The National Center for Research on Gifted Education (NCRGE – http://ncrge.uconn.edu) is funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education PR/Award # R305C140018
For more than a quarter century, the field of gifted education has wrestled with two separate, but related issues:

1) a widespread failure to identify and serve underrepresented populations and
2) limited data documenting “what works” in gifted education.
The GOAL

...to increase our understanding of

1. Identification policies and procedures
2. Instructional approaches
3. Program curricula and content
4. Predictors of success
The PLAN

- Analyze State District Gifted Education Plans
- Survey All Districts and Schools about Gifted Identification and Service Policies and Practices in Three States
- Analyze 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade Student Reading and Mathematics Achievement for Current 8th Grade Students
- Identify Schools that Successfully Include and Serve Underrepresented Populations with Gifted Services
- Conduct Case Studies of 24 Schools and 9 Districts to Determine Which Practices and Services are Most Effective
- Develop a “What Works Clearinghouse” Quality Study Based on Findings from Year 1-3

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- 133 Variables for 293 State District Gifted Plans
- 362,254 8th-Grade Students’ Math and Reading Achievement in Grades 3, 4, and 5
- 2 Comprehensive Literature Reviews
- 202 Interview Transcripts
- 2419 School Survey Responses (53% [45-68% Response - 80% Title 1])
- 332 District Survey Responses (78%-90% Response)
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identification
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First identify in...</th>
<th>Identified in what...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kind. - .9%</td>
<td>Global – 41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; – 2.8%</td>
<td>Reading/LA – 69.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; – 27.8%</td>
<td>Mathematics – 66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; – 53.6%</td>
<td>Other – 44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; – 12.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; – 1.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above – 1.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19.3% Use Universal Screening
- Group Cognitive – 77.7%
- Non-verbal – 37.5%
- Achievement – 22.3%
- Teacher Rating Scale – 11.7%

33% Use Matrix
- 59.8% Have Specific Cut Score
- 46% Modify the Identification for Underserved Populations
  - 33.9% Native Lang.
  - 50.3% Non-Verbal Test
  - 62% More Flexible Score
- 23.9% Different Weighting of Criteria
- 49.4% Different Criteria or Cutoff
Probability of Being Identified as Gifted after Controlling for Achievement in State 1
Probability of Being Identified as Gifted after Controlling for Achievement in State 2
Probability of Being Identified as Gifted after Controlling for Achievement in State 3
What is the relationship between the % of free and reduced lunch students in a school and the % of students identified as gifted?

-0.31
-0.56
-0.64
There is an institutional and individual relationship between poverty and the likelihood of a student being identified for gifted services. Even when they exhibit equally high achievement, free/reduced lunch students were less likely to be identified for gifted services. In addition, higher poverty schools tend to have lower proportions of gifted students.

The implications of our research are clear: between school inequities appear to contribute to the under-identification of students of poverty as gifted. High potential students of poverty are less likely to be recognized and served in programs for the gifted. Such inequities have the potential to increase, rather than decrease social inequities. Gifted education is certainly not the root of our social inequities. However, at present, it appears that gifted programs may be perpetuating societal inequities rather than helping to eliminate them.

services
• 29.2% of schools do not accelerate
• 34.8% of schools subject accelerate
• 26.1% of schools whole grade accelerate

• 73.4% of schools use pullout
• 53.6% of schools use cluster grouping
• 44.7% of schools use homogenous grouping
• 32.9% of schools use push-in

• 28.9% schools offer gifted reading/LA but 28.7% of them don’t have specific reading/LA curriculum
• 28.4% schools offer gifted mathematics but 24.2% of them don’t have specific gifted math curriculum
• 93.7% of districts do not have a designated math curriculum for gifted
• 90.2% of districts do not have a designated reading/LA curriculum for gifted
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**Acceleration in Mathematics**

- \( M = 41.99 \)
- \( SD = 36.61 \)

**Writing Skills**

- \( M = 50.38 \)
- \( SD = 32.12 \)
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\[
\begin{align*}
M &= 57.76 \\
SD &= 31.11 \\
\text{Research Skills} &= \end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
M &= 61.61 \\
SD &= 30.71 \\
\text{Communication Skills} &= \end{align*}
\]
$M=69.39$

$SD=29.71$

Creativity/Creative Thinking Skills

$M=77.07$

$SD=26.91$

Critical Thinking Skills

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Schools Have Options

How much autonomy do your school's teachers of the gifted have in choosing the content to deliver?

- Very Little – 4.6%
- Some – 26.8%
- A Lot – 51.9%
- Complete 15.8%
growth
Prototypical students by gifted and historically under-represented minority/free and reduced priced lunch status (Under/FRL), controlling for gender and English language status in State 1 (panels A1&A2) and State 2 (panels B1&B2).
What Do Current Research and Practice Tell Us About How to Educate Gifted and Talented English Learners?
• Fastest growing population of learners (NCES, 2013)

• From 1990 to 2005 foreign born populations doubled to 35.2 million (Rong & Preissle, 2009)

• Since 1990, 47% increase in age 5+ U.S. residents who speak language other than English at home (Rong & Preissle, 2009)

• Biggest Increase Asian and Latin American (Grieco et al., 2012)

• Over 350 different languages (American Community Survey, 2015)

• 23% living in poverty compared to 13.5% (Camarota, 2012)

• Representation in gifted programs lags behind traditional populations, as well as other underserved populations (Matthews, 2014)
EL Students are a Diverse Population

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Teachers Value...
Verbal Skills, Social Skills, Achievement, and Work Ethic (Peterson & Margolin, 1997)

Behavior Skills Are NOT Necessarily Related to Academic Giftedness. 24% of Items on Rating Scale Bias:
Assertive, Initiating activities, Asking questions, Contributing in class (A. Brice & R. Brice, 2004)

Project U-STARTS~PLUS Found Teachers Might Have Overlooked 22% Children of Color (Coleman & Shah-Coltrane, 2011)

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Universal Screening

Teachers Make Most Nominations (McBee, 2006) and Deficit Thinking Biases Prevail (Ford & Whiting, 2008)

180% Increase Among All Under Represented
130% Increase for Hispanic
80% Increase for Black (Card & Giuliano, 2015)
Funds of Knowledge
(Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992)

- **Code Switching** (Hughes, Shaunessy, Brice, Ratliff, & McHatton, 2006)
- Translating
- Speed of English Language Acquisition
- Strengths in Leadership, Creativity, and Arts
- Rapid Rate of Acculturation (Granada, 2003)
Ideas For Increasing Student Participation

1. Adopt Universal Screening Procedures
2. Create Alternative Pathways to Identification
3. Establish a “Web of Communication”
4. View Professional Development as Lever for Change

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Adopting Universal Screening Procedures

Recommendations

• Eliminate nomination as a gatekeeping step and use universal screening. Nomination procedures vary by their level of specificity, as informal and formal procedures are practiced.

• Adopt a policy of universal screening as the initial step in the process. There is significant variation in universal screening instruments and methods employed for interpreting scores; therefore, we recommend nomination as an alternative pathway after universal screening, particularly for ELs and other traditionally underserved groups.

• Provide periodic opportunities to assess English language acquisition (e.g., Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment [CELLA]; ACCESS) and monitor the rate of mastering reading, writing, listening, and speaking English.

• Consider administering completely nonverbal ability assessments (e.g., Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test [NNAT], Raven's Progressive Matrices, Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence [CTONI], Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test [UNIT]).

• Maintain a list of bilingual school psychologists on file who are available to administer assessments in various languages at the school during normal school hours.
Creating Alternative Pathways to Identification

Recommendations

• **Use native language ability and achievement assessments** as indicators of potential giftedness, when available. Ability tests are available in Spanish, with the Bateria III Woodcock Muñoz, WISC Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children Spanish. Achievement tests are also offered in Spanish (common examples are Aprenda and Logramos). Typically, standardized, norm-referenced tests are limited to Spanish only.

• **Develop a pre-identification program that provides students with an opportunity to fully develop their potential prior to screening.** Students enter school with varying levels of informal and formal educational experiences. If giftedness is viewed as latent, emergent, and manifest (Gubbins, 2005), learning opportunities can be developed to support the development of essential background knowledge and academic skills for students to be recognized as gifted.

• **Create a “talent pool” or “watch list” of students who exhibit high potential but are not yet in gifted programs.** Observations, daily interactions between teachers and students, informal assessments, and formal assessments provide multiple opportunities to gauge students’ learning progress.

• **View screening, nomination, and identification as a continual process,** rather than a yearly event. Talent development is an educational and developmental process supported by engaging and challenging learning opportunities. Educators and parents need to be mindful of students’ emergent talents within and across school years.
Establishing a “Web of Communication”

Recommendations

• Develop a “web of communication” such that all stakeholders are aware of the identification system in its entirety and are empowered to interact with one another in all phases (i.e., screening, nomination, identification, and placement).

• Establish an identification committee that includes representatives who have key responsibilities in various roles (e.g., administrators, general education teachers, gifted specialists, coordinators of gifted programs, EL teachers, bilingual personnel, school psychologists, or other assessment personnel) and departments.

• Focus on the development and implementation of intentional outreach to the school community, particularly parents. This should utilize multiple pathways in languages appropriate to the population, such as clearly written program information (without educational jargon) available via the school or district website, video segments posted to school websites and made shareable via social media, information and community-building nights held at the school or in conjunction with community groups, and regularly distributed newsletters.
Viewing Professional Development as Lever for Change

**Recommendations**

- **Create and enhance professional development opportunities** such that classroom teachers and other school personnel are aware of effective practices for recognizing and developing talent across student groups of the historic underrepresentation of ELs and other groups in gifted education programs (United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2014), and of gifted education policies in a given district or school that can be used to support equitable representation.

- **Develop a systematic approach to analyzing district and school demographics** (e.g., race/ethnicity, free and reduced-price lunch status, ELs) and the status of students identified/not identified for gifted programs, along with goals for reaching and sustaining equitable representation (McCoach, Siegle, Callahan, Gubbins, & Hamilton, 2016).

- **Continue concerted efforts to diversify teaching staff** so that the adult community of a school reflects the student population and includes members who are bilingual, as they can assume proactive roles in advocating for ELs during the screening, nomination, identification, and placement procedures.

- **Promote collaboration within and across specializations/departments** (e.g., general education, ESL, and special education) regarding identification processes. Educators can offer their perspectives on the gifts and talents of EL students in various educational environments.

- **Develop an action plan** that supports policies and practices to promote English language acquisition (i.e., reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills) in the students’ native language and English. This process would involve changes in policies and practices to support bi-literacy.
Best practices involve a fair and equitable nomination process. This requires a paradigm shift where the focus changes from identifying and remediating weaknesses to identifying strengths and giftedness through multiple lenses (Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012).
Now, as we complete our visit to schools to understand how underserved students are being identified as gifted and excelling, we begin to put the pieces of the puzzle together...stay tuned
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