

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY IN ILLINOIS:

Responding to Differences within the Gifted Population

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About the Authors

About the Authors

Rosina M. Gallagher, Ph.D., was born and raised in Mexico City, where she resided through early adolescence. She is a nationally certified school psychologist, former administrator of programs for gifted and talented students in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), and an adjunct faculty member in Gifted Education at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. Under her leadership and her work as author of a federal education grant, CPS established three centers that offer bilingual instruction to gifted English Learners. The centers are now 20 years old and flourishing.

Current president of the nonprofit national organization SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted), Dr. Gallagher is a past president of the Illinois School Psychologists Association, a member of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Diversity and Equity Committee and the Illinois Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children, and co-chair of the Committee on Underserved Gifted Populations of the Illinois Association for Gifted Children (IAGC). She is also a State Mentor for the Illinois Gifted Education Seminar.

Dr. Gallagher is a regular presenter at state, national and international conferences including NAGC, SENG, IAGC, the National Association for Bilingual Education, and the World Council for Gifted Children. Her research and publications include articles and book chapters on second language acquisition, evaluation of bilingual education programs, and identification and services for gifted English Learners and their families. A recent publication is *Educando Hijos Exitosos* (Parenting Successful Children), a book for Hispanic audiences. Rosina and William Gallagher are the proud parents of three grown sons and grandparents of two lovely granddaughters.

Ellen D. Fiedler, Ph.D., Professor Emerita from the Gifted/Talented Masters degree program at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, has a broad-based background in education, with particular emphasis on differentiation of instruction and on services for gifted students. Dr. Fiedler currently provides consultation services for school districts and other educational agencies across the United States through her organization, Wings for Education LLC. Dr. Fiedler has also provided workshops in Canada, Ireland, Australia, and Russia. She is currently President of the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education and a member of the Committee on Underserved Gifted Populations for the Illinois Association for Gifted Children (IAGC). Dr. Fiedler is also a Regional Trainer for the Gifted Education Seminars for the State of Illinois.

Dr. Fiedler has a number of articles and two book chapters in print. She is a regular presenter at state, national, and international conferences, including the European Council for High Abilities and the World Conferences on the Gifted in The Hague (Netherlands), Toronto, Vancouver, Seattle, New Orleans, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Barcelona, and Adelaide (Australia).

Dr. Fiedler has been chair of the Counseling and Guidance Network of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and co-chair of NAGC's Global Awareness Network. She served on the Board of Directors of the National Association for the Fostering of Intelligence, as president of the Northwestern University chapter of Phi Delta Kappa, and as president of the Fargo-Moorhead chapter of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted. Dr. Fiedler's professional affiliations have included state agencies in Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Illinois. Her introduction to the field of gifted education was as the parent of two highly-gifted children.

About the Authors (cont.)

Penny Choice, M.A., M.Ed. is a specialist in Gifted Education, Differentiation and the Visual-Spatial Learner. A retired coordinator from the Regional Office of Education in Lake County, she has been Adjunct Faculty at National-Louis University, Aurora University, and currently teaches in the Master of Arts in Gifted Education Program at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. Ms. Choice is also the Midwest consultant on working with visual-spatial learners for the Gifted Development Center in Denver, CO. She has provided professional development to teachers and administrators across the state on how to meet the needs of students with diverse learning needs. A special interest includes training educators in “process drama,” the use of critical and creative thinking to enhance instruction.

Ms. Choice has served as chair of two NAGC Networks: Arts, and Global Awareness, and she is currently co-chair of the Committee on Underserved Gifted Populations for IAGC. A featured presenter at state, national and international conferences, she has participated in delegations to China and Egypt sponsored by NAGC and the People to People Ambassador Program. Ms. Choice is a Regional Trainer for the ISBE Gifted Education Seminar. She is the proud parent of a son and daughter, and grandmother of four grandchildren.

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Introduction

Diversity and Equity in Gifted Education: Responding to Differences within the Gifted Population

Introduction: Diversity and Equity in Gifted Education: Responding to Differences within the Gifted Population

Just as gifted students differ from others in school, gifted students differ from each other as well. “One size does not fit all” applies to the gifted population too, and teachers need to respond to diversity in order to provide appropriately for their students.

Historically, as teachers have become more aware of typical gifted students, many subgroups of the gifted population have been missed, misunderstood, or ignored. Generally, schools tend to emphasize challenging those from majority cultures and those who usually do well in school, while many subgroups of the gifted population have been overlooked and neglected. Gifted students typically undeserved include:

- Racially, culturally, and/or linguistically diverse children
- Gifted children with diverse learning characteristics including:
 - those who are underachievers
 - those who are creatively gifted
 - those with leadership ability
 - those with other special needs such as learning disabilities, behavior disorders, etc.
- Children from diverse home/life experiences including:
 - those in poverty
 - the homeless
 - recent immigrants
- In specific age/gender categories including:
 - gifted girls
 - gifted boys
 - the very young

- Gifted “at risk” including:
 - drop-outs
 - delinquents
 - those at risk for suicide
- Emotionally or spiritually and highly sensitive gifted

Some Gifted Students are Missed

A main concern about gifted students who are underserved is that a great many of them are seldom, if ever, identified as being gifted. The standard identification procedures that are commonly used in programs for the gifted typically miss those students who are “atypical.” The usual tools that are used to determine giftedness include standardized test scores, past school performance, and teacher recommendations. However, these generally fail to provide the kind of evidence of giftedness that is usually required for atypical gifted students to be placed in gifted programs. Furthermore, the ways in which various identification tools are used can also serve to close the doors to the gifted program, leaving atypical gifted students out in the cold. For instance, some of the problems that occur are the result of rigid cut-off scores and/or placing scores from a variety of tools on a matrix and only admitting students whose overall combined scores are high enough.

If we want to be sure that we don’t miss a significant number of gifted students, those who wouldn’t be identified otherwise, our identification procedures need to be adjusted for the diversity that exists within the gifted population itself. As it has often been said, there are more ways in which gifted

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students differ from each other than ways that they resemble each other. Therefore, our identification instruments and the processes we use need to be responsive to this diversity.

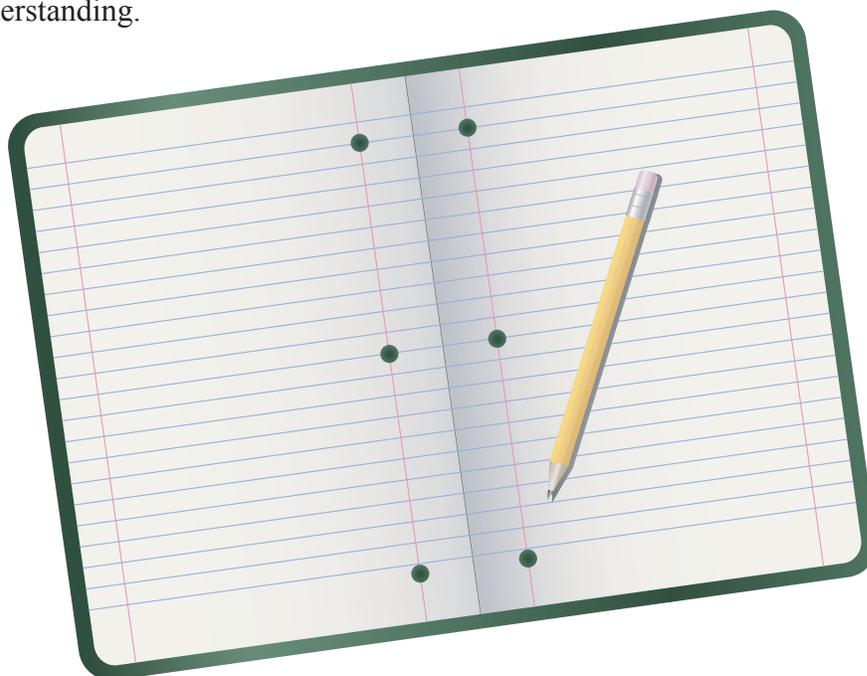
Some Gifted Students Are Misunderstood

What are some of the reasons why atypical gifted students are often misunderstood?

In general, people have in their heads a mental picture of what they think a “gifted child” should be like. Preconceived notions about academic achievement, behavior, economic status, race, color, creed, language spoken, types of abilities, disabilities, lack of disabilities, family structure, cleanliness, etc., abound. Variations from this in any way, as Mr. Spock from *Star Trek* would say, “just don’t compute” for them. Therefore, they have great difficulty accepting any individual as “gifted” who doesn’t match their understanding.

Concerned educators need exposure to comprehensive information about gifted students in order to rectify common misconceptions about these students. The diversity within the gifted population has not been the focus of most efforts to develop general awareness and understanding. In most cases, advocates for the gifted and experts in gifted education have been happy if they can raise consciousness about gifted children in general, let alone those who are atypical.

Some people still think that gifted programs are a reward and should only be given to kids who deserve them. Atypical gifted kids are just that: atypical. By definition, they differ from the norm of giftedness even more than gifted students differ from the norm of the general population. The range of diversity within the gifted population is simply too much for some people to wrap their minds around.



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Some Gifted Students are Ignored

Why have atypical gifted students generally been ignored?

Some of the reasons for this are pragmatic, some are political, some are based on ignorance about the students themselves, some are based on philosophical perspectives, and some are based on prejudice.

Let's consider some examples of how teachers or program advisors might justify limiting programming for gifted students:

Pragmatic:

- “We can't afford a gifted program what with all the other demands on our current budget.”
- “We only have a tiny bit of money to spend on the gifted, and we need to use it where it will do the most good.”
- “We need to identify students who are our superstars and will make our district look good.”
- “We have to use the standard identification process and follow the state's rules and regulations.”
- “If we made exceptions for anyone, no matter what individual differences exist between that child and others, we'd be opening Pandora's Box.”
- “We can't be all things to all people.”
- “Academics are our first priority, so we need to focus on academic achievers.”

Political:

- “Gifted programs are not a priority in our community.” Or, an opposite, but equally damaging rationale, “All of the parents in our community think that their children are gifted.”
- “There is no state or federal funding for gifted education; therefore, we don't have a program.”
- “Our school board expects us to demonstrate success in our gifted program, so we need to be sure that we place gifted students in the program who will be high achievers.”
- “What would people in the school district think if we have all these different types of gifted kids in the program?”
- “(So-and-so) is very influential in this school district and would be opposed to a program that serves those kinds of gifted kids.”

Ignorance:

- “Kids who aren't high achievers can't possibly be gifted.”
- “Everybody knows you can't be gifted and _____.” (Fill in the disability and/or racial/ethnic category.)
- “In order to be considered gifted, kids need to learn English first, regardless of how smart they are.”
- “We don't have any gifted kids here in our little town.”
- “That kid just needs to knuckle down and get to work before being considered for the

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gifted program. You have to earn A's or B's or you are out!"

- "She can't possibly be gifted; she's the most phlegmatic child I've ever had in my classroom." (This one was actually said by a first grade teacher about a child who was reading Mark Twain at home and discussing the books at the dinner table.)

Philosophical perspectives:

- "We believe that all children are gifted."
- "We believe in quality education for all."
- "The gifted will make it on their own anyway."
- "If all teachers utilize differentiation in their classrooms, the gifted students will be just fine."
- "We don't believe in gifted education."

Prejudice:

- "Those kids can't possibly be gifted."
- "If she were gifted, she would be speaking standard English."
- "If he were gifted, he would be... (getting straight A's, doing all his homework, behaving better in school, getting along with others, not forgetting his stuff all the time, etc.)"
- "We all know that people from that (racial/ethnic) group aren't as intelligent as we are." (Fiedler, 2007)

This guide is meant to bring attention to the problem of missed gifted students and to give teachers the tools they need to help diverse gifted students reach their full potential. We can be the champions of the underdog, the undeserved gifted, so that they don't get missed, misunderstood, or ignored.

2

Characteristics of Diverse Gifted Learners

Introduction

Characteristics of Diverse Gifted Learners:

Introduction

It has been said that there is no greater diversity than within the gifted population itself. This makes sense when we consider the wide range of differences between and among gifted learners. Even if all we take into account individual differences in gifted student interests, learning profiles, and readiness to enroll in challenging programs, extremes are found in individual passions, in preferred learning modes and demonstrating what is learned. In addition, varied instructional levels should depend on the subject area.

However, diversity goes far beyond these differences. Gifted youngsters in our schools come from varied racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups, and these differences have a significant impact on their characteristics and needs. Furthermore, we have gifted students who have other exceptional educational needs, in addition to their giftedness—e.g., students with learning disabilities, those with behavior or emotional disorders, those with physical challenges, and those with attention deficits or other learning problems. The list of ways in which gifted students can be “twice-exceptional” goes on and on.

Many gifted students, especially those who are highly gifted, often find themselves in situations that fail to challenge them sufficiently, and their teachers and parents are often baffled about what can be done for them. Those who are creatively gifted are frequently out-of-sync in school. And, gifted underachievers do not match the profile of

high-achieving performers and can be a source of frustration for educators and parents who may recognize their abilities but do not know how to help them.

Diverse home and life experiences also may contribute to the challenges faced by gifted youngsters and their families, educators, counselors, and administrators. For instance, gifted children who live in poverty, those who are homeless, those who are isolated by rural or urban environments are likely to have unique characteristics and needs which must be addressed by the schools in order for them to fully develop their potential.

Gender and age issues also contribute to diversity within the gifted population. Gifted girls face challenges that are unique to them, and so do gifted boys and very young gifted children whose needs may go unrecognized by parents and teachers. Some gifted students are at risk—candidates for dropping out, delinquency, depression, and even subject to suicide. Emotionally or spiritually gifted youngsters may be maligned and misunderstood.

This section of the Illinois Guide to Diversity and Equity in Gifted Education is designed to help unravel the tangled tapestry of characteristics and needs of diverse gifted learners. It will also suggest possible interventions that can help educators and parents to understand and provide appropriate educational opportunities for these students who otherwise are likely to be missed, misunderstood, and ignored.

3

Identification

Instruments and Procedures

Identification: Instruments and Procedures

In order to identify gifted students for appropriate programming, educators must be familiar with the general and specific aptitudes they may manifest. In 1993, a report on gifted education, “National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent,” by the U.S. Department of Education, published the following definition:

Gifted children and youth are those with outstanding talent and who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.

Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

The new Illinois School Code definition reads:

“Gifted and talented children” means children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other

children and youth of their age, experience, and environment. A child shall be considered gifted and talented in any area of aptitude, and, specifically, in language arts and mathematics, by scoring in the top 5% locally in that area of aptitude. (Article 14-A, Sec. 14A-20)

Researchers have identified sets of characteristics or attributes that can be categorized under the six broad areas of ability outlined in the federal definition: general, creative, artistic, leadership, academic, and psychomotor. The array of characteristics included in each area will be specifically discussed in the next section. There are commonalities among these singular abilities, and each may be expressed differently depending on the content area, discipline, or specific situation. For instance, a keen observer can pose astute questions and engage in problem-solving. A gifted math student may prefer simple, practical solutions, while one interested in writing may choose to elaborate ideas through poetic verse or eloquent oratory. A creative student in art may experiment with various media, prefer spontaneity, and tolerate ambiguity and disorder, whereas a future leader may focus on a specific goal and seek to develop organizational and team-building skills to achieve it.

Viewed this way, researchers list the broad areas as follows (Johnsen, 2008):

- General intellectual ability
- Creative ability within a content area
- Artistic ability in a specific field
- Leadership ability in specific situations

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- Academic ability in a specific discipline
- Psychomotor ability—practical, spatial, mechanical and physical skills
 - This specific characteristic is seldom used as a criterion in gifted programs.

Implications

The definitions presented raise a number of issues to be considered when selecting assessment instruments and instituting identification practices. First, there is a shift from using the absolute IQ=130 or academic achievement at the 98th percentile to identifying student aptitude in areas of interest. Second, with the understanding that giftedness or talent is to be cultivated, early identification is encouraged, and emphasis is placed on the development of strengths rather than remediation of weaknesses, particularly among minority populations. Third, researchers caution that traditional assessment tools penalize students who have limited experiential opportunities. Tools that focus on language achievement leave out the artistically creative and talented students learning English as a second language. Similarly, focusing on disabilities discounts talented students with diverse learning characteristics.

Professional development for educators and school personnel remains another important issue to be addressed. Change in attitude precedes change in practice. Workshops should include introductory and advanced discussions on common behaviors characteristic of underrepresented diverse populations such as those included in this guide: namely, students from diverse racial, cultural and linguistic groups, children with specific learning

characteristics and impairments, those from atypical home/life experiences, those for whom age and gender may be an issue, those “at risk” for school failure or socio-emotional difficulties, and the highly sensitive or spiritually gifted.

Assessment topics used to determine the success of a program for gifted children may range from familiarity with varied instruments and procedures for teachers to the development of a comprehensive plan in accordance with state and federal guidelines for those responsible for identification, selection, and exit practices. These areas will be discussed subsequently.

Finally, we must consider the need to provide an orientation program for parents of the gifted, particularly minority group parents and the school community, in order to increase understanding of the characteristics and needs of gifted learners, the range of programs and services available in the school districts, and the importance of advocacy efforts at local, state and national levels.

Purpose of Identification

Experts in assessment recommend that evaluators responsible for the identification of students for accelerated programs observe six principles (Lohman, 2008).

First, evaluators should identify students within a aptitude or readiness levels necessary to succeed in the specific learning context. For example, candidates for advanced algebra should have the knowledge and skill base for success in such a course.

Second, evaluators should supplement (not supplant) verbal and quantitative measures with

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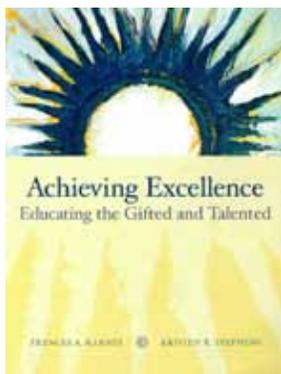
nonverbal tests, particularly for groups with limited English proficiency, language and verbal skills, or experiential background.

Thirdly, experts recommend comparing the results of aptitude measures with those of groups that have had similar opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills measured by the test.

Fourth, remember that students of the same age inferred to have particular academic talents often have markedly different instructional needs.

Fifth, identification of accomplishments and talent should be ongoing, as research has shown that the skill sets of young children who obtain high scores on ability or achievement tests generally level off in a couple of years.

Finally, research supports the use of multiple measures that assess multiple abilities, achievements, and provide evidence that students can apply warranted skills in the classroom.



Selecting Identification Instruments

Staff members who are responsible for identification and selection procedures are generally charged to select instruments that align with the

domain or talent area. Such instruments should be technically adequate, as well as complemented by information from multiple sources such as peers, parents and significant others in various home, social and recreational settings. Researcher Susan K. Johnson, in *Achieving Excellence: Educating the Gifted and Talented*, one of the texts used for the Illinois Gifted Education Seminar, describes the following types of instruments in general use.

Quantitative Instruments are norm-referenced tests (i.e. intelligence) or criterion-referenced tests (i.e. achievement) that use numbers to describe a student's performance in relation to others. Aptitude tests measure overall reasoning ability in verbal, quantitative, or nonverbal areas. Achievement tests determine the extent to which a student has mastered the content, knowledge, and skills in his or her grade level curriculum. Both types of instruments report scores in national percentile rank ranges from one to 99. If a student scores at the 85th percentile, it means that he or she did as well as or better than 85 percent of the students of the same age in the standardization sample.

Qualitative Instruments use words to describe student strengths and emerging skills as perceived through interviews, observation, or collection of work samples. These include rating scales or checklists which are recorded when students exhibit particular characteristics or problem-solving skills during instruction. Through performance-based assessment, a teacher designs complex strategies in areas of interest or talent and uses test-teach-retest procedures to discover potential within a student. This type of dynamic assessment is especially helpful when working with students from limited

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experiential background or those learning English as a second language.

Keeping a portfolio of student work is another alternative assessment procedure that can show performance over time, include student reflection of products or performance, and identify objectives for improvement. This procedure also helps when working with students from the diverse populations described in this guide.

An alternative assessment strategy used to measure the performance of highly gifted learners is off-level or above-grade-level testing (Olszewski-Kubilius & Kulieke, 2008). This involves administering measures designed for use with students at a higher grade level with younger students for a specific purpose: to determine extent of exceptional ability or achievement; to analyze the level of student knowledge about a topic prior to instruction; and to evaluate growth after participation in accelerated programming.

Olszewski-Kubilius and Kulieke report advantages and disadvantages of this assessment model. Benefits include providing a more accurate measure of high-achieving students in a specific content area; offering a useful method for grouping; placing and accelerating students in a subject area; and allowing measurement of progress from year to year based on higher-difficulty indices. Disadvantages are that students may be apprehensive about taking more difficult tests, that off-level test scores are more difficult to interpret because norm-referenced scores such as percentile ranks are no longer meaningful, and parents tend to be

disconcerted when students do not achieve high test scores and percentile ranks.

Determining Technical Adequacy

Johnsen of the Illinois Gifted Education Seminar cites questions and recommendations by other researchers that may be helpful to determine the technical adequacy of assessment instruments (Jolly & Hall, 2004, cited by S. Johnsen in Karnes & Stephens, pages 141-142).

- Determine the date when norms were collected for standardization. Norms older than 12 years are invalid because demographics change in the United States.
- The purpose of assessment should be to identify gifted students and assessment instruments should be related to the area of giftedness and program expectations.
- Determine validity by asking a variety of questions: Does the assessment discriminate between students who are talented in a domain from those who are not? Does it sample a range of knowledge and skills within the domain, including problem-solving?
- Are norms representative of racial and ethnic groups? Were administrators properly trained?
- Does the assessment measure the domain consistently, over time, and between raters or observers?

For more insights, check out the video *Dr. David Lohman on Qualitative Instruments*. To view the video, click on the play icon to the left or watch the DVD.

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- Do norms match national census data and reflect the school district's population? Should local norms be developed? If multiple assessments are used, standard scores are essential for comparison purposes.
- Psychologists administer individual aptitude tests. Proper training is required of professionals who administer group tests.
- Consider costs in terms of human and material resources: budget, training required, and administration time.

Instruments Frequently Used in Gifted Education

The following is a descriptive list of instruments used for different areas of giftedness. Publishers and websites are included.

General Intellectual Ability

- The **Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-IV)** is an individually administered clinical instrument for assessing the cognitive ability of children ages six through 16. It provides composite and subtest scores that represent intellectual functioning in specific cognitive domains as well as a composite score that represents general intellectual ability. Extended norms are available to identify exceptionally and profoundly gifted children. The Psychological Corporation. www.harcourtassessment.com
- The **Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale 5 (SB-5)** is an individually administered clinical instrument for assessing the global intellectual ability of children and adults, ages two to 85+ years. It provides verbal, nonverbal and composite scores. SB-5 includes extensive high-end items designed to measure the highest level of gifted performance. Riverside Publishing. www.riverpub.com
- The **Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test (UNIT)** is a standardized, norm-referenced measure designed to fairly assess the general intelligence and cognitive abilities of children and adolescents from ages five to 17 years, who may be disadvantaged by traditional verbal and language-loaded measures. It measures memory and reasoning abilities such as planning, pattern processing, problem-solving, and understanding of relationships. Riverside Publishing. www.riverpub.com
- The **Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz—Pruebas de habilidad cognitiva** (Spanish) is a comprehensive system for measuring general intellectual ability, specific cognitive abilities, scholastic aptitude, oral language, and academic achievement for subjects two to 90 years old. Riverside Publishing. www.riverpub.com
- The **Bilingual Verbal Abilities Tests (BVAT)** is a test of verbal abilities in English and 16 other languages for individuals ages five to 90: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Haitian-Creole, Hindi, Hmong, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. It provides a holistic overall estimate of a bilingual subject's cognitive

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language mastery.

Riverside Publishing. www.riverpub.com

- The **Slosson Intelligence Test for Children and Adults Revised (SIT R3)** is an individually administered screening instrument designed to yield a quick and reliable index of verbal intelligence for subjects ages four to 18+ years. It may be used by teachers, counselors, social workers, and psychologists. Slosson Educational Publications. www.slosson.com
- The **Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence (CTONI-3)** measures intelligence, aptitude, abstract reasoning and problem-solving. It is nonverbal and largely motor free: the test taker merely points to or nods toward the appropriate response. It is designed for both children and adults, ages six through 89, and can be administered to individuals or small groups. The test may be administered to those who have a learning disability, neuropsychological impairment or disease. It also accommodates the needs of individuals who are not proficient in English. PRO-ED. www.proedinc.com

Group Aptitude Instruments

- The **Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test 2 (NNAT 2)** is a measure of nonverbal reasoning and general problem-solving ability. The NNAT 2 and Online versions are useful with students, ages five to 17, from culturally or linguistically diverse

populations, and those who have a hearing, physical, and/or speech and language impairment.

Psychological Corporation.

www.harcourtassessment.com

- The **Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAt) (Form 6)** is a K-12 group administered assessment battery designed to assess student learned abilities in reasoning and problem solving using verbal, quantitative and nonverbal (spatial) symbols. Riverside Publishing. www.riverpub.com
- The **Otis-Lennon School Ability Test 8 (OLSAT 8)** is a group administered, multiple choice, pencil/paper instrument that measures verbal, quantitative, and spatial reasoning ability. The test yields verbal and nonverbal scores, and a total score or School Ability Index (SAI). Pearson. www.pearsonassess.com
- The **Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students (SAGES 2)** allows the examiner to sample aspects of the most common areas measured when identifying gifted students. Because the test is administered only to children in gifted and talented programs, it is difficult and should be able to differentiate among gifted and nongifted, even within the nomination group. Prufrock Press. www.prufrock.com
- The **Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test (UNIT) Group Ability Test (UNIT-GAT)** is currently being standardized. Riverside Publishing. www.riverpub.com

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Measures for Creativity

- The **Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT)** is a test which measures creative thinking using pictures to assess five mental characteristics: fluency, originality, elaboration, abstractness of titles, and resistance to closure. The figural version of the test incorporates abstract pictures. After they are presented, the examinee is requested to state what an image might be. In the verbal version of the test, the examinee is presented with a situation and given the examinee the opportunity to ask questions to improve products. The test is used for children ages five and up.
Scholastic Testing Service.
www.ststesting.com
- The **Group Inventory for Finding Creative Talent (GIFT)** is a test created by Sylvia Rimm which can be used in screening elementary school students for programs for the creatively gifted. The Primary Level K-2 Normed Test is used with rural, urban, and suburban students, and is considered culturally fair. The test is used to identify creativity among achieving and underachieving students. **PRIDE** (Preschool and Kg Interest Descriptor) is a parent report inventory to identify creative characteristics as they are displayed in children ages three through six years old.
Educational Assessment Service.
www.sylviarimm.com
- The **Group Inventory for Finding Interests (GIFFI- I & II)** is a self-report inventory for grades six through nine and nine through 12. The test was created by S. Rimm and G. A. Davis.
www.sylviarimm.com/cii.html
- The **Creative Activities Check List (CACL)** is a self-report inventory for grades four to eight. Seven domains are addressed: art, writing, science, performing arts, crafts, music, and public presentation. It is designed to identify creative activities in which the respondent has participated, and to quantify the number of times the respondent engaged in each activity. M. A. Runco TCO 14579. Educational Testing Service. www.ets.org

Assessing Advanced Academic Achievement

Off-Level Assessment

- **ACT EXPLORE** is a test for students in grades four through eight that is used by American College Testing Service (ACT) www.act.org
- **ACT EXPLORE** is a test for students in grades seven through nine which includes four multiple-choice tests in English, math, reading, and science. The test shows strengths and weaknesses of students in these areas. American College Testing Service. www.act.org
- The **Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)** for grades seven through nine) is administered by the College Board. The test measures

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literacy, numeracy and writing skills that are needed for academic success in college. The SAT is typically taken by high school juniors and seniors. The SAT Reasoning Test takes three hours and 45 minutes. Taking the test costs \$45. The SAT Reasoning Test allows possible scores from 600 to 2400, which is determined by combining test results from three 800 point sections (math, critical reading and writing) along with other subsections scored separately. www.collegeboard.com

Specific Content

- The **Test of Early Reading Ability, 3rd Ed. (TERA-3)** is a measure of early reading abilities used to test children in grades three through eight. The TERA-3 yields standard scores, percentiles and ranks, and NCEs. American Guidance Service. www.ags.pearsonassessments.com
- The **Test of Mathematical Abilities for Gifted Students (TOMA-GS)** is used for grades K through three and four through six. The test is an intermediate-level, standardized, norm-referenced assessment used to identify children gifted in math. The complete kit was designed by G. Ryser and S. Johnsen. Prufrock Press, Inc. www.prufrock.com

Other Instruments

- **Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) 3rd Ed.** This test offers a guide for whole-grade

acceleration for students in grades K through eight, and is a tool to help parents and educators make an objective decision on whole-grade acceleration.

Great Potential Press. www.giftedbooks.com

- **Gifted Rating Scales (GRS)** is a test used to assess observable student behaviors indicating giftedness and to help identify children for placement in gifted programs. It can be used in conjunction with the Stanford Achievement Tests. Steven I. Pfeiffer and Tania Jarosewich. www.PsychCorp.com
- **Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI), 2nd Ed.** is a test which increases teacher effectiveness in identifying and differentiating instruction for students with gifted potential. Professional Associates Publishing. www.kingore.com
- **Preponderance of Evidence—Environmental Opportunities Profile (EOP)** This test allows the collection of data for a student at school production, informant data, cognitive/ language skills, standardized test data, and factors in the home environment. Students are examined to determine the impact of their environment on school performance. P. Slocumb, Ed.D. and R. Payne, Ph.D. aha! Process, Inc. (2000). www.ahaprocess.com
- **DISCOVER Assessment Process** is a problem-solving assessment used to identify the strengths of all students in a classroom and those who are gifted in a way that is equitable across gender, language, economic, and cultural groups.

Identification: Instruments and Procedures

- **Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS)** is a test based on a multiple-talent approach to the identification of gifted students where 14 scales help identify student strengths in the following areas: learning, motivation, creativity, leadership, art, music, dramatics, planning, communication, mathematics, reading, science, and technology. It is used for students in grades three through 12. Creative Learning Press. www.creativelearningpress.com

Establishing Procedures

Most school districts follow three phases during the testing process: nomination, screening, and placement. The guidelines from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), however, delineate additional steps to ensure equal access; nondiscriminatory referral, screening, evaluation, and placement practices; and inclusion of all qualified students. More information about the guidelines can be found here.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

In preparation for the nomination phase, districts are expected to conduct statistical analyses to determine the racial/ethnic composition of the total student enrollment, the number of students receiving gifted services, whether minority students are underrepresented, and the percent by race and ethnicity being referred for evaluation, placement, and exit from programs and services.

Proper annual notice to reach families of all segments in the school community constitutes a simple and clear explanation of the program's purpose, referral and screening procedures, eligibility criteria, and the district's contact person. In large urban areas, this may include the translation of information into the majority languages represented in the district. It may also include the use of the media and timely scheduling of face-to-face meetings in community agencies. Optimally, the meeting facilitators should represent the cultural and language groups of the participants.

Nomination Phase

The purpose of this phase is to cast a wide net in order to identify as many students as possible who might need services not available through the regular program. Multiple sources of information may include checklists, observations, portfolios of student work, a learning profile reflecting achievement test data, grades, interests and motivation, as well as recommendations from teachers, peers, parents and significant others in community, recreational, and religious agencies.

Screening Phase

During this phase, trained examiners administer specific program-relevant aptitude and/or achievement instruments in a nondiscriminatory manner. Assessments provide in-depth information about a student's characteristics and special talent,

**For more insights, check out the video *Panel Discussion on Instruments*.
To view the video, click on the play icon to the left or watch the DVD.**

Indentification: Instruments and Procedures

and may include further individual assessment, interviews, and auditions. The purpose of this process is to equitably identify high-achieving or high-performing learners for talent enhancement or high-potential learners for talent development.

Placement Phase

During this phase, all data collected should ideally be organized in a case study format or be used to show an individual profile that describes how the student acquires, processes, and applies information. Eligibility criteria are applied in a nondiscriminatory manner and are consistent with program expectations. Alternative assessments may be used appropriately. A committee of professionals reviews the profile and determines the program or services the student needs to develop or enhance his or her potential. This group generally consists of a school administrator, a regular teacher, a gifted teacher or coordinator, and a school psychologist or school counselor.

Caution and flexibility need to be exercised to ensure equal access to minority groups which are traditionally underrepresented in gifted education. Students learning English as a second language might further benefit from additional testing in their native language. Children with atypical learning characteristics may also need modifications to their testing experience such as additional time, a speech and language interpreter, or oral directions instead of written ones.

Finally, program exit procedures need to be clearly defined, made public, and periodically reviewed with school staff, students, and parents.

Some questions that may facilitate planning are: Under what circumstances should a student be asked to exit the program? What is the process for exiting a program? When should the school administrator be consulted? When should parents be notified? Have support services been provided and documented? Have steps been delineated for how a student can re-enter the program?

Due Process and Appeals

The Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education has the primary responsibility to ensure equal access to education. Consistent with the First and Fourteenth Amendment, OCR requires school districts to adopt due process and appeal procedures. This generally requires a sequence of steps that proceed from the local to state and federal levels. In Illinois, parents of students who feel subject of discrimination may appeal first to the school principal, the district gifted program director, the board of trustees, or the superintendent. Consultation with an impartial professional mediator may then be followed by contact with ISBE. At the state level, parties may seek legal counsel and finally litigate in federal courts.

4

Including Culturally, Linguistically and Economically Diverse (CLED) Students in Gifted Education

Including Culturally, Linguistically and Economically Diverse (CLED) Students in Gifted Education

Demographers assert that cultural and ethnic diversity continues to grow in most states across the country. Federal guidelines also remind us that students with high potential exist in all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups. It is therefore essential that educators, from an ethical and practical perspective, evolve their methods for recognizing and developing student potential. Designating a student as “gifted” must not be bound by cultural, linguistic or economic ties. The purpose of the following section is, first, to facilitate a better understanding of these groups by highlighting some general characteristics; second, to identify behaviors indicative of high aptitude or talent among CLED populations; and third, to suggest appropriate interventions conducive to the development of individuals who are healthy, competent, and ready contributors to a global society.

Clearly, it is an ethical responsibility for educators and school personnel to develop the learning potential of all students as “whole” individuals—intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically. Practically, if a state is to be competitive in presenting a comprehensive reform agenda for new federal funds provided through the Race to the Top Fund enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (The New Teacher Project, 2009), the state must demonstrate its readiness to uncover and nurture the aptitudes and talents of students from this neglected group in public schools—the gifted who are also culturally, linguistically and economically diverse.

Generalizations Facilitate Understanding

As noted in the introduction to this guide, there are many dimensions of diversity. In this section, we focus on diverse cultural and linguistic groups—the traditional federal categories of Black, Asian, Hispanic and Native American. These populations, generally enrolled in public schools, tend also to be classified as having a low socioeconomic status. While generalizations help to raise awareness, it should be emphasized that broad categories do no justice to the cultural wealth implied by individual differences within groups such as racial and ethnic heritage, family values, beliefs, traditions, primary language, gender and age issues, and lifestyle and home experiences.

To illustrate, the term “African-American” might include immigrants from Haiti who speak Creole French or recent refugees from Somalia. “Hispanic” may include native Puerto Ricans, American citizens who speak only Spanish and were born in Puerto Rico, which is known as the *Isla Encantada* or “enchanted island,” those who are bilingual and living in mainland USA, or “Chicanos,” activist U.S. citizens born to Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrant or undocumented parents. Asian groups might include both early and recent immigrants from China, the Pacific Rim, or newcomers from the Middle East. “Native American” could include Eskimos and Aleuts or members of more than 510 different tribal nations recognized by the U.S. government (2000 U.S. Census). Given these considerations, the following takes a closer look at the four major cultural groups.

Including Culturally, Linguistically and Economically Diverse (CLED) Students in Gifted Education

The African-American Culture

In the past three decades, researchers have contributed to increased understanding and appreciation for the expressed talent or latent potential among African-American students. From the writings of E. Paul Torrance, Mary Frasier, Barbara Clark and Alexinia Baldwin as well as those by Donna Ford, James Borland, Thomas Hébert, Tarek Grantham and other contemporaries, new paradigms advocate for multiculturalism, inclusiveness and emphasis on talent development.

Ford (2004) and Clark (2008) quote the work by Boykin (1994) who identifies nine cultural styles African-American students which raised in this country may exhibit in varying degrees and under different circumstances:

- Spirituality: deep belief systems that influence a religious, optimistic, and resilient perspective
- Harmony: ability to perceive the social and emotional environment which can subsequently motivate or impede learning
- Oral tradition: ability to learn and demonstrate knowledge through verbal communication, debate, and word-play
- Affect: sensitive and emotional temperament values toward information presented through personal relationships more than through abstract concept analysis
- Verve: understanding by performing, using imagery, and individual style

- Communalism: preference for learning cooperatively in groups, and being appreciated and respected by peers
- Movement: preference for experiential, hands-on learning to prevent distractions
- Social-time perspective: a viewpoint which may make time management and organizing schedules secondary
- Expressive individualism: flair for being creative and dramatic, and a preference for being entertained

In the gifted, manifest behaviors might be:

- facility to express feelings and emotions
- effective ability to tell stories, rap or debate and employ convincing oratory
- creativity in the visual and performing arts
- intuitive or resourceful problem-solving
- imaginative and dynamic team membership
- athletic talent
- persuasive leadership skills
- keen awareness of equity and justice issues

The Hispanic or Latin American Culture

The terms “Hispanic,” “Chicano,” and “Latino” are used in the United States to identify individuals whose ancestry originates from 23 countries where Spanish or Portuguese is the native language. “Hispanic” and “Chicano” began to emerge in the 1960s; the former promoted by the Census Bureau, and the latter adopted by U.S. citizens from Mexican descent who lived primarily in the Southwest. “Latino” was broadly used by

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a younger generation who was determined to replace “Hispanic,” which had been associated with European Spain rather than with the Latin American continent. While both Hispanic and Latino are acceptable terms, government documents tend to use the broader term, and natives often prefer to be named based on their country of origin, for instance: Mexicanos, Colombianos, Puertorriqueños, Dominicanos, Peruanos, Argentinos, Brasileños, Españoles o Portugueses, etc. (Arroyo, 2008).

The figure that follows presents a broad picture of characteristics belonging to this population as gleaned from the author’s personal perspective and from research. Each area, of course, could be a fertile ground for future investigations.

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Strengths and Needs in Education, Family, Social, and Emotional Constructs

Strengths	Needs
Education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad concept for learning includes socio-cultural values • Individual interest is secondary to family • Males tend to exhibit a strong work ethic • Mother acts as the first educator • Crafts and folkloric arts are emphasized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities to learn by experience • High expectations in all areas • Proficiency in English/Spanish • Quality apprenticeship or mentorship programs • Overall career development
Family	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuclear and extended structure • Male figure dominant • Female role in transition • Oriented toward children • “Respect” for adults is rooted value • Traditions are important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instill independence in children • Improve ability of women to meet high expectations • Career development opportunities • Orientation to school and community resources • Practical English development and/or adult basic education
Social and Emotional	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian values • Idealism, romanticism • Individual “dignity” • Mother role is venerated • Strong sense of loyalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instill independence in women • Increase overall assertiveness and organization in individuals • Leadership development • Role models and mentors in all fields • Strong sense of self

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Singular Characteristic Behaviors of Gifted Hispanic Learners

Researchers like Bernal (1979), Grossman (1995), Villareal (2004), Borland (2004), and Gándara (2005) have identified singular characteristics among gifted Hispanic learners:

- Learn to speak a second language quickly
- Highly curious and eager to delve into new ideas in either language
- Enjoy older playmates and readily engage adults in conversation
- Resourceful, intuitive problem-solvers
- Have excellent memory for stories, songs, and poetry
- Enjoy performing
- Persevere in attaining goals
- Demonstrate social maturity at home and in the community
- Become absorbed in self-selected tasks

The Impact of Immigration Policies on Individuals, Families and U.S. Society

Immigration issues are not unique to Latinos. However, impressive marches of thousands have prompted the media to present a variety of success and failure. Feature stories of individuals who surpass adverse circumstances to become successful entrepreneurs, professionals, entertainers or political leaders contrast with stories of families torn apart and towns disappearing due to mass deportations.

A more realistic picture probably lies in the gray area. Some studies show differences in academic achievement between children from

families who are legal U.S. residents and those who are undocumented (Valdés, 2003). The 2006 report, *The State of Latino Chicago* by the Institute for Latino Studies, found that a high concentration of Latino businesses have revived declining commercial districts in some neighborhoods and created new ones in others (Ready & Brown-Gort). Finally, it is a well-known fact that many public universities across the country are increasingly dealing with the dilemma of restrictions on higher-education access for illegal immigrant students, even though these individuals have lived in this country virtually their entire lives.

The Asian-American Culture

The term “Asian-Pacific Islander” has been used generically in this country since the late 1960s to classify the early immigrants from China (1850s) and Japan (1890s), the waves from the Philippines and Korea (1970s), the refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia (1975), to those from Middle Eastern countries like India, Pakistan, Iran and Lebanon (1980s and 1990s). Trying to fully understand the identities and political and economic histories these groups represent could be overwhelming (Camarota, 2002).

A theme that has been controversial in literature is that of Asian-Americans as the “model minority.” The term may be appropriate when referring to early immigrant families who became professionals, and whose offspring have reaped the benefits of enriched, middle-class environments. These students are often high achievers in school who are overrepresented in gifted programs across

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the nation. But there are many refugee families today who are struggling to recreate their identities amidst abject poverty, discrimination, and pressures to assimilate. Like other groups, Asian Americans have had to rely on strong family values, hard work, and persistent problem-solving in order to survive and thrive in America.

Authors like Kitano (2004) remind us of the impact of language variances. For example, Japanese Americans who have been in this country for several generations often speak English exclusively, while a Vietnamese group, the Montagnards, may speak as many as 20 languages. Unfortunately, the tendency toward monolingualism in the United States is alarming. Psycholinguist Hakuta (1986) has compared the rate of loss of language diversity in this country with that of other nations and concludes that “it would take 350 years for the average nation to experience the loss witnessed in just one generation in the United States” (p. 167).

In the past, Asian-Americans have been encouraged, if not programmed, into mathematical, scientific and technical fields at the expense of developing communication skills. As noted earlier, not only are some students losing their home language, and thus part of their identity, but also limiting future career options and participation in a competitive global society where verbal competency in two or more languages is a requirement for top administrative positions in business, government or academic settings (Gallagher, 1989). A case-in-point is the fact that, in Illinois, the certification of teachers of Arabic is being instituted.

The experience of Middle Eastern immigrant families is being woven into Jesse Jackson’s “quilt...

(of) many pieces, many colors, many sizes... held together by a common thread.” (Coil, 2000). This group may share similar values with earlier immigrants from India; mainly, a reverence for “hard work, clear focus, building strong credentials, and dogged pursuit of careers that lead to prestige and material rewards and recognition” (Sethna, 2004). The Center for Immigration Studies reports newcomers from Pakistan and Iran are some of the fastest growing immigrant groups in California, Texas, New York, New Jersey, Michigan and Illinois (Camarota, Aug 2002). In general, newcomers tend to practice the Muslim or Christian faith, are the most educated immigrant groups in America, readily acquire U.S. citizenship, and own their own businesses.

Sethna (2004) highlights some characteristics that have contributed to high achievement among this group:

- Families placing high value in academic learning
- Insistence that children pursue careers in math, science, and technical fields
- Instilling the value that effort is a greater factor in success than innate intelligence or talent
- Belief in the formula that individual hard work, delayed gratification, and strong family support will yield success

The American Indian Culture

Last but not least is the group who continental U.S. considers the indigenous people

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from North America, parts of Alaska, and the island state of Hawaii. This group encompasses a large number of distinct tribes, states, and ethnic and political communities. In this section, the terms “American Indian” or “Native American” are used interchangeably in reference to North American natives. However, a poll by the U.S. Census in 1995 found a preference for the term “American Indian” (50%) over “Native American” (37%), and specific groups prefer to be identified by tribal nation affiliation, such as Cherokee, Shoshone, Chippewa, Mohawk, Navajo or Lakota.

Acknowledging the fact that generalizations are meant to be helpful in gaining insight into behaviors which might otherwise be confusing or misinterpreted, researchers like Sisk, Pfeiffer, Garrison in Maker & Schiever (1989), Tonemah (2003), Klug (2004), among others, have identified some common characteristics among American Indian groups:

- Lower dependency on language for communication; American Indian (AI) students in a mainstream gifted classroom may feel overwhelmed or intimidated by highly verbal peers, or they may need guidance to develop a more aggressive communication style.
- Instruction is done by modeling, storytelling, learning by observation, and guided practice. AI students may be familiar with developing a skill through observation, imitation and practice, rather than via verbal explanation and questioning. Principles and abstract concepts, on the other hand, are taught

through stories and by modeling behavior. AI students are expected to listen quietly, remember stories, and interpret and apply meaning individually to daily living. This contrasts mainstream education of content analysis and group discussion, followed by individual responses to questions that assess comprehension and develop written communication skills.

- Cooperation is the norm within a group, and competition is reserved for adversarial groups. AI students, for example, may be reluctant to compete with peers in classroom activities, which may be misinterpreted as noncompliance or lack of understanding. However, AI students can readily engage in athletic competition between schools.
- The group is more important than the individual. In the AI culture, tasks are generally assigned, accomplished, and credited to the group. Again, this is in sharp contrast to mainstream education where most of the work is done by individuals and credit or admonishment is thus assigned. To recognize individual talent in a mainstream classroom may inadvertently alienate an AI student from the group and possibly cause him or her to “go underground” and bury his or her natural ability.
- Time is perceived as cyclical rather than linear. Garrison (1989) eloquently explains this difference:
- From a mainstream perspective, time is linear and sequential, starting at one point and continuing forever onward in one direction.

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In contrast, from an American Indian perspective, time is circular. At the end of each year, one has not traveled 365 days away from the beginning, but has completed a cycle and returned to a beginning. In the American Indian culture one travels around the circle with time, not ahead of it or behind it, as it flows... The goal is not to limit the time, but to experience and enjoy time as it passes (p 121).



Knowledge of Cultural Attributes Facilitates the Development of Educational Interventions

With these perspectives in mind, it is clear that a “one-size-fits-all” curriculum needs to give way to flexible, relevant programming for high-potential CLED learners. To uncover and nurture their talents, teachers must be trained to look for different qualities in their students: richness of imagery in casual language, originality in problem-solving, creativity in performance, keen observation and appreciation for the environment, ability to see relationships between unrelated ideas, advanced sense of humor or speed at which they grasp new concepts or acquire a new language, resilience in adversity, concern for “fairness” or social justice, independence, and leadership.

Educators also need to be sensitized to the intensity with which high-potential learners—irrespective of cultural, linguistic, or environmental factors—see, feel, and interpret situations.

Educators must also understand that the ethnic identity of some CLED students may be jeopardized when they enter a program for the gifted. Frequently, these students must adopt mainstream communication and interaction styles and social conventions that can make them successful in one world, but, at the same time, alienate them from family, friends, and their home culture.

For more insights, check out the video *Dr. Terek Granthem on Ethnic Minorities in Gifted Programs*. To view the video, click on the play icon to the left or watch the DVD.

Including Culturally, Linguistically and Economically Diverse (CLED) Students in Gifted Education

Conclusion and Recommendations

Uncovering the talents of students from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds may be compared to the science and art of mining precious stones. Educators, like geologists, must first value these potential “gems,” become familiar with the terrain and environmental conditions that suggest deposits of precious ores, and then commit resources to unearth them. Methods can vary from manual digging and sifting through surface alluvial deposits to hard rock mining that involves tunneling underground with heavy machinery. The art happens by allotting time and creativity to shape and polish the many facets of whole, competent, and productive individuals, whose beauty, comparable to diamonds, opals, emeralds, rubies, or sapphires, may enrich the lives of others.

The literature in the field is replete with ideas that can be researched and adapted to specific circumstances, beginning with service delivery models, research-based instructional strategies, counseling, and system-wide practices. The Schoolwide Cluster Grouping model, for example, has been found effective in communicating high expectations for all students, reducing the range

of achievement in all classes, and providing professional development in gifted education for all teachers (Winebrenner and Brulles, 2008).

To make learning relevant and meaningful, instructional strategies should maintain high expectations, emphasize differentiation, include content-based English as a Second Language and bilingual or heritage language programs, thematic and interdisciplinary units, concept mapping and graphic organizers, technology, and problem-based and cooperative learning.

To address healthy and resilient social and emotional development, counseling might include values clarification and career exploration, leadership and service training, as well as apprenticeship and mentoring opportunities.

Finally, system-wide practices should include early identification, the recruitment and training of bilingual/bicultural teachers and support staff, comprehensive parent involvement, systematic evaluation of programs and services, and promotion of focused research. The establishment of advisory councils would be invaluable in these efforts, along with parent and teacher advocacy at local, state, and national levels.

For more insights, check out the video *Panel Discussion on High Achieving, Low Income Students*. To view the video, click on the play icon to the left or watch the DVD.

5

Implications of Lists of Characteristics of Diverse Groups of Gifted Students

Implications of Lists of Characteristics of Diverse Groups of Gifted Students

**By Ellen D. Fiedler,
Rosina M. Gallagher,
and Linda K. Silverman
April 29, 2009**

1. Many common characteristics exist across exceptionalities. What is important is to address the needs of multi-exceptional gifted children regardless of diagnosis.
2. Administrators need to have an awareness and understanding of all of the implications of diversity and equity in order to provide appropriate leadership on behalf of all gifted students.
3. Often, gifted students with other exceptional educational needs are not identified as gifted because their disabilities mask their abilities. Furthermore, their abilities may allow them to compensate enough so that their disabilities go unrecognized.
4. Programs and services for gifted students need to address specific talent areas as well as overall considerations for the characteristics of gifted students; in general, the process should aim to keep the whole child in mind.
5. Gifted students with sensory processing deficits need interventions planned by occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, optometrists, audiologists, etc.
6. Consultation with appropriate specialists needs to take place for those gifted students with other exceptional educational needs.
7. The value of multi-disciplinary team meetings where all specialists gather to confer about the needs of students with special needs has long been recognized, but gifted specialists are alarmingly absent from such meetings. The focus of most IEP meetings is generally on remediation rather than talent development, and on disabilities rather than abilities.
8. Professional development regarding gifted students needs to extend to all educators and specialists who are involved with students in any capacity in order to promote optimal response to their gifts and talents.
9. Parent education is an important component that needs to be incorporated in order to help parents work as partners with the schools on behalf of their children's optimal development and so that consideration for the whole child can be given.
10. Children who are gifted and have other learning differences are more likely to exhibit gifts in ways that are not as easily recognized: e.g., visual-spatial, artistic, musical, and kinesthetic domains.
11. Children who are highly gifted are more likely to exhibit characteristics that may result in their being misdiagnosed as having some kind(s) of special educational need. Regardless, their characteristics should be addressed and they need help learning how to learn how to cope.

Gifted Children with Diverse Learning Characteristics

Characteristic	LD	ADD/ADHD	ED/BD	Autistic Spectrum/Asperger Syndrome	Physically Challenged	Visually Impaired/Visual Processing weaknesses	Hearing Impaired/Central/Auditory Processing Disorder	Speech And Language Disorder	Sensory Processing Disorder	Visual-Spatial	Low-Incidence/Highly/Profoundly Gifted	Creatively Gifted/Non-Conforming	Under-Achieving
Visual-Spatial													
Have difficulty finishing tasks/school work	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Poor listening skills, appears not to be listening	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Easily overwhelmed by sensory stimuli	*	*	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	*	X
Poor handwriting or difficulty staying within the lines	X	X	X	X	*	X	X	*	X	X	X	*	X
May grip pencil hard and press on paper when writing	X	X	X	X	*	X			X	*			*
Distractible	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	*	X	X
Highly sensitive to criticism	X	X	X	X	*			*	X	X	X	X	*
Emotionally on-edge		*	X						X	X	X		X
Poor sense of time	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X
Difficulty with spelling/times tables	X	X	X	*	*		X	X	X	X	*	X	X
Highly disorganized	X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X
Vivid imagination/dreams		*	X	?					X	X	X	X	*
Does not perform well under time limits	X	X	X	X	*	X	X	X	X	X	*	X	X
Performs better in science/math/vocational classes	X	*	*	*					X	X	*	X	*
Interest/skill in hobbies requiring creating, building or repairing	X	X	X	X	*	*	*	*	*	X	*	X	X

Gifted Children with Diverse Learning Characteristics.

Prepared by Rosina M. Gallagher, Ellen D. Fiedler, and Linda K. Silverman. April 30, 2009. Page 1 of 5.

*Generally true. However, individual differences and socio-economic factors, as well as differences between various sub-categories of these groups may override these generalizations.

Diversity and Equity in Illinois: Responding to Differences within the Gifted Population
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Gallagher, R.M., Fiedler, E.D., & Silverman, L.K (2009). Gifted children with diverse learning characteristics. Page 1 of 5.

Characteristic	LD	ADD/ADHD	ED/BD	Autistic Spectrum/Asperger Syndrome	Physically Challenged	Visually Impaired/Visual Processing weaknesses	Hearing Impaired/Central Auditory Processing Disorder	Speech and Language Disorder	Sensory Processing Disorder	Visual-Spatial	Low-Incidence/Highly/Profoundly Gifted	Creatively Gifted Non-Conforming	Under Achieving
Sensory Processing Disorder													
Can imagine more than they can deliver	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Low frustration tolerance	X	X	X	X	X	*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Require more time to process information	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	*		X
Need hands-on learning experiences	X	X	*	X	*	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Reverse letters/numerals beyond expected developmental level	X	*				X	X	X	X	*			
Poor "kinetic melody," rate of thought exceeds rate of pencil movement	X	X	*	X	*	*		*	X	X	X		X
Need assistance with sequencing skills	X	X	*	X					X	X			X
Need models or finished products to emulate	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	*		X
Need to develop note taking skills	X	X	X	X		X	*		X	X	X	X	X
Inflexible thinking			X	X					X		*	X	X
Needs keyboarding skills	X	X	*	X	X	Voice activated	X		X	X	X		X

Gifted Children with Diverse Learning Characteristics.

Prepared by Rosina M. Gallagher, Ellen D. Fiedler, and Linda K. Silverman. April 30, 2009. Page 2 of 5.

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Characteristic	LD	ADD/ADHD	ED/BD	Autistic Spectrum/Asperger Syndrome	Physically Challenged	Visually Impaired/Visual Processing weaknesses	Hearing Impaired/Central Auditory Processing Disorder	Speech and Language Disorder	Sensory Processing Disorder	Visual-Spatial	Low-Incidence/Highly/Profoundly Gifted	Creatively Gifted Non-Conforming	Under Achieving
Need to develop memorization skills	X	X		X			X		X	X			
Notorious procrastinators	X	X	X						X	X	X	X	X
Have less energy available for cognitive tasks	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Need to learn to manage sensory input	*	X	X	X			*	X	X	X	X	X	X
Know more than they show	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Withdrawn, apathetic	*		*	X			*	*	X				*
May appear bored, aloof			*	X					*		X		X
May be class clown	X	X	X							*		X	X
Highly self-critical	X		X	*					X	X	X	X	X
Exhibits maladaptive behavior	*	X	X	X					X	*	*	*	X
Has low self-concept	X	X	X	X	*	*	X	X	X	*	*	*	X
Need clear instructions and check for understanding	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Responsive to mentoring relationships	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Need to understand their strengths and challenges	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Asperger Syndrome													
Marked deficiencies in social skills	X	X	X	X				*	*		*		X
Exhibits obsessive routines		*	*	X				*					
Preoccupation with particular objects/subjects			*	X							*		
Great difficulty reading nonverbal cues		*	*	X				*					
Often very talented in specific areas	X	X	X	X	*	*	*	X	X	X	X	X	X
Language well developed but difficulty with pragmatics/patterns of intonation in language	*		*	X			*	*	*				
Can be extremely literal	*		X	X				X					X

Gifted Children with Diverse Learning Characteristics.

Prepared by Rosina M. Gallagher, Ellen D. Fiedler, and Linda K. Silverman. April 30, 2009. Page 3 of 5.

*Generally true. However, individual differences and socio-economic factors, as well as differences between various sub-categories of these groups may override these generalizations.

Diversity and Equity in Illinois: Responding to Differences within the Gifted Population
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Gallagher, R.M., Fiedler, E.D., & Silverman, L.K (2009). Gifted children with diverse learning characteristics. Page 3 of 5.

Characteristic	LD	ADD/ADHD	ED/BD	Autistic Spectrum/Asperger Syndrome	Physically Challenged	Visually Impaired/Visual Processing weaknesses	Hearing Impaired/Central Auditory Processing Disorder	Speech and Language Disorder	Sensory Processing Disorder	Visual-Spatial	Low Incidence/Highly/Profoundly Gifted	Creatively Gifted/Non-Conforming	Under-Achieving
Autism													
Onset early in development	X	X	*	X	*	*	X	X	X	X	X	X	*
Difficult to remediate	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X
Severe social and communication deficits				X				*					
Prominent circumscribed interests				X							*	*	*
ADHD													
Often fails to give close attention to detail or makes careless errors in desk work	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	*	X	X
Often has difficulty sustaining attention on tasks	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	*	*	X
Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly	*	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	*	*	X
Often does not follow through on instructions (not due to oppositional behavior or lack of understanding)	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	*	*	X
Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Often loses things necessary to complete tasks	X	X	X	X					X	*	X	X	X
Often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli	X	X	X	X					X	X	*	*	X
Often forgetful in daily activities	X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X

Gifted Children with Diverse Learning Characteristics.

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Characteristic	LD	ADD/ ADHD	ED/ BD	Autistic Spectrum Asperger Syndrome	Physically Challenged	Visually Impaired Visual Processing weaknesses	Hearing Impaired/ Central Auditory Processing Disorder	Speech and Language Disorder	Sensory Processing Disorder	Visual- Spatial	Low- Incidence/ Highly/ Profoundly Gifted	Creatively Gifted/ Non- Conforming	Under- Achieving
Hyperactivity													
Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat	*	*	*	*				*	*		*		*
Often leaves seat in classroom	*	*	*	*				*	*		*		*
Often runs about or climbs excessively in inappropriate situations	*	*	*	*				*	*		*		*
Often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly	*	*	*	*				*	*		*		*
Is often "on the go" or acts as if "driven by a motor"	*	*	*	*				*	*		*		*
Often talks "excessively"	*	*	*	*				*	*		*		*
Impulsivity													
Often blurts out answers before questions have been completed		*	*	*				*	*		*		*
Often has difficulty awaiting turn		*	*	*				*	*		*		*
Often interrupts or intrudes		*	*	*				*	*		*		*

Gifted Children with Diverse Learning Characteristics.

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Common Observable Behaviors, Potential Areas of Strength and Potential Interventions for Gifted Children with Diverse Learning Characteristics

Common Observable Behaviors	Potential Areas of Strength	Potential Interventions
Poor listening skills	Vivid imagination	Present information in a visual and kinesthetic way
Difficulty finishing work	Whole-part learner	Check for mastery of material
Needs access to keyboard	Abstract thinker	Develop keyboarding skills
Does not perform well under time limits	Creative builder	Allow more time on task, avoid timed tests
Enjoys making things	Complex problem-solver	Use hands-on academic activities whenever possible
Low frustration tolerance	Long-term visual memory	Determine readiness level and challenge for growth
Resists new or unfamiliar tasks	Aware of environment	Provide models or finished products to emulate
Inflexible thinking	Displays witty sense of humor	Model alternative problem-solving techniques
Prone to sensory overload	Empathetic to others	Teach self-monitoring strategies
Highly self-critical	High energy and enthusiasm	Capitalize on their strengths
Lacks attention to detail, makes careless errors	Eager to try a variety of tasks	Involve student in leadership roles
Does not follow through on instruction	Wide range of interests	Create short challenging activities
Difficulty organizing tasks and activities	Leadership potential in areas of strength	Teach goal-setting, prioritizing, time management
Easily distracted by extraneous stimuli	Early and avid reader	Teach focusing skills
Highly sensitive to criticism	Well-developed academic vocabulary	Provide support for tackling difficult tasks
Difficulty with tasks perceived tedious	High concentration in areas of interest	Appropriate differentiation
Focused interests/skills/avocations	Confident, eager learner	Encourage creativity in the classroom
Imagines more than can deliver	Enjoys adult relationships	Develop imagination through appropriate activities
Requires more time to process information	Concerned with fairness and justice	Allow more think time
Needs hands-on learning experiences	Enjoys good health and coordination	Provide multi-sensory activities
Knows more than can show	Learns a second language regularly	Capitalize on interest/project/problem-based learning
Responsive to mentoring relationships	Goal-oriented and initiator	Facilitate mentoring
Specific talent	Internal locus of control	Provide opportunity to pursue talent
Early onset of areas of difficulty		Communication with parents and monitor development
Misses details or makes careless errors		Develop precision through high-interest assignments

Adapted from: *The Frances A. Karnes Center for Gifted Studies*, The University of Southern Mississippi, www.usm.edu/gifted

6

The Creative Gifted Child

The Creative Gifted Child

What is creativity? According to Charles F. Wetherall (1989), creativity is “the *mind’s* ability to create new images or ideas about things that never were and never have been.” Lewis Carroll, Marie Curie, Leonardo da Vinci, Albert Einstein, Georgia O’Keefe, J. K. Rowling, J. R. R. Tolkien, and many others exemplify the recognized creative gifted person. However, there are many children in school who have high creative potential yet go unnoticed, often being labeled as non-conformist or difficult to teach or discipline because public school can be unsupportive of the gifts of the creative child. Research has demonstrated a significant drop in creativity of all children in fourth grade and again in middle school. Gifted children who are creative often score up to 10 points lower on tests used for identification causing them to go unidentified for gifted programs and services. There are tests available for identification of creativity, but they are seldom used in the public schools for various reasons. Notable among these are the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking available from Scholastic Testing Service out of Bensenville, IL.

Who are these children? Bertie Kingore (2008) has separated the characteristics of the gifted and the creative into two diverse groups in her book on differentiation. According to the work of Joan Smutny, of the Center for Gifted at National-Louis University, a highly creative child can be characterized as follows:

Characteristics of Highly Creative Children

The highly creative child:

1. Reacts positively to new, strange, or mysterious elements in his/her environment
2. Is curious, investigative, and asks penetrating questions
3. Is imaginative, creates fantasies, and tells stories
4. Is full of ideas and fluent at speaking and communicating
5. Has a strong and persistent sense of humor
6. Is emotionally responsive, often empathetic
7. Likes to play with ideas
8. Shows a sense of wonder, or a heightened awareness of the world
9. Tends to daydream
10. Has a great deal of energy
11. Is spontaneous, impulsive, and uninhibited
12. Tends to resist authority
13. Is independent, individualistic, and self-sufficient
14. Is sensitive to beauty, nature, and animals
15. Feels strongly about many things and has a strong sense of justice
16. Experiments with whatever is at hand and improvises
17. Is an intuitive thinker
18. Sees relationships among seemingly unrelated ideas
19. Is usually socially accepted by peers
20. Shows strength of will, which may appear rigid or stubborn.

Personal communication with Joan Franklin Smutny, July, 2009

The Creative Gifted Child

It is apparent that some of these characteristics could lead to the appearance of non-conformity and underachievement in the public school setting. Nevertheless, if we are to nurture creative thinking in the schools so that these students may blossom and grow (and perhaps make a significant contribution to our country), there are creative training activities which can help.

- Divergent production training, which involves open-ended exercises with no single right answers that works to develop fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration as practiced by the academic competition, Odyssey of the Mind. These can be developed through quick morning exercises in the classroom.
- Creative Problem-Solving, where people work in groups to solve real-world problems, teaching specific creative problem-solving skills.
- Direct teaching of problem-solving and pattern recognition.
- Using guided fantasy and imagery.
- Using thematic fantasy.
- Using creative writing.
- Quality Circles, which involve prescriptive directions and exercises, published originally in Japan.

Other essential activities include cultivating risk-taking, a sense of wonder and, most importantly, creating a classroom climate of trust and support to motivate children to develop their own creativity.

Finally, Joe Khatena, creator of creative testing and creative development, said: “If we are not alert to the needs of the creatively gifted, we may lead them to give up using this precious energy in their lives.”

7

Promising and Enlightened Learners in Low-Income, Poor, and Homeless Environments

Promising and Enlightened Learners in Low-Income, Poor, and Homeless Environments

Children and youth possessing high potential may be found among those living in low socioeconomic, poor, and homeless environments. These children are the “diamonds in the rough” or “hidden gems” that, once uncovered, can be the source of inspiration for generations. Take Wyclef Jean, for example, the Haitian icon and millionaire rock star who, in only 20 years, has sold 50 million records, performed guitar concerts in the White House, conducted the symphony orchestra at Carnegie Hall, and established Yele Haiti (“Scream, Haiti”), a nonprofit organization designed to attack the seemingly insurmountable problems of his homeland.

Raised in a one-room house with parents, grandparents, and brother in the abject poverty of Cite Soleil, an infamous slum by the bay of Port-au-Prince, Wyclef immigrated to Brooklyn, NY, as a young child with his Christian minister father and family. Although his parents did not approve of his rapping, Wyclef had the courage and support during his childhood to develop his talent and maintain the identity that celebrates “dreams over despair” and “beauty over violence.” Interviewed recently over the national media (*60 Minutes*, July 31, 2009, NBC by Scott Pelley), Wyclef aspires to make a “serious dent” into Haiti’s deplorable conditions. Above all, he wants to help children and youth to believe in themselves, develop resilience, and trust that other people do care.

And what about enlightened learners?

Richard Leroy Walters, a proclaimed atheist who died at 76 in 2007, left an estate worth four million dollars to a number of charities and National Public Radio (NPR), according to Robert Siegle, host of

All Things Considered (July 28, 2009). Walters was a retired engineer from Allied Signal Corp, an honors graduate of Purdue University with a Master’s degree, and a U.S. Marine who never married and had no children. Sleeping on the grounds of a catholic mission in Phoenix, AZ, he befriended volunteer worker Rita Belle who would chat with him over coffee about his beliefs and investments. Walters confided that he had relinquished all material possessions for a contemplative life. He ate in a nearby hospital, used computers in the library, and tuned to NPR on a small radio, his sole possession. Belle eventually cared for him in illness and became executor for his estate. One wonders, “How is it that those living in the fringes of society often make significant contributions to it?”

These anecdotes dramatically highlight what researchers affirm: for society to reap the benefits of including brilliant minds in mainstream culture and society, families, educators, organizations, and policy-makers must continue to renew an extraordinary commitment to understand and cultivate its bright gems by networking with groups at local, state, and national levels. Research in this area helped to identify specific behaviors characteristic of this population. While lists such as the ones presented in this guide run the danger of stereotyping individuals, they are provided only as a guide for further inquiry and discussion that may illumine practical solutions.

Homeschooling Gifted Students

Nearly a million students are homeschooled in America each year. It has been said that up to 90

Promising and Enlightened Learners in Low-Income, Poor, and Homeless Environments

percent of highly and profoundly gifted children are in this group. Many home-schooled youngsters are twice-exceptional. Whatever the reasons for deciding to homeschool, parents have determined that the public school setting is not appropriate for their child's learning needs. In some cases, schools have cut their budgets for gifted education and have reduced or eliminated services. In others, there is a concern for whether public schools are meeting the social and emotional needs of the gifted student. Sometimes there are few opportunities for critical and creative thinking and real-world learning in public school settings when the focus of the public school curriculum is to pass the high-stakes, minimum-competency state test.

Illinois considers homeschooling a form of private education and is one of the least restrictive states for homeschooling. The requirement for providing this type of education resides with the parents who must meet the minimum requirements stated in Illinois Compulsory Attendance Law (Section 26-1 of the Illinois School Code). Homeschooled children must have instruction in the core subjects: Language Arts, mathematics, biological and physical science, social science, fine arts, and P.E. and health. State standards provide the guidelines for how students should demonstrate what they know and can do. Parents must write a letter to their local school informing them that their child will be educated at home and declaring the home as a private school.

The Regional Superintendent of Schools in the student's county of residence holds the responsibility for compliance of the compulsory attendance laws. Support for homeschooled

children is provided through the ISBE website (www.isbe.net/homeschool).

The uneven development of many gifted children makes them great candidates for homeschooling. For example, a 10-year-old child may be reading at a high-school level, able to comprehend math at an abstract college level, and could be writing at a fourth grade level in the same year. Public education, with its focus on grade level mastery, may have a great deal of difficulty meeting the academic needs of that child. Often these children feel out of touch with their age peers and, too often, feel that there is something wrong with them personally. Social-emotional support can be provided in the home to include understanding and valuing differences and diversity.

The most frequent question dealt with by parents is, "How will socialization be accomplished in the isolated home setting?" Homeschooled children have many options for socialization. There are a variety of activities, both recreational and educational, that are provided by groups of parents who have banded together to provide multi-age activities for real-world learning, socializing, and challenging opportunities. Park district programs, scouting, area sports activities, and other activities organized by various groups within the community can easily fill the homeschooled child's needs for socialization.

Homeschooling is an excellent alternative for a number of gifted children, and there are many resources available to homeschooling families to provide this service.

Promising and Enlightened Learners in Low-Income, Poor, and Homeless Environments

Characteristics and Behaviors of Gifted Homeschooled Children

Common Characteristics	Positive Behaviors	Challenging Behaviors
Tend to have high cognitive abilities	Masters material quickly	Needs material at a higher level
Can be very intense	Can be very sensitive to details, information, and behavior of others	Can react intensely to situations
Learns concepts rapidly	Progresses rapidly through material	Needs deeper coverage of material
Prefers depth and complexity in learning	Thrives on high-level learning	Can become frustrated with age-level curriculum
May be asynchronous in development	Ready to grow at various levels of development	Has difficulty finding true peers at various levels of development
May be a prodigy in one or more areas	Can shine in an area of ability such as math, language, or arts	Needs mentor/support in areas of strength
May need social-emotional support	Has potential for high emotional development	Needs socialization and often counseling
May be uncomfortable in a public school setting	Can blossom in a homeschool setting	Can develop inappropriate behaviors
May be twice (multi-)exceptional	Gifts can go unrecognized	Needs support in areas of struggle

8

Rural Gifted and Talented Students

Rural Gifted and Talented Students

Educational opportunities for gifted and talented students living in rural areas and small towns have been a concern for educators in Illinois, especially because the state is reported to rank in the lower third of those serving rural districts well across the country. Some of the reasons for this deficit have been identified by many researchers and are compiled in the table which follows. It is important to note that growing up gifted in rural America has its benefits and its liabilities. When advocating for greater educational opportunities for this population, we need to appreciate the rural culture that has produced many leaders in gifted education.

Colangelo, Assouline and New (2001) remind us, for example, that Lewis Terman, from rural Indiana, was first to address the objective standardized measure of giftedness, and his writings helped to break the stereotype of the gifted as absent minded, neurotic, awkward, and socially

inept. Leta Stetter Hollingworth, born in a small town in Nebraska, brought to public awareness the social-emotional issues that can accompany outstanding intellectual capacity. Julian C. Stanley and E. Paul Torrance, both from rural communities, uniquely contributed to our understanding of specific talent and creative aptitude.

To summarize the subsequent list of advantages, challenges, and potential solutions, rural schools need to identify ways of grouping gifted students with intellectual peers, and of advocating for funding to improve technology for increased distance learning and professional development, particularly in differentiated instruction. Movement in this direction will help rural and small schools attract and retain highly-qualified teachers who are motivated to meet the intellectual, academic, and social-emotional needs of this population.

Gifted and Talented Students in Rural Public Schools

Advantages	Challenges	Potential Solutions
<p>Homogeneous communities provide a secure environment</p> <p>Greater individual attention may be offered</p> <p>Opportunity to become involved in a wide range of activities: school newspaper, sports, student council.</p> <p>Natural setting serves as a science laboratory</p> <p>Quiet places in which to reflect and gain inspiration</p> <p>Opportunity to develop independence and autonomy</p> <p>Parents and community are involved and support activities</p> <p>Strong family ties: children are actually raised by parents</p> <p>Talents or passions may emerge from an early age</p> <p>Small schools may allow special programming for children with special needs or exceptionalities</p> <p>Spirituality may enhance learning and giftedness</p> <p>Charter schools may be established for special populations, i.e., the Native American Preparatory Academy in Rowe, NM, where the main qualification is, "Will the student benefit in this environment?" (See Colangelo et al, 2001)</p>	<p>Lack of community resources: museums, cultural centers and professional mentors</p> <p>Charge of "elitism," by some community members</p> <p>Unlikely to find intellectual peers</p> <p>Colleges and universities may be inaccessible</p> <p>Flexible scheduling to accommodate special programs may be problematic</p> <p>Lack of Advanced Placement or college-credit-earning programs</p> <p>May not attract teachers with advanced training and experience</p> <p>Lack of opportunities for professional development in gifted education</p> <p>Teachers may feel isolated in meeting the needs of this population</p> <p>Talent development may be costly in time and financial resources</p> <p>Highly gifted girls may feel pressured to early marriage or a traditional career choice</p> <p>Conservative setting may not allow diverse viewpoints</p> <p>Student fear that competencies may not be competitive with those of other gifted learners in the larger community</p> <p>Parent fear that once students expand their horizons they may abandon family values, leave the community or not be accepted back</p>	<p>Group students through online programs and distance learning courses</p> <p>Encourage participation in advanced leadership training and career development through existing organizations such as 4-H Clubs, Rainbow Girls, church youth fellowships.</p> <p><i>Gifted Kids Network</i> connects students to engage in high level content, with like minded peers, guided by a teacher/facilitator.</p> <p>Integrate real-world activities into the curriculum. For example, students write/edit/publish and market a book about their community (See Idalia H.S. in Yuma County, CO, in Colangelo et al, 2001).</p> <p>Encourage all students to participate in specific events to help build bridges between gifted and promising interested learners.</p> <p>Provide appropriate mentors for kids with special interest.</p> <p>Develop job-shadowing experiences</p> <p>Plan summer or year-long programs in sites to accommodate learning profiles</p> <p>Establish online mentor for young gifted teachers</p> <p>Consider establishing a "charter" school</p> <p>Establish a state Governor School (See models in Colangelo, et al., 2001)</p>

Gifted and Talented Students in Rural Public Schools

Advantages	Challenges	Potential Solutions
<p>Uses many definitions of gifted and talented so “it does not have cultural limitations.” They look at the whole student and ask, “Would he or she benefit from this environment.” Offers college preparatory courses</p> <p>to motivated Native American middle school students started as a summer enrichment program and has now expanded into a boarding school for 75 founded by Richard P. Ettinger of Prentice Hall publishing company</p>	<p>Well meaning boarding schools of the past focused on uprooting them from their familial bonds and values, resulting many times in alcoholism and other destructive behaviors.</p> <p>“Kill the Indian in him and save the man,” Captain Richard Pratt, founder of such a school.</p> <p>Some teachers feel intimidated by gifted kids, or they resent not being able to teach them...they don't understand that the higher the ability, the greater their need in many ways.</p>	<p>Idalia H.S. in East Yuma county, Colorado,</p> <p>Encourage students to write a book about community history. Teacher provided copy of the district writing standards. Students wrote grants to purchase tape recorders, laptops, camera. Each selected and research a topic in accordance with their passion. Sources of information were through interviews of community members, past local histories and internet sources. A professional small publisher suggested a book with an ISBN number rather than magazine. Community excitement ensued.</p> <p>ie. The study in marine biology in the Virgin Islands may bring about dramatic life-changing outcomes</p> <p>may provide accelerated opportunities for neighboring high schools during the year and summer academies such as global economics and technology, acceleration and exploration in areas ranging from the arts to government and international studies</p> <p>Students use computers, robotics and current technology in laboratory activities, conduct in-depth research, work with others to develop special projects and performances alongside mentors in business, industry and government.</p>

9

Gifted Girls; Gifted Boys

The Challenge of Gender

Gifted Girls; Gifted Boys:

The Challenge of Gender

Ever since the American Association for University Women (AAUW) published the report “How Schools Shortchange Girls” (1992), America has been concerned and challenged to ensure both girls and boys are educated appropriately in the public school setting. AAUW is an organization that advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Schools learned how gender affects talent development and have moved toward closing that achievement gap. Recent studies indicate that girls have closed the gender gap in several ways:

1. Eighth grade girls have caught up with boys in math.
2. Girls are taking courses in high-level biology, chemistry and physics at the same level of boys.
3. Girls aspire to leadership positions and careers in law, medicine, and other traditionally male-dominated careers.
4. Women in athletics have achieved at levels comparable to or exceeding men in many cases.

Nevertheless, women still struggle with:

- Society continues to attempt to define “the perfect woman” and still tries to hold on to the ideal of physical beauty. Along these lines, 90 percent of eating disorders are found in women.
- Self-esteem issues continue to challenge girls based on both familial and societal demands.

- Most gains for equality between males and females can be found in the elementary and secondary level of education. At the college level, these gains are often lost.
- Adult women tend to compete with males for jobs and sometimes deny personal dreams and goals in order to comply with the needs of society.

However, gifted boys also suffer in this generation and are equally at-risk:

- They are often forced into rigid stereotypes of masculinity.
- Underachievement continues to plague gifted boys.
- Boys are often held back in school so that they can compete athletically and can subsequently be denied gifted education, often becoming bored and difficult children. This practice, called “redshirting,” is common in communities where sports are highly valued.
- Boys can become apathetic in school when faced with competition and challenge from both female students and teachers, and they can shut down academically.
- Boys learn that it is not “cool to be smart” in many school settings and refuse to do homework or be noticed as academically or called “nerds.” (The term for this pattern of behavior is “Bartleby Syndrome.”)

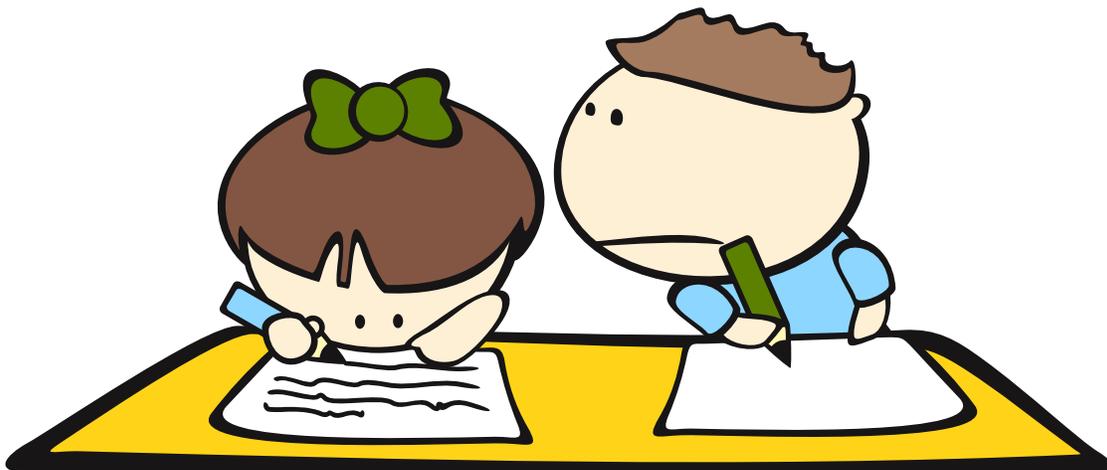
Gifted Girls; Gifted Boys:

The Challenge of Gender

Schools need to be aware of these at-risk behaviors in both gifted girls and gifted boys. Certain interventions can help prevent gifted children from risking their educational achievement in order to meet gender roles that society creates for them. The key is to be able to tell what a stereotype is:

- “It’s a stereotype if it ascribes characteristics to an individual based solely on group membership...”
- “It’s probably a stereotype if it describes how girls and boys are ‘supposed’ to be...”
- “It’s probably a stereotype if a book, toy, or tool is described or pictured as ‘for boys’ or ‘for girls.’”

From the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. D.O.E.



Gifted Boys; Gifted Girls: Challenges and Solutions

Gifted Girls

Challenges	Potential Solutions
May feel less physically able than boys	Encourage athletic activities with other girls in healthy competition
Tend to score lower in math, science, and computer science	Study female success in those fields and teach spatial skills
Often take less challenging math and science courses	Provide female role models in math and science
May have lowered career goals due to societal pressure or misconceptions about ability	Provide counseling for girls with expectations about or aspirations for challenging career paths
Adolescent focus on popularity	Be aware of social stereotypes and try to combat them before misconceptions become second-nature
May dislike being gifted	Provide opportunities to be around and talk to other gifted girls
May have intense interests	Provide encouragement for a variety of interests and teach that intensity is often a part of being gifted
Perfectionism	Teach the difference between perfectionism and excellence
High percentage of eating disorders and substance abuse	De-emphasize the importance of appearance and provide girls a chance to avoid societal pressures in a comfortable and welcoming environment
Adolescent downward shift in goals	Provide family and school support and encouragement
Must deal with inequity in classroom assessment items	Provide tests that feature problems interesting to girls
Teacher attitude biased toward boys	Provide teacher training in female stereotyping and provide equal treatment to both boys and girls
Successes are attributed to luck and effort while failures are attributed to ability	Assign and encourage challenging coursework while teaching healthy competition
Societal pressure to fulfill stereotyped gender roles	Provide teacher training in how to understand and define real femininity as well as values clarification training; consider offering follow-up discussion groups between teachers to practice speaking about these topics

Gifted Boys

Challenges	Potential Solutions
Less advanced in language development	Provide and encourage reading in areas of interest
More likely to underachieve due to “Bartleby Syndrome”	Provide school and family counseling for achievement and utilize male teachers who model that intelligent behavior is “cool”
More likely to camouflage talents	Provide complex and difficult projects to encourage struggle; consider acknowledging talents in a comfortable setting, whether that’s with a group or one-on-one with a teacher
May score lower on English tests	Provide advanced reading on male interests
Concerned with male sex-role identification; may accept stereotyped image of masculinity	Teach an understanding of what it means to be masculine and teach how stereotyping hurts everyone
May choose careers based on high salaries and status; have high need for occupational information; have difficulty in setting college/ career goals	Encourage fulfillment of individual ideals and provide career counseling early (before high school)
Often recognize disadvantages to being gifted; become less well-adjusted in school setting	Train teachers to support gifted students through basic gifted training
Concern about being “male” enough	Find visionary male leader as mentor (from places such as church or religious group or scouts group)
Must deal with common parental need to have boys be athletically competent; delayed entrance to kindergarten (“redshirting”)	Counsel parents that gifted boys are more successful in school and are more likely to be identified for gifted programs with earlier entrance to kindergarten
May have intense interests in non-traditional areas	Provide encouragement for interests and teach intensity as part of being gifted
May demonstrate multi-potentiality or the ability to be successful in many areas	Provide trained social-emotional counseling and career guidance in the needs of the gifted
May have increased depression or suicide tendencies	Provide counseling in sensitivity and intensity and be aware of the dangers of social isolation
May be reluctant to seek help when needed	Provide a safe environment and a strong support system
May have unrealistic image of the female model	Offer relationship education and counseling to gifted boys

10

Gifted Preschoolers

Gifted Preschoolers

Determining intellectual precocity among preschool-age children and implementation of appropriate developmental interventions have been controversial topics for at least three decades, but there are areas of agreement. For instance, studies have shown that potentially gifted children often proceed through developmental milestones up to 30 percent faster than other infants (Gross, 1999). The importance of an enriched environment to stimulate native learning potential is acknowledged (Hall, 1993), and there is evidence to support the asynchronous or uneven development from infancy for gifted children (Barbour and Shaklee, 1998).

Researchers divide common traits of gifted preschoolers into three categories: language and learning, psychomotor development and motivation, and personal-social characteristics (Koopmans-Dayton & Feldhusen, 1987). The gifted preschooler generally displays abilities earlier and with greater intensity than his or her normally-developing age peers. Also, he or she may exhibit asynchronous development patterns. A gifted preschooler may acquire remarkable vocabulary and communication skills as well as demonstrate an interest in factual information over make-believe activities, but may grow at a normal pace in physical or social development. A gifted three-year-old may also be extremely independent in wanting to master the environment, but still display intense shyness and difficulty in adjusting to new situations (Tucker & Hafenstein, 1997).

In light of accelerated developmental patterns, it is essential that educators provide appropriate early childhood experiences. It is also critical to consider the possible consequences of a

deficiency in early stimulation during later years: underachievement due to boredom or loss of interest and motivation, rebellious behavior, and gradual social or emotional issues.

The Frances Karnes Center for Gifted Studies has published the following table which summarizes the characteristics of gifted preschoolers and suggested identification procedures and instructional strategies for providing them with a positive and effective learning environment.

Gifted Preschoolers

Characteristics	Screening and Identification Procedures	Instructional Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alertness in infancy • Faster pace in reaching motor development milestones • Early language development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced vocabulary • Complex speech patterns • Interest in the alphabet and symbols • Intense curiosity • Sustained attention • Abstract thinker • Creative/Imaginative • Excellent memory • May be an early reader • Early empathy development • Emotional intensity/sensitivity • Concern with truth and fair play • Mature sense of humor • Perfectionism • Leader in cooperative play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments must be developmentally appropriate • Define the purpose for assessment • Use multiple measures over time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation • Portfolios • Informal testing • Formal testing • Examine student portfolios for talent areas • Interview parents, teachers, and students • Keep in mind asynchronous development patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create balance between academic and play activities • Involve children in decisions about what to learn • Remember that social development is important—children need intellectual peers in addition to age peers • Invite children to explore the world through drama, art, and movement • Teach processes such as brainstorming and thinking aloud • Build on prior knowledge and scaffold new experiences based on the child’s comments and current understandings • Provide centers or learning spaces in the classroom and home • Involve preschoolers in planning travel experiences and family outings



Gifted GLBT Youth

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender

Gifted GLBT Youth:

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender

Families at home, educators in schools, and professionals in communities across the country are increasingly concerned about how best to meet the needs of gifted and talented young people who are dealing with diverse issues of sexual or gender identity. For this reason, government and professional organizations are taking a stand to support practices that are non-discriminatory and demonstrate understanding and equitable treatment of GLBT individuals, particularly in schools.

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has published a position paper which describes the precarious state of this group.

...GLBT students...present across races, genders, ethnic groups, income levels, geographical locations, religions, and abilities/disabilities...may experience unusually high rates of verbal and physical harassment, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, homelessness, and differential access to school services that can contribute to substantial problems such as dropping out of school, contemplation and completion of suicide, and many other by-products of social alienation.

Consequently, NAGC recommends that:

Programming efforts...address a range of academic, affective, and career needs related to their development as gifted and GLBT...Affective programming needs to provide for student safety, evoke acceptance and appreciation, develop social skills,

and nurture self-advocacy abilities. Career education should encourage gifted GLBT youth to consider a range of careers as wide as the span of their talents and interests rather than urge them into stereotypically gay or stereotypically straight positions in which they must submerge their true identities.

A literature review in this area yielded the characteristics and potential interventions outlined in the following table.

Gifted GLBT Youth: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender

Characteristics/Behaviors	Intervention Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possess high intellectual aptitudes/abilities • Attain high academic achievement • Earn youth awards for leadership, creativity or athletics at school or in the community (T. P. Friedrichs) • Multipotentiality due to wide interests • Exhibit creativity in the visual and performing arts • Demonstrate empathy for the woes of others • Perfectionism: strong drive to excel • Fragile identity may yield to desire to fulfill expectations of others • Talent/s may emerge early • Gender preference may emerge early • May hide talent/s to be accepted • May express confusion about gender identity • Victims of name calling, bullying, even violence • In case of minorities, obedient to family traditions and forgo personal over family pursuits (dpresgraves@glsen.org) • Girls may be pushed away from stereotyped careers • Boys pushed to limit emotional, creative, spiritual selves; hence their self-actualization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional development to increase awareness of the realities, challenges and issues affecting this group • Promote tolerance and respect for individual differences, including GLBT issues • Include GLBT historical events and celebrated individuals in the curricula • Integrate GLBT issues into the curriculum; i.e., include a brief history of the movement as part of a social science studies unit on discrimination • Set up bibliotherapy groups to help students discover others like themselves and gain insight into common concerns. (J. Halsted) • Train professional support personnel, (counselors, social workers, psychologists) to work with this special group • Establish a Gay-Straight Alliance student club • Compile and make available a list of resources: books, websites, support groups • Consider a Safe Space Program to provide strategies for support and intervention when anti GLBT bias occurs (www.glsen.org) • Enforce policy: zero tolerance for bullying/name calling • Provide individual and group counseling for values clarification and conflict resolution • Encourage constructive parent relationships • Facilitate mentoring relationships • Offer career counseling or make referrals • Build supportive classroom atmosphere • For girls, provide strong role models: encourage independence and exploration of traditional and non-traditional female roles • Encourage research into factors that are helping adults lead fulfilling lives • Watch for danger signs: changes in appearance, school attendance or performance, weight/energy shifts, withdrawal from family/friends, self-destructive behavior, suicide ideation or threats; provide appropriate access to counseling, as needed

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Gifted/At-Risk Youth

Gifted/At-Risk Youth

The term “gifted/at-risk youth” is used as an umbrella term to describe students who possess exceptional talent, as evident on standardized intelligence or achievement measures; who demonstrate unique creative, artistic, athletic or leadership ability; and who exhibit at-risk tendencies. These behaviors generally refer to dropping out of high school or not completing college or vocational programs that would prepare them for adult life, but may also include anti-social,

delinquent, or maladaptive conduct. It is necessary that educators, school support personnel, and administrators understand the characteristics and needs of this population to develop interventions that will enable them to become contributors to their communities and society at large.

The Frances A. Karnes Center for Gifted Studies has compiled the following table which outlines characteristics, identification procedures and potential interventions to assist in this effort.

Gifted/At-Risk Youth

Characteristics	Screening and Identification Procedures	Instructional Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possesses strong intellectual abilities • Has a keen level of intellectual curiosity • Exhibits poor academic achievement • Has poor school attendance • Finds school curriculum unchallenging • Is disengaged from school activities • Has a strong desire to be successful • Usually lives in a single-parent family • Is highly observant and articulate • Feels alienated from social peers • Displays low self-esteem • May be highly creative • Feels that educators are uncaring • Usually lives in an unstable home environment • Usually comes from low socioeconomic status • Has heightened sensitivity to attitudes and criticisms of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate the <i>Talent Identification and Development Education Model</i> • Look for a discrepancy between achievement test scores and academic performance • Create an academic portfolio that displays student's strengths, weaknesses, and interests • Interview parents, peers, and community members • Pay attention to change in student's social group • Take notice of artistic expression (written, visual, or musical) • Ask student to share views about school, peers, home life, and/or future aspirations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide social/emotional counseling sessions • Provide career counseling • Establish a mentoring program • Encourage student participation in extracurricular activities • Institute a creative problem-solving curriculum • Create authentic learning environments • Allow flexible programming options • Promote parental involvement • Permit students to re-enter school • Provide opportunity for artistic self-expression • Instill a sense of pride and self-worth

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Social/Emotional Issues for Diverse Gifted Learners

Social/Emotional Issues for Diverse Gifted Learners

When it comes to school and to life in general, some gifted students seem to sail through on untroubled waters, making the most of the opportunities available to them. Others will battle inner storms and strong seas that seem to batter them from all sides. The many individual differences in personality, motivation, and performance reveal that diversity is still a significant characteristic of all groups of gifted youngsters. As we have previously acknowledged, some believe that the only generalization that can safely be made about gifted and talented individuals is that there are more ways in which they differ than ways in which they resemble each other. These differences are multiplied whenever other variations are added to the mix: racial, cultural and/or linguistic differences, diverse learning characteristics including being twice-exceptional, being from diverse home/life experiences, and more. Social/emotional issues for gifted students from diverse populations must be taken into consideration along with nurturing these children's full development academically.

College professors are fond of saying, "There is nothing so practical as a good theory." If that's true, then Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences seems to fit the bill. This theory has been used as the framework for many practical applications, especially in education. In this area, several of the "intelligences" he described are directly related to social/emotional issues for gifted students, namely: Intrapersonal Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, and Existential Intelligence.

Another theoretical perspective that helps to shed light on social/emotional aspects of giftedness

is Dabrowski's Theory. One component of this theory has to do with "overexcitabilities," or areas of intensity that individuals may possess. Even at an early age, gifted youngsters seem marked by an intensity that sets them apart from others. This intensity can be compounded by racial or cultural differences or diverse learning characteristics, as well as the many other ways that some gifted students are atypical as compared with others. The concept of intensity seems to be the best way to think about what is meant by the five "overexcitabilities" (as described by Dabrowski's Theory: Psychomotor, Sensual, Intellectual, Imaginational, and Emotional).

Much of the extensive literature surrounding social/emotional issues for gifted students reflects concern about conflicts resulting from their distinction from the general population. This tends to be even more of an issue for atypical gifted students. A major source of difficulty for gifted individuals from diverse populations lies within the social environment. Traditionally, schools have not paid very much attention to a child who is not in tune with their usual expectations—that is, unless that child qualifies for special services such as those covered under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Even then, the focus is more likely to be on the child's disability, rather than on his or her abilities as a gifted student. Therefore, basic awareness and understanding of all the ways in which diversity plays out within the gifted population is very important for all who work with gifted students or those who advocate for appropriate opportunities for them.

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One particularly promising method of gathering information about how gifted students are functioning socially and emotionally relies on assessing their perceptions of what is going on in their lives. Valid implications can be drawn from asking gifted youngsters to describe their perceptions of their experiences. This can be done either directly, by saying, “Let’s talk,” or through interviews conducted by someone adept at asking open-ended questions and **listening** carefully to the responses. Indirect questioning can also be done using paper-and-pencil questionnaires, drawings, journaling, story-telling, etc.

One way to think about responding to the social/emotional needs of gifted students from diverse populations is by categorizing interventions under three major headings: who, what, and where. Working to prevent problems and help gifted children realize their potential is akin to weaving a tapestry in which all three of these elements intertwine and create patterns that affect each gifted child in positive ways.

Who

First of all, it’s important to figure out what persons play a crucial role in the social-emotional life of the gifted child and what they can do. Parents, regular classroom teachers, teachers of the gifted, program coordinators, counselors, psychologists, social workers, building administrators, central office administrators, and community leaders are all key players who can intervene on behalf of the gifted. Each of these individuals has a niche to fill and expertise to bring to bear in terms of helping see

that gifted students’ social/emotional needs are met. The more that individuals work together, the more likely it is that they will be able to be effective in helping any given child.

On the most basic level, respect and appreciation for individual differences, including giftedness, is a prerequisite for effective intervention. If there are no people in a gifted child’s life who can accept and understand him or her, the battle is lost before it has begun. Knowledge of gifted children and of the affective and cognitive needs that accompany giftedness are key in preventing problems and promoting optimal development. Parent education and effective professional development programs for school personnel lay the groundwork for appropriate action.

Gifted students from diverse populations need ways to gain perspective on the people in their lives and to begin to understand how to relate to all kinds of people, some of whom may treat them in ways that they cannot fathom or expect. They need opportunities to sort out their concerns with others who have had similar experiences and they also need chances to learn how to function most effectively in a world that oftentimes seems quite alien to them.

Those who help guide gifted students to resolve social/emotional issues throughout their journey need empathy and listening skills, along with a willingness to be authentic and to set aside any desire to control the children by exercising positional power and wielding authority. One popular way of explaining this is to say that gifted youngsters need someone who is a “guide on the side, not a sage on the stage.” This is equally true for teachers and parents, for counselors and community

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leaders, and for anyone who wants to be effective in working with gifted students, including those who are atypical. A climate of mutual respect, along with appropriate guidelines for what is negotiable and what is not negotiable, allows those who work with gifted students to be most effective.

What

Looking at interventions for addressing psychosocial needs of gifted students involves considering specific suggestions of *what* can be done—specifically, programs or approaches or strategies for intervention and prevention of problems, as well as ideas that can aid the students in maximizing their potential. Interventions can be divided into individual, small group, and large group approaches, any of which might be implemented by people with a wide assortment of backgrounds, training, and skills. Individual areas of expertise will influence what, specifically, teachers, mentors, parents, or advisors will do, as well as when and where they will do it.

Individual interventions can be as informal as a teacher meeting one-on-one with a student to explore ways of coping with a conflict that has come up in the classroom. Or a parent and child might discuss a bedtime story they have read together in which the main character is dealing with dilemmas associated with being gifted. On the other hand, a list of more formalized individual approaches might include the implementation of weekly sessions with a counselor who is knowledgeable about how gifted children are affected by such social/emotional

issues as perfectionism, procrastination, and/or school phobia.

One highly-individualized intervention for meeting the social/emotional needs of gifted children is journal writing. This approach can be especially effective when a caring adult takes time to respond non-judgmentally to the child's reflective journal entries.

When thinking about the “what” of intervention, one simple strategy to keep in mind is: provide choices. Because atypical gifted students tend to be internally motivated, and typically resist external control, the element of choice is vital in working with them and can be highly effective in encouraging them to use their gifts and talents productively. Without having the opportunity to select among various alternatives for responses, as well as the chance to design their own ways of responding, they are all too likely to choose not to respond at all. This is as true of classroom assignments and projects as it is for activities that are more directly related to meeting social/emotional needs. Options must be made available as often as possible.

Where

Another way of thinking about approaches designed to prevent problems and/or maximize gifted students' potential is to consider *where* the interventions might take place. Home, school, and community all have an impact on the social/emotional development of the gifted child, and this is particularly relevant in the case of gifted students from diverse populations. The need to create a

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psychologically-safe environment has long been recognized as a crucial component for the optimal development of all children, and this is particularly true for gifted children because of their vulnerability.

Parent education can be a valuable tool for psychosocial intervention and preventing problems for gifted children. Parents who have learned more about how to deal with the challenges of raising a gifted child can create a more supportive environment for that child to develop fully on all levels—academically, psychologically, and socially. Holding parent meetings such as those following the SENG model (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted), reviewing reading material, and consulting with specialists who understand gifted children from diverse populations can be very useful to parents who are interested in learning about how they can help their children at home.

By systematically incorporating both planning and flexibility, the learning environment in schools can be significantly more responsive to the social/emotional needs of gifted students from diverse groups.

Resilience

The need to develop resilience is especially crucial for gifted children from diverse populations. By definition, they not only differ from the norm but also from more typical gifted students, and because of this, paying attention to research about resilient children can be particularly meaningful.

Studies of resilient children and youth who were observed in unstable, hostile, or negative environments affected by external forces showed

that these types of situations generally lead to serious problems. However, some children at risk showed remarkable absence of mental illness. They seemed to possess “inner strength” (beyond “coping ability”). They were able to maintain focus and hope—something that would be highly desirable for gifted students from diverse populations.

Resilient children were found to possess a cluster of “protective factors” which included characteristics and skills, along with environmental variables. Development of resilience seemed to be based on multiple “transactions” between the child’s individual characteristics and protective factors in the environment.

By considering the elements of protection suggested by the research, we can gain insights that have clear implications for promoting resilience in atypical gifted students. For instance, one factor mentioned was the presence of a mentor or “polestar”—a vivid image of a fixed point of light upon which the child can focus when all else in their world seems to be swirling around them. A trusting relationship with an adult is needed in order to promote resilience, and this is most helpful if the relationship is long lasting. The relationship can be with a teacher, a parent, or other family member, a counselor or other school personnel, a community member—the list could go on and on. The most important lesson we learn from this research is that any adult can be a child’s polestar, lending resilience to at-risk gifted students.

“Protective factors” include all kinds of informal sources of support. Creativity and opportunities for creative expression are also significant. This includes all sorts of activities in and

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out of school for fostering and enhancing creativity. Collaborative programs in the home, school, and community are also very helpful.

Another factor mentioned in the research on resilience is an “easy” temperament, and herein lies a problem for many gifted youngsters, especially those from diverse populations. This trait is not necessarily a characteristic of many gifted children, as their emotional intensity would seldom result in their being described as having an “easy” temperament. In particular, atypical gifted students who have run afoul of their school’s expectations may have had their ability to cope stretched to the breaking point.

Relationships

To say that relationships are challenging for gifted students from diverse populations is a gross understatement. General issues include:

- Labeling and expectations of others
- Conformity versus autonomy
- Issues related to self-image and identity
- Empathy with others versus self-focus
- Internal motivation and locus of control versus external motivation and locus of control

Furthermore, gifted students’ social judgment often lags behind their intellect, and this can wreak havoc on many of their relationships.

Three major categories of interpersonal relationships have an impact on gifted children’s lives: 1) relationships with peers, 2) relationships

with siblings, and 3) relationships with adults (especially teachers and parents). All relationships become even more complex when the issues of diversity come into play.

The ability of gifted children to relate to peers is also affected by the fact that these youngsters actually need different peer groups for different purposes. The question becomes not only, “Who are their peers?”, but also, “In which contexts are which individuals their peers?” Gifted children often gravitate toward older playmates and even adults. How many friends or peers does a gifted child need, and where are atypical gifted children likely to find true peers? Issues of peer pressures include conformity, expectations at different ages, with different groups, and in different situations. We must also consider challenges for gifted individuals who regularly need to “shift gears” from one type of relationship to another. Furthermore, they face the question of when can they be true to themselves versus when they must act according to their desire to be accepted by others.

In terms of relationships with siblings, family roles, and birth order, issues are generally well established, even if never overtly recognized. Parents’ expectations and family traditions affect relationships with siblings. Furthermore, sibling relationships are affected if one child in the family is gifted but atypical in some way (e.g., twice exceptional) and others are more typical, whether they are gifted or not. Sibling rivalry comes into play, and the intensity of the gifted student multiplies its effects, especially if performance is a major criterion for validation within the home or at school.

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Relationships with adults are often complicated due to conflicting expectations of the child based on intellectual abilities, rather than the child's age. Atypical gifted children, especially, need opportunities to develop skills in communication and negotiation. However, these needs are rarely recognized and seldom developed. Control issues often arise with teachers who are threatened by gifted students who don't conform to their expectations either to fit in or to reach their potential. Parents' expectations and hopes for their children have an impact on relationships for atypical gifted children as well. Some parents are heavily involved and may even be overly invested in their children's education (sometimes called "helicopter parents" because of their penchant for endlessly hovering over their children). Others are completely uninvolved, leaving their children without advocates or any sense of support. Somewhere, a happy medium needs to be found, allowing for a range of interpersonal relationships so that the children can have breathing room without being cast adrift in untenable situations where their gifts and talents go unrecognized and undeveloped.

Underachievement

Many gifted students from diverse populations are underachievers when their abilities are compared with their academic performance in school. Underachievement is actually a complex phenomenon where being different from others in school can often intensify other underlying causes.

Gifted students from many minority populations may become underachievers because

they are caught between two cultures and face the dilemma of resolving being gifted and all that might imply with who they are (i.e., their identity as Black, or Hispanic, or Native American, for example). One option for improving this situation is to help students such as these become bi-cultural, so that they can function in both worlds—the world of school and scholastic pursuits and the world at home, in their neighborhood, and among their friends. Peer pressure can be a significant factor in this, along with anxiety and guilt about being different from (and possibly accomplishing more than) family members and others in the ethnic community. This may be less of an issue for Asian students, in general, since their families and community members are highly supportive of academic achievement. For Asian students, the struggle more often involves having to deal with excessive pressure and high expectations for accomplishment that are laid upon them at home.

Identification

The first issue related to helping gifted underachievers from diverse populations is identification. Someone in the school has to have the ability to "see" that the student is actually a gifted underachiever (rather than categorizing the individual in some other way due to racial, ethnic, cultural, or linguistic diversity, learning differences such as special educational needs, or diverse home/life experiences).

The following checklist can help make sure that all the bases are covered when it comes to identification of gifted underachievers from diverse populations:

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- Look for students who show signs of advanced conceptualization or insights beyond others at a similar age or stage of life and/or those who are from similar backgrounds or who have similar learning differences.
- Use subjective tools as clues to demonstrate a student's ability (sociograms, parent information, teacher checklists). Provide professional development for teachers to help them look for characteristics and behaviors of capable underachievers and gifted students from diverse populations.
- Use appropriate procedures to uncover the true abilities of students from diverse populations—e.g., test students in their native language; allow more time or use un-timed tests for students with learning disabilities; make appropriate accommodations for students with vision, hearing, or physical disabilities; use non-verbal tests and/or tests of creativity to get a more accurate picture of what students really know and are really able to do.
- Look for students who score well on standardized tests who are not performing well in the classroom—i.e., students with poor grades, who fail to turn in assignments, who have a high rate of absenteeism, who demonstrate disruptive behavior, or who often daydream. (Note: Only some gifted underachievers will do well on standardized tests and even those who do at first, may not continue doing so.)
- Understand that underachievers will seldom be “model students” and that not all of the usual performance standards will apply to them.

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Program Strategies

Next in the process of helping gifted underachievers from diverse populations, we should consider the kinds of program strategies that work. Educators need to take positive action to be certain that what *can* be done *is* done. Some of the suggestions are fairly simple to implement; others require a philosophical commitment on a larger scale.

Here are some basic ideas for program strategies that can be particularly helpful for gifted underachievers from diverse populations:

- Promote cultural competence and respect for diversity of all types in all students.
- Provide appropriate grouping within a psychologically-safe learning environment where risk-taking is valued and encouraged.
- Provide professional development for teachers to increase their awareness and understanding of gifted underachievers and of ways to serve them.
- Support teachers in their efforts on behalf of gifted underachievers (rather than penalizing them for students' failure to perform consistently at high levels, academically or on standardized tests).
- Provide group discussions or group counseling for gifted underachievers where they can discuss feelings about expectations and pressure, perfectionism, and related issues. (Note: It can be helpful to create groups that include both high achievers and underachievers so that they

can all begin to realize that they are dealing with the same issues, though they are responding differently.)

- Establish mentorships and other meaningful relationships with adults or older students who can serve as role models. Bring in guest speakers and other meaningful programs featuring successful individuals from diverse populations.
- Develop gifted programs that are sensitive to diversity.
- Involve specialists with expertise to help design appropriate programs for gifted underachievers from diverse populations (but don't assume that they are knowledgeable about giftedness).
- Consider the individual needs of all gifted underachievers and provide appropriate intervention and advocacy on their behalf.

Teaching Techniques

Teachers are the first (and often the last) line of defense when it comes to providing for diverse groups of gifted underachievers. Whether or not district-wide or school-wide programs are being implemented, teachers can make a significant difference in the lives of gifted underachievers.

The following are some suggestions of ways teachers can help:

- Choose to see potential in the problem; solve problems creatively.
- Modify the curriculum to provide appropriate challenges; use differentiation strategies

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including assessing students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles.

- Be flexible; maximize alternatives and student choices.
- Reduce external pressures as much as possible.
- Provide encouragement, rather than pressure or praise.
- Build success experiences and meaningful learning by helping students set short-term (bite-sized) goals. Recognize small improvements (but do not overemphasize them, which often shuts underachievers down).
- Develop students' ability to evaluate their own work.
- Get to know students and demonstrate sincere caring about each of the gifted underachievers, as individuals.
- Confer regularly with students; encourage student involvement in decisions about their educational programs.
- Plan lessons which are explicitly designed to develop positive self-concept, communication skills, decision-making, problem-solving, and values clarification.
- Systematically include examples in the curriculum of successful individuals from widely-varying racial, cultural, and ethnic groups, those with disabilities, and others from diverse populations.
- Develop students' rational understanding of problems or limitations they must deal with.
- Develop students' understanding of consequences and alternatives as

well as techniques for self-control, relaxation, and overcoming obstacles, including perfectionism.

- Use a wide variety of methods and content to capitalize on and stimulate interests.
- Utilize aesthetic education and multiple opportunities for self-expression.
- Convey genuine respect and positive regard for the student; be "real."
- Confer regularly with parents. Encourage parent involvement and teach them how to inspire and reassure their underachieving children. (However, don't ask them to be "policemen" designated to enforce student compliance.)

Pitfalls to Avoid

As with any other challenging situation, providing appropriately for gifted underachievers from diverse populations comes with its own pitfalls—traps that educators and parents alike often fall into in their frustration when dealing with these students. By being aware of some of the following pitfalls and avoiding them, everyone concerned can increase the possibilities of turning around patterns of underachievement:

- Eliminate rigid expectations for any student based on his or her past history.
- Avoid blaming or condemning **anyone**, including the underachievers themselves, teachers, parents ... or even "the system."

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- Believing that there are simplistic, “easy,” “instant” solutions to the problem of underachievement.
- Delivering admonitions, lectures or “pep talks” aimed at convincing underachievers that they “should” or “could” do better.
- Trying to “do it yourself”; i.e., to turn around patterns of underachievement without making an effort to work cooperatively with everyone involved.
- Getting discouraged and “writing off” the underachiever as a “hopeless case” or deciding that the student simply isn’t “truly gifted.”

Addressing social/emotional issues and diversity

The list of significant social/emotional concerns for gifted students from diverse

populations could go on and on. The high potential that gifted students have is a blessing that carries its own burden, especially when social/emotional issues are considered. A significant number of these students may be particularly vulnerable to developing psychosocial problems and therefore may be seriously at risk within the typical school environment. Furthermore, being different in one way or another from other gifted students in a school or community may add to the difficulties that gifted students from diverse populations experience.

Our responsibilities to the children require that we consider their hearts as well as their heads—that we pay as much attention to meeting their social/emotional needs as we do to addressing academic performance—and that we never lose sight of the giftedness that may be hiding behind the mask of diversity (Fiedler, 1999).

Social/Emotional Issues for Diverse Gifted Learners

Nurturing the Inner Self: Fostering Emotional and Spiritual Giftedness*

When eight-year-old Liam returned home from a vacation with his uncle in Washington, DC, his mother was eager to hear of his experiences. “What did you learn?” she asked. “What did you see and do that gave you new ideas to explore?” Liam’s mother was expecting that he would respond by mentioning a trip to the National Zoo or the Air and Space Museum. She was taken aback by his answer. “Oh, Mom, I learned that the President of the United States looks out of his window every day and can see people across the street who have nowhere to live,” Liam said. “They sleep in the park. I was really sad when I figured out that he doesn’t do anything to make changes. But I’ve been thinking, and I have some ideas about how we can help people who don’t have homes.” For Liam and his mother this exchange marked the beginning of a journey that included her supporting and nurturing his emotional giftedness.

Emotional giftedness is a concept that was first described by Roeper (1982) and developed by Piechowski (2003). These authors believe that faced with the realization of the suffering and distress of others there are many emotionally gifted youngsters who “dare to act” as a response to their experiences. Deep and abiding empathy, compassion, a keen sense of justice, and opposition to unfairness and prejudice are characteristics of emotionally gifted individuals.

Empathy exists on many levels. Intuitive and empathic gifted children may feel empathy for others in the family such as when they know that another

person is feeling badly. This has been described as picking up the “vibes” that something is out of kilter. The highly empathic child may also sense situations away from home such as in their neighborhood or at school. They may sense that a situation needs immediate attention or that something unsafe is about to unfold. Finally, the empathy may be for the world itself and these emotionally gifted young people may feel intensely alarmed when faced with the planetary problems of hunger, poverty, homelessness, disease, and lack of education. (Crawford, 2009).

Piechowski (2003) illustrated the connections between the concepts of emotional and spiritual intelligence (EI and SI) and emotional and spiritual giftedness (EG and SG). Piechowski’s work remains foundational. According to Piechowski, the concepts of emotional and spiritual giftedness actually pre-date the notions of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence.

Daniels and Meckstroth (2009) use Dabrowski’s Theory of Positive Development as a means to understand children who have emotional sensitivities or who have a wide emotional range. Described by Dabrowski as “emotional overexcitability,” or having an intense emotional sensitivity, these children may display some of these characteristics:

- Deep interpersonal relationships
- Heightened awareness of the feelings of others
- Heightened awareness to the emotional tone of surroundings

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- Confusion surrounding the lack of perceived concern of others
- Compulsion to act on empathy and concern for others or the environment
- Possible somatic (i.e., physical) expressions; incongruity with words/actions of others; and lack of vocabulary to explain feelings.

Not every child who exhibits emotional overexcitabilities is emotionally gifted; however, many gifted children exhibit these characteristics. Children that combine these aspects with empathy, compassion, a sense of justice, and a call to action are likely emotionally gifted.

Closely aligned with emotional giftedness is Dabrowski's concept of "positive maladjustment" (Dabrowski, in Piechowki, 2003). Positive maladjustment means that the individual is able to act regardless of the others' opposition. Being authentic and true to self, even if it means doing so alone, is a hallmark of these children. Emotionally gifted children, like Liam, often work to address the needs of others as soon as they become aware of their misfortune. Anecdotal stories and observations abound regarding the altruism of such gifted youngsters and their personal missions to help those in need. Whether by raising money for victims of a natural disaster, collecting books or food, or raising awareness of pressing issues such as AIDS, these highly attuned children demonstrate an advanced understanding of both local and global problems.

For some youngsters, a personal triumph over or resilience to their own adversity provides the catalyst to a deeper emotional life. For one such child, Anna, it was the suicide of her twin brother

that led her to action. Recognizing that depression and anxiety are constant companions for many gifted adolescents, Anna moved beyond her own pain to help others become aware of warning signals that might lead to self-harm. Despite the difficulty of reliving her own emotionally devastating experience, Anna spoke to groups of teens, hoping to prevent similar situations from occurring. In this way, Anna transformed her tragedy into positive action and deepened her own emotional life. Many gifted children who have experienced difficulties and suffered traumas use their experiences as a vehicle for personal growth as well as to provide a helping hand to others.

Emotional giftedness can be called, therefore, "advanced emotional intelligence" and it is separate from intellectual intelligence (although these attributes may overlap). Modifications in parenting, teaching and counseling approaches are necessary to allow for the emotionally gifted child to develop optimally. Parents and teachers can provide support by becoming more aware of the child's characteristics and needs and can provide opportunities, such as service-learning projects, so that the emotionally gifted child is able to develop her abilities.

The concepts of emotional and spiritual giftedness overlap in many ways and are often seen in tandem. Writing on spiritual giftedness, Annemarie Roeper (2007) observed that gifted children have an expanded reality of the universe and are self-protective of their deep spirituality as they often find that others have little acceptance for their belief in their transcendent experiences. She believes that spiritually gifted children are connected

Social/Emotional Issues for Diverse Gifted Learners

globally and spiritually in a qualitatively different way than other gifted children. An essential means of enhancing the security of these youngsters is to help them accept their emotions and to make connections between profound feelings and the yearning for deep connection with self, others, nature, or a higher power (Kessler, 2003).

“Relational consciousness” is the term used by Rebecca Nye (1998) to describe the deep and profound connection that some children feel with self, other people, the world, and God (or other higher power). In her interviews with children, Nye ascertained that some children had transcendent and unifying experiences, whether or not they came from a religious background. It is this relational consciousness that may lead to educational models such as self-actualization and interdependence (Roeper, 2007). This unifying concept creates a bridge between emotional and spiritual giftedness.

Piechowski (2003) maintains that examples of spiritual giftedness pre-date the concept of spiritual intelligence. There are spiritually advanced individuals who display characteristics that lead others to recognize their significant spiritual abilities and look to them as teachers and consider them spiritually gifted. Spiritual exemplars, such as Confucius, Buddha, and Jesus, come from many different religious traditions throughout history. Contemporary leaders such as Mother Theresa and the Dalai Lama also provide evidence of spiritual giftedness. The way in which these spiritual pathfinders live demonstrates the richness of their inner life and their commitment to live in service to humanity. Spiritual intelligence is defined by specific aspects or components of a spiritual life such as

being virtuous; the ability to experience expanded consciousness; the ability to sanctify everyday experiences; and the utilization of spiritual resources to solve problems. Additionally, spiritual intelligence has a neurological foundation.

The terms religion and spirituality are often used synonymously; yet, their meaning is different. Linda Lantieri (2001) is quick to point out that religion is only one route to developing spirituality. She suggests that spirituality is broader than religion and encompasses concepts of belonging, meaning, connectedness, and purpose. In *Schools with Spirit*, several authors share examples of how public schools have embraced and incorporated spirituality into their systems while maintaining a clear boundary between church and state. Understanding and promoting spirituality as a set of concepts distinct from religion will enable typical public school systems to develop critical programs that foster spiritual growth (e.g., programs to develop children’s sense of belonging, meaning, connectedness, and purpose).

Lovecky (1997) maintains that “[s]piritual sensitivity encompasses those children who develop knowledge of spiritual concepts and examine belief systems in advance of age peers, those who act from a desire to relieve the suffering of others and those who show evidence of transcendent or mystical experiences.” Spiritual experiences of children have been recorded; their experiences often center on the same existential questions that adults ponder (Hart, 2003; Hay & Nye, 1998). Recurring questions such as: “Why am I here? What did I come to do? Why do people die? And what happens after life on earth?” are persistent and underlie a search for meaning

Social/Emotional Issues for Diverse Gifted Learners

and purpose, which is at the heart of many spiritual journeys. For some gifted children, seeking answers to spiritual questions begins at a very young age. This may create a sense of dissonance for adults who are unprepared for or unfamiliar with such highly perceptive and intuitive children.

After Jose's mother had a new baby, he would sob for long periods of time when he was left with his teacher and classmates at the pre-school door. Thinking that his tears were an expected response to adjusting to the family changes, his mother and teacher comforted him as best they could; yet, at times, he was inconsolable. It wasn't until a family conversation many years later that his mother was able to piece together the real reason for his tears. "Remember, when I used to cry at pre-school, mom?" "Of course," replied Jose's mother, "It was right after the new baby was born." Jose looked taken aback. "That isn't why I was crying," he insisted. "It was when I was wondering about what would happen if you died on the way home and who would take care of me and the new baby." Jose was not yet four years old at the time his brother was born.

Suggested activities to nurture children's spiritual dimensions include creative arts, solitude and silence, being in nature, aesthetic experiences, play, meditation, visualization, centering, storytelling, and ritual building (Kessler, 2000). Teachers, too, can facilitate spiritual and emotional development in youngsters. Kane (2006) recommends the following strategies for teachers to use in their classrooms to encourage students' emotional and spiritual intelligences and to foster a culture of care:

- Create a sense of community in the classroom and within the school where you can provide opportunities for students to make contributions to the group (Morning meeting works well).
- Demonstrate understanding in the physical arrangement of your classroom (build a quiet corner; chill spot; put desks together and separately).
- Provide times when leadership skills can be developed.
- Use bibliotherapy and videotherapy.
- Encourage learning through service projects as emotional and spiritual outlets for caring students.
- Have something alive in the classroom; pets (maybe fish or lizards for the allergy prone) and plants require attention and care, providing the chance to connect.
- Teach active listening, decision-making and problem-solving strategies; these are life skills transferable to any profession.
- Encourage the use of journals and respond to students after they write about their experiences.
- Teach "shades of feelings"—use narrative works to demonstrate.
- Read biographies of spiritual pathfinders.
- Hold competitions like FPS (Future Problem Solving) to encourage future thinking along with occasions to see solutions from other perspectives.
- Offer aesthetic experiences and opportunities to enjoy beauty in the world.

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- Discuss the needs of the planet and ways to live in ecological harmony.
 - Encourage experiences in nature and find curricular connections.
 - Provide insight into the global village and share perspectives of those living in other places and according to different cultures.
 - Use visualization and imagination activities in project development.
 - Try PBL (Problem-based Learning) as a means to connect with real world problems and to make a difference (e.g. Pennies for Peace).
 - Use metaphor, myths and poetry as entry points in describing the ineffable—this also gives the students vocabulary for describing experiences they might not otherwise be able to talk about.
- Encourage role-play or socio-drama to explore concepts that are difficult to understand.

If gifted education is to educate the whole child, then the aspects of emotional and spiritual development must accompany those of physical, social, intellectual, and creative development. Ignoring or avoiding essential aspects of the self sends an early message to gifted children that these areas are taboo or forbidden in thought or discussion. It is essential that educators who wish to create a respectful and wholesome community of learners ensure that all dimensions of the self are fostered and celebrated.

14

Differentiation for Diversity

Differentiation for Diversity

Differentiation for diverse gifted students is based on quality differentiation for all students. It begins with differentiation by content (what the teacher teaches), process (how instruction is delivered), and product (how the student demonstrates mastery of material). Combined with an understanding of a student's readiness to learn, student interests, and a student learning profile (how a student learns best), any learning activity can be made appropriate for the learner.

Assessment should be ongoing and embedded in every concept taught and it involves pre-assessment, assessment during learning, and reflections after learning. There are many examples of instructional and management strategies for differentiated classrooms that include compacting, contracting, flexible grouping, tiered assignments, and many other tactics.

Years ago, Carol Morreale, a significant Illinois gifted educator, created questions for teachers to ask for successful differentiation:

- Is the curriculum appropriately challenging for all?
- Are students working on different tasks?
- Is differentiation in the lesson plans?
- Do lesson plans incorporate different levels of depth and complexity?
- Do they use the language of differentiation?
- Are there more errors in the work of the brightest students?
- Do all students demonstrate growth (at least one year for every year spent in school)?
- Are students taking responsibility for their learning?

- Is the classroom comfortable with different students working on different tasks at the same time?



When we consider the fact that diversity is increasing in the classroom, then the task of meeting learners' needs can become quite challenging. Susan Baum, as Editor of *Twice-Exceptional and Special Populations of Gifted Students*, stated:

Researchers have supported the idea that gifted students from special populations have needs that are different from their more traditional gifted peers and from peers with similar challenges (Baum & Olenchak, 2002; Bernal, 2002). These special gifted youngsters have unique needs and require interventions that speak to both their gift and their challenge. (page xxv)

Differentiation for Diversity

These students are also at-risk if they do not receive appropriate support and opportunities for growth. Although classroom differentiation is appropriate for some gifted students some of the time, if gifted students do not receive the appropriate amount of challenge, research indicates that most of these students learn to either coast through their education or will quit trying, thereby not developing the skills they will need to be successful in their lives. Students with both gifted needs and special needs may be ignored in the public schools because of the difficulty in diagnosing and serving them appropriately.

Let's look at some ways to serve sub-populations of gifted students. Before we do this, however, it is very important to recognize that thinking of a population as a group may lead to stereotyping. We must look at individual student behaviors in order to determine appropriate interventions. By understanding cultural differences and using appropriate assessments we can provide students with appropriate challenges. Nevertheless, there are some approaches that may work with students who demonstrate racial/cultural/learning differences.

15

RtI and Gifted Education

A Perfect Fit

RtI and Gifted Education: A Perfect Fit

by Penny Choice

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) was rewritten in 2004 to ensure appropriate instruction, through response to intervention data, or RtI, for students who are not successful in the regular classroom. Developed as a general education initiative, RtI was quickly adopted by special education as a means to identify students who could benefit from instructional intervention.

Educators are finding, however, that RtI can be beneficial for struggling students as well as for those exhibiting high learning aptitude. Close monitoring of student progress reveals that high-end learners are not demonstrating academic growth. States such as Colorado and Idaho are incorporating the core principles of RtI to address the needs of all students, including the gifted. Gifted and twice-exceptional learners need appropriate levels of academic challenge in order to demonstrate at least one year of growth for every year spent in school. It is critical that RtI help **all** children, including the gifted, to reach their potential.

Penny Choice has revised the RtI pyramid into a diamond that, when turned on its side, demonstrates how appropriate interventions can be provided to struggling and advanced learners on a continuum through three levels of intervention (labeled as tiers one, two and three). This version of the RtI model is being used in the Gifted Education Seminar recently launched throughout the State of Illinois.

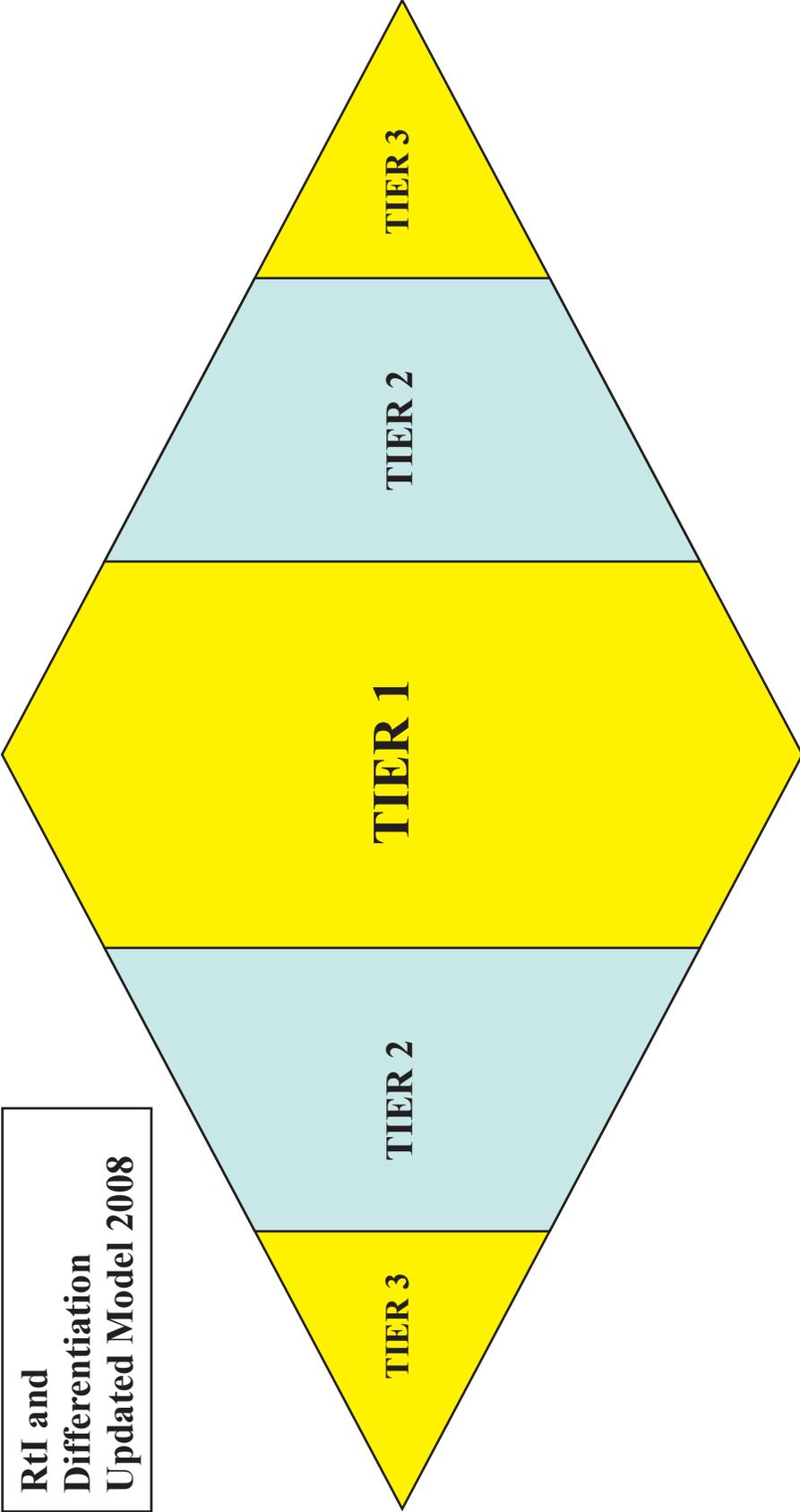
In January of 2006, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) initiated ongoing monitoring of student progress, and the development of research-

based interventions to meet the instructional and social-emotional needs of diverse high-end learners:

- Advanced students
- Highly gifted students
- Culturally and linguistically diverse students
- Economically disadvantaged students
- Students with gender diversity
- Visual-spatial learners
- Twice-exceptional or students with multiple exceptionalities

States adopting the RtI initiative have found that early intervention through universal screening for strengths is effective in identifying children with high learning potential, especially those from traditionally underserved populations. Through RtI, gifted students may be provided ongoing academic challenge through tier two and three interventions, and their progress monitored to ensure appropriate growth and development.

**RtI and
Differentiation
Updated Model 2008**



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How the Choice Model Differs from the ISBE Model of RtI

How the Choice Model Differs from the ISBE Model of RtI

The Illinois Response to Intervention Plan was published on the ISBE site (www.isbe.net) on January 1, 2008. The Illinois State Board of Education created a model to demonstrate how “high quality instruction is matched to student needs.” Illinois created a three-tier model of school support, using a problem-solving model for making decisions based on data. Tier one is for 80 to 90 percent of all students based on instruction on a core curriculum (grade level). Tier two focuses on five to 10 percent of the student population and provides interventions for struggling (at-risk for achieving mastery of the core curriculum); Tier three incorporates one to five percent and provides intense individual interventions.

Many of us assume that every child can be served adequately in the regular classroom (as expressed by tier one), that all differences can be addressed through differentiation, and that all teachers in Illinois are using differentiation to meet the needs of their students. Research studies (discussed throughout this diversity guide) have found that these are erroneous assumptions—especially as they apply to gifted students.

In order to meet the needs of a variety of gifted students, Penny Choice created a new, more inclusive model. By turning the standard RtI triangle on its side and looking at a continuum of a diverse population of public school students, it is possible to understand that the needs of the gifted can be met through the RtI model.

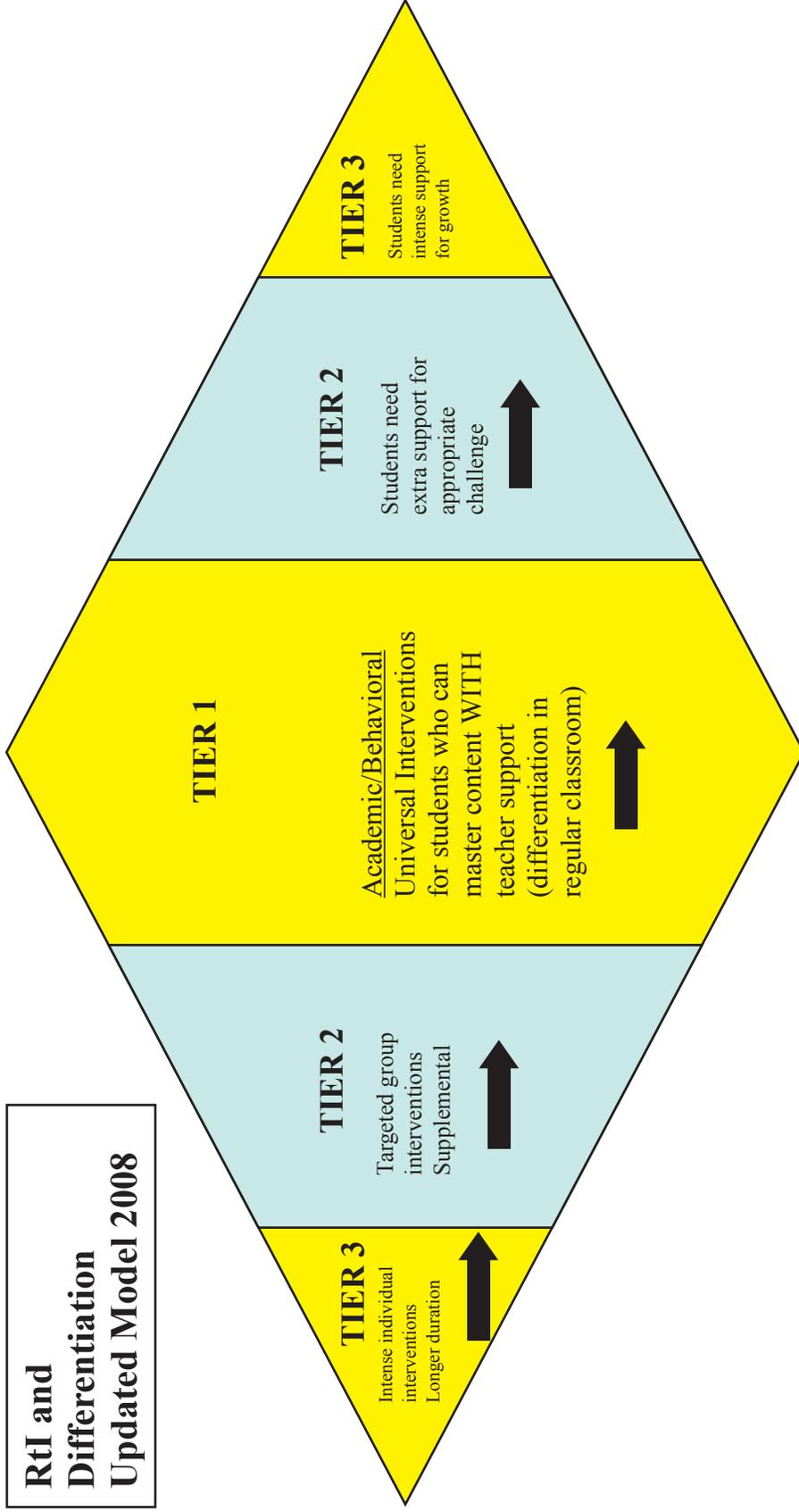
Upon achieving mastery of the core (grade level) curriculum, gifted students move into tiers two and/or three so that an appropriate level of instruction can be provided. Data on mastery is

collected through both pre- and post-assessments and students can be provided with appropriate challenges so that they can have the opportunity to learn and grow at least one year for every year spent in school.

Tiers two and three are also appropriate for students of diversity, or those who are:

- Racially, culturally, and/or linguistically diverse
- Gifted children with diverse learning characteristics
- Children from diverse home/life experiences
- Gifted children in specific age/gender categories
- Other gifted at-risk students
- Emotionally/spiritually gifted

**RtI and
Differentiation
Updated Model 2008**



Objective for school support for struggling students: To be successful at Tier one or better.

Objective for school support for advanced students: To receive appropriate challenge for growth (and skill development) at least one year for every year spent in school.

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Academic Systems

Tier 3: Intensive, Individual Interventions
Individual Students
Assessment-based
High Intensity
Of longer duration



Tier 2: Targeted Group Interventions
Some students (at-risk)
High efficiency
Rapid response



Tier 1: Universal Interventions
All students
Preventive, proactive



Behavioral Systems

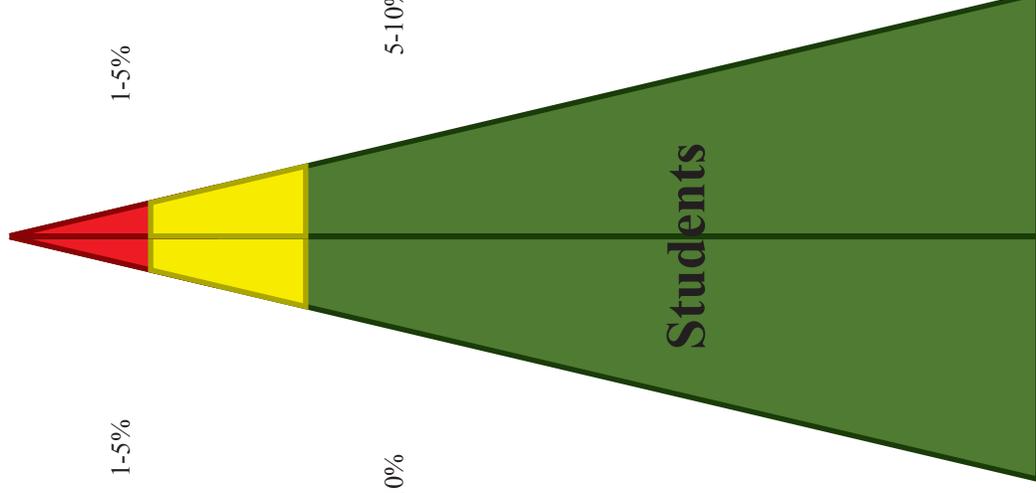
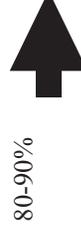
Tier 3: Intensive, Individual Interventions
Individual Students
Assessment-based
Intense, durable procedures



Tier 2: Targeted Group Interventions
Some students (at-risk)
High efficiency
Rapid response



Tier 1: Universal Interventions
All setting, all students
Preventive, proactive



Adapted from *Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation* (Batsche, et al 2005).
Note: Percentages are approximations and may vary by district.

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17

Diversity and Advocacy for Gifted Children

Diversity and Advocacy for Gifted Children

Parents and schools share the responsibility of providing for the unique educational needs of gifted and talented children. Parents and educators can be most effective when they work together as partners for the benefit of students. By supporting the best efforts of the schools in serving their gifted children, parents can promote even better options. School employees, especially those who are working very hard on behalf of the gifted, need to know that their efforts are appreciated. Parents need to tell them and put it in writing, as well. Furthermore, educators who understand the needs of gifted students, including those from diverse populations, need to speak up. This is true even when the visible results are only “baby steps” when everyone concerned is wishing for “giant steps.” Through a productive working relationship between parents and educators, increased understanding can develop and appropriate educational opportunities for students can be enhanced.

However, parents of gifted children from diverse populations and educators may be the least likely to get involved in advocacy efforts. The following are among the underlying reasons that may account for this:

- Perceptions of parents: Many parents of gifted children from diverse populations do not perceive that it is “their place” to tell educators what to do and/or they do not feel adequately prepared to challenge the schools regarding matters beyond their educational level or experience.
- Educators’ perceptions: Many educators in schools with diverse populations believe

that the lack of involvement by parents means that these parents “don’t care” and/or are unwilling or uninterested in supporting the efforts of the schools on behalf of the children.

- Circumstances: Many parents of gifted children from diverse populations, especially those who are struggling economically, simply do not have the resources, including time or energy, to get more involved with their children’s education. This is also true of educators in schools with a significant number of students from diverse populations.
- Language barriers: If parents and school employees do not speak the same language, it becomes very difficult to establish a sense of partnership between home and school. Not understanding each other’s point of view can substitute for not knowing the same language. Teachers and parents must speak openly and often to make sure collaboration is established.
- Feeling hopeless: Unless their initial efforts to work collaboratively have been well-received, parents and educators of gifted children from diverse populations may well give up—feeling that their efforts are unlikely to bear fruit and/or may do more harm than good (e.g., parents thinking that “the teacher will take it out on my child” if they contact the school and ask questions or make requests or teachers’ getting discouraged if their initial efforts to talk with parents haven’t produced desirable results).

Diversity and Advocacy for Gifted Children

Advocacy for gifted students from diverse populations needs to take place at local, state, and national levels. At the local level, this means parents and educators should be advocating for gifted students and doing whatever they can to make sure that those from diverse populations are not overlooked in individual schools and in the school district as a whole. One of the best ways to do this is by banding together with other parents and getting involved in local parent groups at the school or across the school district. At the state level, it means advocating for appropriate legislation and state funding for gifted programs. At the national level, legislation becomes the focus, along with supporting research and exemplary programs for gifted students.

Since advocacy includes political activism on a grass-roots level, parents and educators need opportunities to become knowledgeable about change and the change process and to get help in learning how to work effectively with others, including decision-makers and policy-makers at all levels. All who are concerned with gifted students may need guidance in understanding the legislative process. Legislators and policy-makers who are sympathetic to the plight of the gifted need to know they have supporters among their constituencies. Parents and educators who feel that “politics” is a deep, dark mystery should get together with others who can shed light on the process and help guide them in taking appropriate steps towards a goal that everyone can support: public policies that assure the provision of appropriate educational opportunities for all children, including those who are gifted/talented.

In Illinois, “Springfield Day” is sponsored by the Illinois Association for Gifted Children. This event provides a good example of how advocates for the gifted can learn how to work together effectively on behalf of gifted children across the state and then work together to get their message across appropriately. On “Springfield Day,” hundreds of advocates for gifted education, including some of the gifted children themselves, converge on the state capital to lobby for appropriate legislative support and funding for gifted education in Illinois.

Support for parents of gifted children is also an important consideration if they are to function comfortably in their roles. Sometimes, there is nothing as lonely as being the parent of a gifted child, and the need for community is even greater for parents of gifted children from diverse populations. Parents need someone with whom to share the joys and the woes, the highs and the lows, the triumphs and the tribulations of being responsible for raising such bright young individuals. This is especially true for parents who have a child whose needs are not readily recognized by the schools, whether because of diverse learning needs or because he or she is a member of a diverse population. It is sometimes difficult to sift through the day-to-day experiences and sort out the ones that are just “normal” parenting concerns, which ones are “problems,” which ones are related to the ways in which the child differs from others, and which are common manifestations of giftedness. Parents of atypical gifted children may especially need help in finding someone who understands. An excellent source of such understanding and support can be found among other parents of gifted children. By

Diversity and Advocacy for Gifted Children

working together with other advocates for the gifted, parents can find support and can learn more about how to work in partnership with schools in getting appropriate provisions for their children. Parent groups sponsored by the school or school district can be effective and meaningful sources of this type of support.

Diversity is increasing across the United States. Services that are available for high-ability children are not representative of that diversity. Research conducted by the Belin-Blank Center at the University of Iowa, reported in *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students*, confirmed that, "Outstanding talents are all areas of human endeavor." Illinois and other states have increasingly recognized that equity in gifted education only exists when the services for high-ability children reflects the diversity of the school district.

This recognition is reflected in other large-scale efforts, as well. For example, the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRCG/T) has been conducting research entitled, "What Works in Gifted Education: Excellence and Equity in Educating Gifted Students," and the University of Virginia has developed challenging units which include:

- Instruction tailored to gifted students' needs
- An emphasis on conceptual thinking, real-world disciplinary inquiry, and problem-solving
- Assessment of learning needs of students
- Helping students acquire increasing levels of expertise

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has acknowledged that the strategies implemented as part of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) worked against gifted and talented students. NAGC issued a statement requesting support for fulfilling the promise of NCLB to develop talent in our high-potential, educationally disadvantaged students who are currently underserved in schools. It stated that the achievement gap between the highest performing students who are educationally-disadvantaged and those who are more advantaged is increasing at a faster rate than others. It suggested that Congress create "Equity in Excellence" grants to close this gap, with funds used for:

- High-quality assessments for these students
- Implementation of programming for high-potential students
- Training and hiring of educational professionals with the knowledge and skills to work with these students
- Education and training of parents to support educational excellence for their children

A number of recent research reports have indicated that high-achieving students are losing in the battle to close the achievement gap. For instance, the report by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation called "Achievement Trap: How America is Failing Millions of High Achieving Students from Lower-Income Families" (2007) noted that millions of students are falling behind. Key research findings included the following:

Diversity and Advocacy for Gifted Children

- There are a lot of extraordinary students across America.
- These students are everywhere and reflect the diversity of America.
- High-achieving, lower-income students disproportionately fall out of the high-achieving group during both elementary and high school.
- Kids with high potential rarely rise into the top quartile of achievement.

Inequity for children with high potential has been found all over the United States, including in Illinois.

Much has been written about the need for gifted students to have appropriate educational services in public schools in the United States. Discussion centers around the question of the identification and education of gifted students—pitting equity and excellence against each other. Somehow, the idea of gifted students getting different instruction or programming than regular education students is touted as elitism. It is perceived as “unfair” to those without access. Limited resources in school districts often cause services for students of high-ability to be eliminated, and gifted students are left to their own resources.

This is unfortunate, because students whose education is appropriate learn the skills they will need to survive in our global economy: how to struggle with challenging educational material, how to become organized, and how to develop the problem-solving and critical thinking skills demanded for success in the twenty-first century.

High-ability students who are not challenged, however, mistakenly learn that school is supposed to be easy, that academic struggle is to be avoided, and that school is not the place for learning.

Every child has the right to grow at least one year for every year spent in school. It seems that this opportunity is not available for many gifted students, especially since those students with diverse learning needs and those who come from diverse populations or do not fit the typical image of what most people think a gifted child is like. The goal of equity in education is to encourage equitable representation of all highly-able students with daily opportunities to learn and grow. To do any less is unacceptable.



18

Conclusion, Recommendations and Future Direction

Conclusion, Recommendations and Future Direction

In the process of concluding this guide, the authors were kindly extended a copy of “Diversity and Developing Gifts and Talents: A National Call to Action,” a publication of The Association for the Gifted (TAG, April 2009). We found this article an excellent way to summarize what is needed in our journey to nurture diversity in our schools, communities and the nation. The article is presented in its entirety.*

*Sincere appreciation is due to our colleague and friend, Michele Kane, Ed.D., Coordinator of the Master of Arts in Gifted Education at Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago.

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on Diverse Gifted Learners

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- Tomlinson, C. A., & Eidson, C. E. (2003). *Differentiating in practice: A resource guide for differentiating curriculum, grades 5-9*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
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- Wormeli, R. (2007). *Differentiation: From planning to practice, grades 6-12*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers & Westerville, OH: NMSA.

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Use the “Search” function on these sites to find information about specific populations of diverse gifted learners. Use terms such as “underserved gifted,” “diversity,” “twice-exceptional,” “minority,” or any other specific categories of gifted students from whatever diverse population you are interested in.

General Gifted Resources

- a. National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu>)
- b. National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) (<http://nagc.org>)
- c. Council for Exceptional Children – The Association for the Gifted (TAG) (<http://www.cectag.org>)
- d. SENG: Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (<http://www.sengifted.org/>)
- e. Gifted Development Center (<http://www.gifteddevelopment.com>)
- f. Davidson Gifted Database (formerly GT-CyberSource) (www.DavidsonGifted.org/DB)
- g. “Our Gifted” on-line conferences (<http://giftedonlineconferences.ning.com/>)
- h. Hoagies Gifted Education Information (<http://hoagiesgifted.org>)
- i. Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/javits/index.html>)
- j. Project CLUE (Clustering Learners Unlocks Equity) from Ball State University (<http://www.bsu.edu/web/clue/>)
- k. Hunter College Center for Gifted Studies and Education (<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/gifted-ed/resources.shtml>)
- l. Advocacy in Education (<http://www.advocacy-in-education.com/>)
- m. Council for Exceptional Children – The Association for the Gifted (TAG Division of CEC) (<http://www.cectag.org/>)
- n. Davidson Institute for Talent Development (<http://www.davidsongifted.org/>)
- o. National Association of Special Education teachers (<http://www.naset.org>)
- p. Education World (<http://www.education-world.com/>)
- q. Institute for Educational Advancement (<http://www.educationaladvancement.org/>)
- r. Gifted Child Quarterly online (<http://gcq.sagepub.com/>)
- s. KidSource Online (<http://www.kidsource.com/>)
- t. Illinois Association for Gifted Children (<http://www.IAGCgifted.org>)
- u. Whole Child Education (<http://www.wholechildeducation.org>)
- v. Suite 101 to search for articles (<http://www.suite101.com>)
- w. Northwestern University Center for Talent Development (<http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/ctd/>)
- x. Prufrock Press, Inc. (<http://www.prufrock.com/>)
- y. Free Spirit Publications (<http://www.freespirit.com/>)
- z. Gifted Education Press (<http://www.giftededpress.com>)

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- aa. Duke University Talent Identification Program – Duke Gifted Letter (<http://www.dukegiftedletter.com/>)
- ab. About.com Searchable Database (<http://www.about.com>)
- ac. ED475671 - Special Populations in Gifted Education: Working with Diverse Gifted Learners (http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED475671&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED475671)
- ad. Measuring the Outcomes of State Policies for Gifted Education: An Equity Analysis of Texas School Districts (<http://gcq.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/45/1/4>)

Racially, Culturally, and/or Linguistically Diverse

- a. U-STARS (regarding young children from economically disadvantaged and culturally diverse families) (<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ustars>)
- b. Project CLUE (Clustering Learners Unlocks Equity) from Ball State University (<http://www.bsu.edu/web/clue/>)
- c. Expanding Appropriate Assessment and Differentiated Instruction for Culturally Diverse Gifted Students (information on screening, identification and instruction of gifted CLD students compiled by the Frances A. Karnes Center for Gifted Studies) (http://www.usm.edu/gifted/gifted_culturally_diverse.pdf)
- d. Hot Topics: Fostering Diversity in Gifted Education. The National Association for Gifted Children (offers links to relevant articles) (<http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=1217>)
- e. Linking Academic Scholars to Educational Resources (a U.S. Department of Education forum for discussions and multicultural resources for educators and funding for urban youth programs) (<http://www.coedu.usf.edu/LASER>)
- f. Multicultural Pavillion (provides resources on multicultural education, including lesson plans, action research ideas, materials, professional development and research) (<http://www.edchange.org/multicultural>)
- g. Pew Hispanic Center (provides research about Hispanics, including education, demographics and database for research briefs and full reports) (<http://pewhispanic.org>)
- h. Smithsonian (includes searchable lesson plan database by grade level and selected subjects, including African American, Hispanic multicultural perspectives and worldviews) (<http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/>)
- i. Race Bridges for Schools (includes resources and lesson plans) (<http://www.racebridgesforschools.com/>)

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Gifted Children with Diverse Learning Characteristics

- a. Twice Exceptional (2e) Newsletter (<http://www.2enewsletter.com/>)
- b. Uniquely Gifted (<http://www.uniquelygifted.org>)
- c. Twice Gifted (<http://www.twicegifted.net/>)
- d. All Kinds of Minds (<http://www.allkindsofminds.org>)
- e. Misunderstood Minds (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/misunderstoodminds/intro.html>)
- f. The Mislabeled Child (<http://www.eideneurolearningblog.blogspot.com>)
- g. Listserve to discuss Twice Exceptional Gifted (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GifTEds/?yguid=147337526>)
- h. Learning Disabilities Online: LD In-Depth: Gifted Students with Learning Disabilities (<http://www.ldonline.org/indepth/gifted>)
- i. Nonverbal Learning Disabilities (<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/eric/e619.html>)
- j. The Resource Room (<http://www.resourceroom.net/gtld/index.asp>)
- k. Sensory Processing Disorders Foundation (<http://www.spdfoundation.net/>)
- l. SPD Resources Page (<http://www.sensory-processing-disorder.com/>)
- m. Integrative Education Partners (<http://www.ieptherapy.com>)
- n. The Profoundly Gifted Institute (<http://highlygifted.org/>)
- o. The Hollingworth Center for Highly Gifted Children (<http://www.hollingworth.org/>)
- p. Tinsnips – A Special Education Resource (<http://www.tinsnips.org/>)
- q. Hoagies (specific info. on non-verbal learning disabilities) (<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/eric/e619.html>)
- r. New York University Child Study Center (articles resulting from search on “gifted”) (http://www.aboutourkids.org/search?search_type=site&keywords=gifted&x=0&y=0)
- s. ADD in School (<http://www.addinschool.com/>)
- t. Attention Deficit Disorders Resources (<http://add.obrienbusinessgroup.com/>)
- u. ADHD News (<http://www.adhdnews.com/>)
- v. ADHD Support (<http://www.adhdsupport.com/>)
- w. Your Health (specifically, information on autism/autism spectrum) (<http://www.artzoo.com/health/autism.htm>)
- x. Autism Society of America (<http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer>)
- y. Autism Resource Center (online resource library) (<http://www.autismcommunityconnection.com/>)
- z. CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) (<http://www.chadd.org/>)
- aa. Children’s Disabilities Information (<http://www.childrensdisabilities.info/>)
- ab. Deaf/Hearing Impaired Education (<http://www.deafed.net/>)

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- ac. Disability Resources (<http://www.disabilityresources.org/>)
- ad. Eric Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education (<http://www.ericec.org/>)
- ae. Hollingworth Center for the Highly Gifted (<http://www.hollingworth.org/>)
- af. LD Online (gifted & learning disabled) (<http://www.ldonline.org/indepth/gifted>)
- ag. Speechville (resources for speech & language disorders) (<http://www.speechville.com/>)
- ah. Exceptionalities and Special Education/Gifted (<http://www.cloudnet.com>)
- ai. Visual-spatial learners (<http://www.visual-learners.com>)
- aj. Visually impaired (using music to promote learning) (<http://www.songsforteaching.com>)
- ak. American Foundation for the Blind (<http://www.afb.org>)
- al. Council for Behavior Disorders (<http://www.ccbd.net>)
- am. Council for Behavior Disorders (<http://www.ccbd.net>)
- an. Association for the Education of Gifted Underachieving Students (<http://aegus1.org/>)
- ao. High-ability/Learning Disabled Students: How Are They Different? (<http://gcq.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/32/3/321>)

Sensory-Motor Issues

- a. GMS Institute (<http://www.gmskids.com>)

Children from Diverse Home/Life Experiences

- a. U-STARS (regarding young children from economically disadvantaged and culturally diverse families) (<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ustars>)
- b. Project CLUE (Clustering Learners Unlocks Equity) from Ball State University (<http://www.bsu.edu/web/clue/>)
- c. California Virtual Academy (resource for homeschooling) (<http://www.k12.com/cava/>)
- d. Homeschooling Gifted Children – A to Z (<http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/weblinks/gifted.htm>)
- e. Gifted and Talented in the 21st Century: Rural Gifted (<http://www.talentedandgifted.net/?p=31>)
- f. Indiana University of PA Center for Rural Gifted education (<http://www.coe.iup.edu/gifted>)
- g. Gifted and Talented National Rural Network UK (<http://www.ruralgandt.org.uk/>)
- h. Greenhouse (geographically isolated gifted students) (<http://www2.greenhouse.wa.edu.au/gh/gt/atrisk/geography>)
- i. Gifted Child Quarterly: The Rural Gifted Child (<http://gcq.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/31/4/155>)

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Low-Income, Poverty, Homeless

- a. Rampant Problems and Promising Practices in the Identification of Disadvantaged Gifted Students (<http://gcq.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/31/4/149>)
- b. Policy of the Illinois State Board of Education on the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Overview (<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/homeless/pdf/policy.pdf>)
- c. Lewis & Clark University Continuing Education (<http://www.lclark.edu/dept/ccps/giftedpoverty.html>)
- d. Gifted Potential and Poverty: A Call for Extraordinary Action (<http://www.psych.wisc.edu/henriques/papers/kitano.pdf>)

Gender/Age Issues

- a. Marty Nemko – Smart, Active Gifted Boys: Our Most Underserved Gifted Population (<http://martynemko.blogspot.com/2008/03/intellectually-gifted-active-boys-most.html>)
- b. U-STARS (regarding young children from economically disadvantaged and culturally diverse families) (<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ustars>)
- c. Austega Gifted Resource Center (an Australian site that features a preschool page with suggested activities for parents of young gifted children) (<http://www.austega.com/gifted/preschoolers.htm>)
- d. Hoagies' Gifted Education (a page that focuses on preschoolers—parenting, teaching and social-emotional issues) (http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/young_children.htm)
- e. Parents, families and friends of lesbian and gays (<http://www.community.pflag.org>)
- f. Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (<http://www.glsen.org>)

Gifted “At Risk” (Including Drop-Outs, Delinquents, and Those at Risk for Suicide)

- a. The Education of Gifted and Talented Students in Western Australia (Web site provides information on risk factors for gifted students) (<http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/gifttal/inclusivity/atrisk.htm>)
- b. Hoagies' Gifted Students at Risk (a list on culturally diverse gifted students) (http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/at_risk.htm)
- c. The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network site (15 effective strategies that have the most positive impact on the drop out rate) (<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/>)
- d. Network for the Dissemination of Curriculum Infusion (real life issues for at risk youth) (<http://www.neiu.edu/~k12pac/ndci/stratg1.htm>)

Emotionally/Spiritually Gifted; Highly Sensitive

- a. The Theory of Positive Disintegration by Kazimierz Dabrowski (<http://positivedisintegration.com/>)
- b. The Ageless Retreat (<http://www.theagelesswisdom.com>)
- c. Personal Empowerment Audio Programs (<http://www.personalempowermentnetwork.com>)

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- d. Focused Passion (<http://www.focusedpassion.com>)
- e. Spirituality Resources (<http://www.talentdevelop.com/spirituality-r.html>)
- f. Stephanie S. Tolan (young adult author homepage) (<http://stephanietolan.com>)
- g. Institute of Noetic Sciences (<http://www.noetic.org>)

Some Specific Parent and Professional Organizations that Advocate for the Gifted Are:

- a. Hoagies Gifted Education Page (<http://hoagiesgifted.org>)
- b. ERIC Digests (<http://www.ericdigests.org>)
- c. Sylvia Rimm's Websites (<http://www.sylviarimm.com>)
- d. Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (<http://www.sengifted.org>)
- e. Davidson Institute for Talent Development (<http://www.ditd.org>)
- f. The Illinois Association for Gifted Children (<http://www.iagcgifted.org>)
- g. The National Association for Gifted Children (<http://www.nagc.org>)
- h. The Council for Exceptional Children (<http://www.cec.sped.org>)
- i. Mensa International (<http://www.mensa.org>)
- j. The National Association for Bilingual Education (<http://www.nabe.org>)
- k. The National Association for School Psychologists (<http://www.nasp.org>)
- l. The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (<http://www.wcgtc.org>)

List of Links for the YouTube (and other) Videos Found for Individuals Who Fit into Our Categories:

- a. Diversity dance act (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPcGy77Gru8&feature=related>)
- b. Man without arms and legs (<http://www.maniacworld.com/are-you-going-to-finish-strong.html>)
- c. Four-fingered pianist (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FSnalrPYpc>)
- d. Severn Suzuki, age 12, addressing the UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=MX&hl=es-MX&v=DLV6jaZFLro&feature=related>)
- e. Susan Boyle (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9z0h1NNk1Ik&feature=related>)
- f. Rex Lewis-Clack, a blind, autistic genius who was featured on *60 Minutes* as a young child and who was featured again in 2008 (www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oZaCrkCxu8)
- g. Harold Fernandez, world-renowned cardiologist who sailed illegally from Colombia, S.A., at age 11 (<http://technorati.com/videos/youtube.com/watch%3Fv%3Dh1a3kqGFLJ0>)
- h. Jill Bolt Taylor, "A Stroke of Insight" (<http://www.mystrokeofinsight.com/>)
- i. [Sean Banks' poem about being gifted – winner of Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award](#)
- j. Cesar Chavez (<http://www.farmworkermovement.org/media/video/index.shtml>)
- k. Ben Carson, neurosurgeon (<http://www.tnt.tv/stories/story/?oid=44661>)
- l. Barack Obama (<http://www.youtube.com/user/BarackObamadotcom>)

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- m. Temple Grandin: “The World Needs All Kinds of Minds” (http://www.ted.com/talks/temple_grandin_the_world_needs_all_kinds_of_minds.html)
- n. Kids from World Council for Gifted & Talented (<http://www.worldgifted.ca/>)
- o. Dalton Sherman inspires Dallas teachers (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fe_rPBDFjxM)
- p. [Karen Babcock \(“Possibilities” poem\) – Fiedler](#)
- q. Jason Crowe, rural isolated/emotionally-spiritually gifted (<http://www.myhero.com/myhero/hero.asp?hero=jasoncrowe> Fiedler)
- r. Dalton Sherman (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fe_rPBDFjxM)
- s. Gustavo Dudamel conducting the Simon Bolívar Youth Orchestra from Venezuela (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2PtLBYMo68>)
- t. Jose Abreu, a mentor to young economically disadvantaged, musically-talented youth in Venezuela (http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/jose_abreu_on_kids_transformed_by_music.html)
- u. Keiron Williamson, a six-year-old watercolor artist, exhibits paintings at gallery (www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQwk_DNeowE). See also: Pictured: Incredible watercolour paintings by boy aged just six by Andrew Levy (<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1203226/Pictured-Incredible-watercolour-paintings-boy-aged-just-SIX.html>)