Low Cost and Effective Gifted Services

NJSBA 2018 Annual Workshop
Engaging Every Child
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Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Every Student Succeeds Act

P.L. 114-95, Enacted December 10, 2015, amending:

• Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)

• Improving America’s Schools Act of 1994 (IASA)

• No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s Retained from NCLB?

Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program

Provides grant funds for students typically underrepresented in gifted and talented programs; minority, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, students with disabilities
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
Gifted & Talented Education
What’s Retained from NCLB?

Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program
Provides support for the National Center for Research on Gifted Education [https://ncrge.uconn.edu/](https://ncrge.uconn.edu/)

2016 - $12,000,000 appropriated; $1,000,000 research, $11,000,000 continuation awards
2017, 2018, and 2019 - $12,000,000 appropriated
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s Retained from NCLB?

Title I Committee of Practitioners – Advises in State Plan Development

NCLB Advisory Council

NCLB School Improvement Advisory Council (eliminated)

LEA representatives, Administrators, Principals, Parents, Board of Education members, Private and Charter Schools
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
Gifted & Talented Education
What’s New in ESSA?

Title I – LEA plans on use of funds specifically may include how the LEA will assist schools in identifying and serving G&T students

State plan development – advocacy
Local plan development – advocacy
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s New in ESSA?

Title I – Disaggregation of state assessment student achievement data at each achievement level on state and local report cards

May identify need for access to advanced coursework and gifted education programming
SEA plan shall address how the state educational agency will improve the skills of teachers, principals and other school leaders in order to enable them to identify... *students who are gifted and talented* ... and provide instruction based on the needs of such students.

*Includes teacher preparation programs.*
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s New in ESSA?

Title II – Professional Development

LEA plan shall address the learning needs of all students, including... *gifted and talented students* including training in:

*Identification; gifted-specific instructional practices such as grouping, enrichment, acceleration, curriculum compacting, and dual & concurrent enrollment*
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)  
Gifted & Talented Education  
What’s New in ESSA?

ESSA Federal Regulations

Published in the Federal Register May 31, 2016

“Supporting Excellent Educators” – cites G&T; SEA, LEA plans; educator preparation programs

Repealed by Congress – March 2017; did not affect New Jersey’s ESSA plan.
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s New in ESSA?

_New Jersey’s ESSA Plan_

• Original Submission to the USDOE – no substantive mention of gifted and talented - March 2017

• USDOE amendments included substantive references to gifted and talented – July 2017 (see redline version)
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s New in ESSA?

New Jersey’s Final ESSA Plan

- Use of Title II funds to support state level strategies
  - Design and implement a professional development plan that supports teachers in improving Algebra I instruction and outcomes for all students including... students who are gifted and talented...
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s New in ESSA?

New Jersey’s Final ESSA Plan

Use of Title II funds to support state level strategies

Launch a K-3 literacy initiative that will support teachers, principals, literacy coaches, and other school leaders in improving statewide literacy instruction for all students including...students who are gifted and talented.
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s New in ESSA?

New Jersey’s Final ESSA Plan

Use of Title II funds to support state level strategies

Improve DOE data literacy to ensure teachers, principals and other school leaders are able to identify and support the specific learning needs of all students including ... students who are gifted and talented
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Gifted & Talented Education

What’s New in ESSA?

New Jersey’s Final ESSA Plan

Use of Title II funds to support state level strategies

Supporting teachers, principals and other school leaders in identifying and serving the unique needs of all students, including students... who are gifted and talented... with the launch of the New Jersey Tiered System of Support (NJTSS)
Gifted and Talented Students

Students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared with their chronological peers in the local school district and who require modifications of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.
Gifted and Talented in New Jersey

Board Implementation

_N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)(5)_

- Identification G&T Students, K-12
- Multiple measures to be a candidate – e.g. teacher/parent recommendation, performance, testing (not required to be top in all indicators, can be subject specific)
- Provide Appropriate Instructional G&T Adaptations and Educational Services - K-12
Gifted and Talented in New Jersey

Board Implementation

*N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)(5)*

[part of LEAs policies and procedures, in cycle of program review]

• Develop Curricular and Instructional Modifications to NJ Student Learning Standards – G&T

• Content, Process, Products and Learning Environment
Gifted and Talented in New Jersey

Board Implementation

*N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)(5)(6)*

- Consideration of NAGC Standards
  - New Jersey Commission on Programs for Gifted Students
    - January 2005, DOE soon to have an advisory board for G & T
  - Actively Assist and Support Professional Development for teachers, educational services staff and school leaders ($ in ESSA, Title II)
Gifted and Talented in New Jersey

Board Implementation

N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.7(b)(3)

Equality in School and Classroom Practices

Reducing or preventing the underrepresentation of minority, female and male students in all classes and programs including gifted and talented, accelerated and advanced classes.

*Research shows use of universal assessments, K-3 also, finds those with potential who traditionally go unnoticed for gifted services.
Gifted and Talented in New Jersey

Board Implementation

*N.J.A.C. 6A:7-15-1.4(g)*

**Bilingual Programs for Limited English Proficient Students**

- Additional programs and services shall be designed to meet the special needs of eligible LEP students and include, but not limited to, remedial instruction through Title I programs; special education; school-to-work programs; computer training; and gifted and talented education services.

- P.L. 2017 c. 171 - Requires Commissioner of Education to develop guidance on identifying English language learners for gifted and talented programs.
Gifted and Talented in New Jersey

Board Implementation

*New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum*

*Instruction and Program # 18*

The district requires and verifies that instruction for all students is based on the district’s curriculum, instructional materials, media and school library resources and includes instructional strategies, activities, and content that *meet individual student needs* including Individual Education Plans (IEP). “All students” includes those students with disabilities, English language learners, gifted and talented students and students in alternative education programs.
Gifted and Talented in New Jersey Board Implementation

_N.J.A.C. 6A:30 -1.1 et. seq._

_New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum_

• Full QSAC reviews - every three years
  • District Performance Review due November 15
• New QSAC regulations
  • New District Performance Review Indicators
  • Elimination of Statement of Assurance
  • Effective 7/1/18
Gifted and Talented in New Jersey

Board Implementation

*N.J.A.C. 6A:30 -1.1 et. seq.*

New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum

- Instruction and Program DPR indicators each contain reference to **modifications for gifted students**. English and Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, Health and Physical Education, Visual and Performing Arts – **4 points each**.
- “Integrated accommodations and modifications for students with IEPs, 504s, ELLs, and **gifted and talented** students”
Gifted & Talented – Continuing Issues for School Districts

• Identification
• K-12 Programming & Services
• Admission to & Exit from G&T program, Services
• G&T Curriculum
• Funding – T&E, Categorical Aid
• Student Activity Fees
• Public Education Alternatives – G&T
• G&T Teacher Certification
G&T Teacher Certification

• Instructional Certificate – no specific endorsement required

• Online graduate courses are available

  • Rutgers Continuing Studies Gifted Education Certificate Program
  • Montclair State University
  • Rider University
  • UConn offers an online graduate degree program and undergraduate elective courses, as well as a summer week
G&T Teacher Certification

• Instructional Certificate – no specific endorsement required to teach G&T

• Where do we want to be five years from now?

• “You’ve got to be careful if you don’t know where you are going, ‘cause you might not get there.” – Yogi Berra
G&T Teacher Certification
Gifted Education Improvement Bill

- DOE Division of Gifted and Talented Education
- County Office Specialist in Gifted and Talented Education
- School District Specialist in Gifted and Talented Education
- DOE In-service Workshops
- Pre-service – 3 semester credit hours in G&T
- Pre-service – 6 semester credit hours in special education – 3 G&T
- G&T Endorsement – 15 academic credits + Praxis
- “Grandfather” teachers of G&T - 4 years experience
- 4 year phase in
Getting what is in policy into practice...

**Strengthening Gifted Education Bill**

- DOE to gather data: *How many students identified as gifted in each grade? How many specialists employed for G & T?*
- Strengthens current code and requires DOE to provide guidance
- Transparency on district website for identification process
- Transparency on district website for continuum of services
- Show in schedules and budgets to prove gifted ID & services
- Establishes a complaint process, County DOE to investigate within 60 days.
What improvements to the current code are in the “Strengthening Gifted Education” bill?

**Strengthening Gifted Education Bill**

- Students with IEPs and 504s cannot be denied gifted services.
- Establishes a reporting process on local policies within first year of enactment, then matching the QSAC cycle, every 3 yrs.
- Encourages practices that assure equity, access, and transparency.
- Student may be gifted in only one academic area.
- Single service (only a pull out in gr. 3-5) will not be sufficient.
- Matches student needs with services, not for the gifted label.
Why do we need the “Strengthening Gifted Education” bill?

- Commission to Study Gifted, 2005, same issues in 2018
- Very little attention to gifted at DOE
- Change in leadership and staff at DOE
- Testimonies to NJSBOE
- Gifted education needs the attention of the Commissioner
- Gifted needs to be an integral part of DOE (not only office of academics, include special education, AP/honors, Governor’s Schools) help and support for LEAs
How has NJAGC helped the DOE?

• Meetings for three years (Deputy & Assistant Commissioner)
• Participated in ESSA stakeholders groups
• Made suggestions for the PARCC replacement:
  - computer adaptive tests (find appropriate challenge level)
  - follow individuals and cohorts, reporting all 5 levels
  - allow out of level testing at instructional level
  - get data to teachers for instructional modifications for individuals
• Presented at regional meetings, & to County Education Specialists
Equity and Access Issues in Gifted Education

NJ earned an A- for Excellence but a D- for Equity on Fordham report

• Untrained teachers are recommending candidates
• EL gifted excel in native language & non-verbal tests
• Information district shares must be in parents’ language(s)
• Those without pre-school may have capability without having been in a formal educational setting, can catch up quickly
• Home support necessary, educate families (process)
• Understand cultural behaviors which may hide “gifted traits”
• Universal screening (ALL, not just those nominated by teachers and parents) has been proven to help close the equity gap
Office of Civil Rights has cited NJ districts

• The OCR collects information on the racial, ethnic, language, and disability proportionality of identified gifted and talented populations. Using the OCR school or district search function, anyone can view these data within any school or district in the United States for a four-year period.

• In addition, OCR is investigating discrimination when a district denied a student access to advanced mathematics and the gifted program because he has an IEP and language disabilities

• Who in your district completes this report? What services do you count as gifted? Have you identified gifted students in every grade?
“Gifted education services does not need to break the bank,” according to the National Association for Gifted Children. “Beginning a program requires little more than an acknowledgement by district and community personnel that gifted students need something different, a commitment to provide appropriate curriculum and instruction, and teacher training in identification and gifted education.”
How does a local district serve its gifted at low cost?

- Can use Title funds for identification and professional development
- Cluster grouping or acceleration costs nothing
- Align local acceleration policies to subject & grade skipping
- Use in-house specialists (document it in schedules)
  - media specialist has one period per week with early readers K-2
  - tech specialist finds online opportunities for students by subject
  - curriculum supervisor pursues purchase of alternate materials for those who are performing above grade level by subject
  - guidance & CST to support social emotional needs of G & T
How does a local district serve its gifted at low cost?

Free and low cost PD – live & webinars:  (some are $ubscription)

• NJEA workshops https://www.njagc.org/professional-development.html

• https://gifteded.rutgers.edu/free-demand-webinars free

• http://www.nagc.org/demand-learning (many here are free on You Tube and others are NAGC member benefits)

• http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/unwrapping_the_gifted/2013/01/upcoming_gifted_education_webi.html (with EdWeek)

Great for Faculty Meetings, In-Services, PLCs, use in other education graduate courses (curriculum, administration, policy, guidance, CST)
How does a local district serve its gifted at low cost?

Student opportunities

- contests (NJAGC art & writing, video K-12) Scripps Spelling, National Geographic Bee,
- Academic curriculum and competitions by subject (Math League, MOEMS, Nat'l History Day, Inventions
- mentorships (use older students in district and local universities, volunteers)
- co-enrollment in college course (in person or online)
- scholarships (students) & mini-grants (educators)
- weekend events (NJAGC REACH, Scholars Search, bookstore meet-ups)
- summer programs (JHU/CTY, SIG, STEM summer camps)
How does a local district serve its gifted at low cost?

Curriculum (and what counts as observable differentiation)

• Curriculum compacting: “Hardest problems first” allow students to prove mastery and test out of grade level benchmarks (before and during a unit of study). Excuse from unnecessary practice.

• Provide enrichment in subject/topic (depth and breadth)

• Offer alternate activity (independent study, student contract, real world)

• Change pacing or delivery of new content... in lesson plans

• Change rubric to match product, allow for student choices

• “Instead of” not “in addition to” respectful work on school time
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Who counts as “gifted” in a local district?

• Documentation of identification (lists of candidates, qualifications should match services, specify those who need modifications, disaggregate the data by grade/age and subject) note in cumulative files

• Annual reports to the US Office of Civil Rights (do not count a child twice if in two honors classes) becomes public info

• Consider “high fliers” (4-10%) and “outliers” (1-3%) by subject or area not just by testing (performance using local norms); use interest, potential

• Only consider teacher checklists and grades if they have been trained in “Gifted vs. teacher pleaser” —-> hidden gifted

• “Observable behaviors” may not show in underground gifted
"Sometimes, the most brilliant and intelligent minds do not shine in standardized tests because they do not have standardized minds."

-Diane Ravitch
Who counts as “gifted” in a local district (and what do they need?)

• peer groups are academic equals or above (chess—> not by age)
• decreased competition or expectations of perfection
• understanding of asynchronous development
• ways to show teacher that they know (without setting them up)
• Dabrowski’s “over-excitabilities” are sensitivities, employ tactics
• teachers as “Guide on the side” not the “Sage on the stage”
• Specialized counseling and support
How do I start building “gifted” in my local district?

• Check what you have in **policy, last update, if any changes were ever made** and why, practices for identification and a continuum of services

• **Transparency** ("We use a matrix of several weighted factors including achievement and aptitude tests, parent and teacher checklists, products and performance, student interview, and consider individual student needs," without telling the test or point value of each. “Our nomination period is June.”)

• Set goals to serve **all** children with enrichment opportunities, **some** children with different content, process, products and learning environments, **few** children with acceleration. All children should be instructed at an appropriate challenge level for their abilities.
How do I start building “gifted” in my local district?

Plan a continuum of services for gifted

- Philosophy of enrichment for all (three tiers, Renzulli TRIAD)

- Identifying and **grouping** gifted are the lowest cost visible options
  *can include clusters in mixed ability classes, one accelerated class, other*

- Provide appropriate differentiation for gifted at a challenge level

- Create and educate: a series of professional development sessions
"SHOULD all kids do it? COULD all kids do it? WOULD all kids want to? If the answer to any of these questions is “yes” then it isn’t differentiated..."
– Harry Passow

- **Why isn't differentiation happening?**
  - Lack of training
  - Needs in-depth understanding
  - Resources (human & materials)
  - Management Issues
  - (schedule, time, break w/ tradition)
How do I start building “gifted” in my local district?

Check out Best Practices

Three districts shared at Regional Meetings of the NJDOE in Feb
See the free Powerpoint presentations, available online

North: Washington Twp. (Morris County) Long Valley, NJ

Central: Roselle Schools

South: Glassboro Public Schools
How do I start building “gifted” in my local district?

Ask for Help

• The County Education Specialists have been asked to co-host a meeting of representatives from each district to learn about and share gifted education ideas.

• Contact yours if you wish to attend or co-host.

• Learning is easier together and with guidance.
How do I start building “gifted” in my local district?

Learn online

www.hoagiesgifted.org

www.byrdseed.com

www.nagc.org

www.njagc.org

www.sengifted.org
How do I start building “gifted” in my local district?

What you can do

• Build a team in your district- (guidance, CST, administrators, board, teachers, subject specialists, parents, community members)
• Make a plan to continue your learning
• Celebrate what you already know and do
• Set goals
• Try a new strategy
• Take baby steps
• Stay in touch! Seek help.