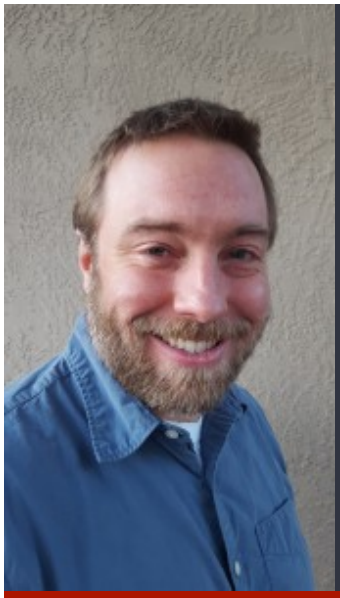
New Mexico Association For the Gifted

2015 NMAG Teacher of the Year: Sheila Hofstadt

Sheila Hofstadt Receives Award from President Christy Jewell-Roth at the January 9, 2016 Board Meeting

Sheila Hofstadt is the NMAG Teacher of the Year 2015. Besides being a stellar teacher making a significant impact among gifted elementary students, Sheila is known as a source of guidance and information about gifted education and a go-to professional educator for pre-service teachers.

Sheila Hofstedt has been teaching since 1986. Fifteen years ago, she began teaching in gifted education, where she found her niche. Sheila feels Albuquerque Public School gifted educators were very progressive when they developed the APS Gifted Strands, and she strives to create strand-balanced services for all her students and believes in educating the whole child. She has long had a passion for extended projects, and has worked with children in such areas as media literacy, architecture, and Passion Projects. Sheila thinks many gifted children are especially in need of project work, as it provides the opportunity to learn a host of skills that will be needed for school, as well as life.



Javits Scholar: Cory Messenger

This past year, Gifted Educator, Cory Messenger, was able to attend the NAGC Annual Convention as a recipient of the NAGC's Javits-Frasier Scholarship. Below he discusses some of his experiences and thoughts on the convention and the scholarship program.

- Jessica Carlisle

What would you like teachers and parents of gifted students in New Mexico to know about NAGC?

The NAGC community is much larger than I had anticipated. It is filled with some of the most dedicated and passionate people I've ever met. I think it would be extremely beneficial for the teachers and parents of gifted students to attend the conference as often as possible. There are many impressive speakers covering a vast range of topics related to gifted education and there's something for everyone there to learn, no matter how experienced he/she may be. Unfortunately, since gifted education is not federally funded, it can become financially challenging for educators to attend. I was very fortunate to be awarded the scholarship, because it may have been my only chance to attend.

How were you inspired to apply for the Javits-Frasier grant that allowed you to attend the NAGC Annual Convention?

It was my wife's idea actually. I had been lamenting the fact that I'd probably never be able to afford to go to the conference and she suggested I look for a scholarship. I had never heard of a scholarship of this nature, so while I was skeptical, I took her suggestion. I visited the NAGC website and saw a page dedicated to the Javits-Frasier Scholarship for Diverse Talent Development. As I read the requirements, I couldn't help but think that I was a perfect applicant

Who else represented gifted education in New Mexico?

I was the only Javits-Frasier scholar from New Mexico this year. The other scholars came from many areas including Georgia, Illinois, and even Puerto Rico. While I didn't know many of the people at the conference, I was lucky enough to run into fellow New Mexican, Geoffrey Moon. It was nice to see a familiar face from back home.

Which sessions did you find the most inspirational and motivational?

Jack Andraka was definitely the most inspirational of the sessions I attended. He's the teenager who developed a new detection method for pancreatic cancer. I remembered reading his story a few years ago and was incredibly excited when I saw his name on the list of keynote speakers. The things this young man has accomplished are truly impressive. His story is a perfect example of what our students can achieve when they have a person in their lives, like Mr. Andraka's mother, who gives them the opportunity to explore their intellectual passions. I also had the opportunity to meet him after his presentation. He was polite, kind, and even offered to hold a Skype chat with my students. Hopefully, we'll be able to set that up for the coming school-year. I also enjoyed the creativity session with Dr. Scott Barry Kaufman. The stories of his school days led me to question the various ways in which gifted students are identified.

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This man was, as a child, placed in a special education setting due to a learning disability. While he struggled for much of his academic career, he received encouragement from one teacher who saw his potential. His newfound confidence led him to accomplish more than many people ever considered possible. More importantly, his stories demonstrate how vital engagement can be for our students and the development of their creativity. I highly recommend taking the time to listen to some of his online presentations.

What knowledge did you gain at the NAGC conference? How will your new knowledge and experience affect your teaching?

I was lucky enough to attend a pre-conference "Action Lab" at the National Aquarium that focused on Project WET (Water Education for Teachers). I was able to bring back a lot of ideas that will be very beneficial for students who live in an area without much water.

I also attended a session about the decline of female students' interest in STEM subjects when they enter middle school. The presenters discussed statistics showing that female students typically maintain an interest level in STEM topics that equals that of male students throughout elementary school. However, that interest begins to wane during the middle school years. Since returning from the conference, I am more aware of these students in my classes and encourage them to explore those interests in multiple ways.

What did you learn from your cohort of Javits-Frasier Scholars? Do you all have similar challenges and concerns in your work? My fellow scholars taught me exactly how much gifted programs can differ and it made me all the more grateful for the program in which I work at Eagle Ridge. We focus on developing individualized projects for our students that allow them to explore their intellectual passions while simultaneously working toward their IEP goals. Some of my fellow scholars described programs in which they are required to teach their gifted students nothing but language arts or solely mathematics and do not have the freedom to help their students explore their individual interests. This is a shame because gifted education should not be just about extra challenges in a student's area of strength. Gifted education should allow the students opportunities to explore and develop their passions. This is a concept with which most teachers of the gifted are familiar, but too few of us have the necessary flexibilities to make it possible within our gifted curricula. It was very encouraging to receive so much praise for our program at Eagle Ridge.

Growing New Mexico's Gifted Visual Artists

- by Steve Heil

By Daesherri (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0) or GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html)], via Wikimedia Commons

As a New Mexico public school art teacher turned teacher of gifted students, I've long been interested in the overlap of artistic and academic talent. It was satisfying to learn of positive reviews from both professional fields of the recent ESEA reauthorization. The Every Student Succeeds Act has been praised for revisions that will benefit advanced and gifted learners in the public schools It has also been recognized for including the arts as essential, no longer peripheral, to a "well-rounded education." This reorientation prompted me to consider again what I can do to help develop the talents of gifted visual artists on my caseload.

I'd like to know if anyone in New Mexico is currently providing artistic talent development for students with a demonstrated very superior ability in the domain of visual art. If so, what instruments are used to demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual arts and to show the need for services, and what services can be designed to meet these needs?

THE IMPACT OF DISADVANTAGE ON POTENTIALLY EMINENT VISUAL ARTISTS

I have no doubt there are students with high potential in the visual arts who, without support, will not be prepared to succeed in post-secondary visual arts training. Without such credentials, they are not likely achieve positions of leadership in the arts and influence the work of museums, galleries, and higher education institutions. They have great potential but may be poor, recent immigrants, or racially, culturally, or linguistically marginalized. Unlike the young artists of families with more resources and connections to invest in talent development through clubs, lessons, mentorships, and arts activities, these disadvantaged students may lack affirmation of their artistic talents while young. For college and careers in the arts, they might lack the preparedness of better resourced peers. Can New Mexico's gifted education programs support young, high-ability visual artists who lack their own connections and resources?

HOW DO ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL ABILITY DIFFER?

Although tests and observations of intelligence, creativity, and achievement customarily yield the requisite evidence for identification, the ultimate measure of these qualities could be a creative product, which Joseph Renzulli defends as worthy of qualifying students below the top 5% of intellectual ability as measured by tests of cognitive ability. Renzulli justifies his view that creative-productive individuals are gifted:

". . . history tells us it has been the creative and productive people of the world, the producers rather than consumers of knowledge, the reconstructionists of thought in all areas of human endeavor, who have become recognized as "truly gifted" individuals. History does not remember persons who merely scored well on IQ tests or those who learned their lessons well but did not apply their knowledge in innovative and action-oriented ways." (p. 11)

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Renzulli's parameters for the creative-productive gifted individual are "(a) above-average, though not necessarily superior [intellectual] ability, (b) creativity, and (c) task commitment." He cautions that, while general ability can be assessed using tests of verbal, numeric, or spatial reasoning, applicable across a variety of learning situations, specific abilities such as those relating to the domain of visual arts only can be observed in creative products. The IQ tests, he warns, may actually miss some of the prime candidates for gifted services:

". . . vast numbers and proportions of our most productive persons are not those who scored at the 95th percentile or above on standardized tests of intelligence, nor were they necessarily straight A students who discovered early how to play the lesson-learning game. In other words, more creative-productive persons came from below the 95th percentile than above it, and if such cutoff scores are needed to determine entrance into special programs, we may be guilty of actually discriminating against persons who have the greatest potential for high levels of accomplishment." (p. 17)

In what ways are intellectual ability and artistic ability distinct? Try to imagine human history of thought without art, and it becomes obvious they are inextricable. Visual art contributes to our understanding of the world just as other modes of intellectual inquiry.

Yet gifted artists, and especially those from disenfranchised families, are scarce in our gifted programs, primarily because the disadvantaged young gifted artist's product is rarely seen as evidence enough of intellectual ability to substantiate qualification for gifted services. Her artwork may never be seen by the evaluators, or when seen, it may not be fairly evaluated for lack of assessment tools or dearth of experience evaluating child art. It may not seem like the kind of art most people would call "intellectual." Few gifted specialists know what to look for that might indicate potential eminence in art. Furthermore, the quality of the sampled artwork may be underdeveloped because general education art programs rarely provide the kind of choice, challenge, complexity, and individualization imperative for developing exceptional abilities in art (Clark & Zimmerman, 2004), relegating the candidate to her own insufficient resources and social connections for extracurricular talent development.

GIFTED PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT VISUAL ART SPECIALIZATION

If we could overcome these and other obstacles not yet anticipated and bring these students into our programs, what could we do for the high ability visual artists? Drawn from Renzulli's elaboration on the concept of task commitment are the following points. I think of them as a guide to designing goals, accommodations, and services to meet the needs of talented visual artists with the long-term goal of becoming creative-productive individuals.

The talented young artist will:

- develop persistence and endurance
- demonstrate hard work and dedicated practice;
- acquire self-confidence and a belief in his or her ability to carry out important work and action related to artistic interests;
- stay motivated to engage in visual art activities for their own sake;
- maximize involvement with the field of visual arts;
- increase qualities of originality

This seems like a framework for writing the gifted IEP. Annual progress toward these goals could be measured using creative product analysis rubrics, rating scales, self-assessments, and surveys of engagement. Now that the arts are federally recognized as integral to the purpose of schools, the time is ripe for including talented artists in our gifted programs. I fear that if we fail to reach them, we will miss out on some of their significant contributions in the future.

Resources:
Catterall, James S. (2012) The arts and achievement in at-risk youth: findings from four longitudinal studies, Research Report #55 March 2012 National Endowment for the Arts https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Arts-At-Risk-Youth.pdf
Clark, Gilbert and Zimmerman, Enid, (2004) Teaching Talented Art Students: Principles and Practices, Teacher's College Press, New York, NY.
Renzulli, Joseph S. (1998) The Three-Ring Conception of Giftedness available online: http://gifted.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/961/2015/01/The_Three-Ring_Conception_of_Giftedness.pdf

My middle school students are currently working in collaboration with the New Mexico Wildlife Center to learn the physics of kayaks through building their own personal, functional kayak.

Students are learning about buoyancy, resistance, kayak design, riparian ecosystems, and weather. We are spending the winter months building the kayaks so that we can explore water habitats in the spring.

At the 2015 NMAG Fall Institute, Alicia Cotabish presented on both project-based and problem-based learning. She highlighted the differences as well as the way in which they are appropriate for high ability learners. There are numerous advantages to using project-based learning with gifted learners including:

- It is interdisciplinary
- It is aligned with curriculum and supported by NAGC Gifted Programming Standards
- It allows for in depth inquiry and problem solving
- It lends itself to differentiation and scaffolding
- Student can take ownership of their learning
- It allows for collaboration, critical and creative thinking
- It can motivate and engage students
- Students are addressing real world, authentic problems

(If you were at the conference, you can download the PowerPoint from Alicia Cotabish's breakout session regarding both problem based and project based learning. The password was sent to you in an email. Click here to go to that password-protected resources page.)

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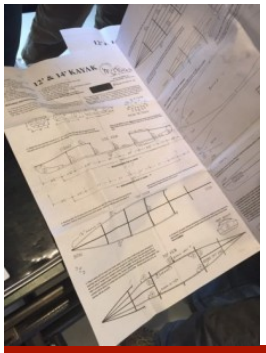
To build excitement and review the ecosystems (many of the students were exposed to water studies as part of the River Class during their elementary years) we spent a day at Abiquiu Lake. Not a single student knew how to kayak when the day began, but by the end, they each had the hang of it and were pretty pleased with themselves! Part of the philosophy of this class is that people must experience and enjoy the outdoors in order to feel a sense of ownership. Besides learning important science skills, these students are learning to enjoy being outdoors and when integrated into a science curriculum, environmental education demonstrably improves student achievement in science. (Lieberman and Hoody, 1998)

Following that, we had a quick refresher on density and buoyancy. We filled cylinders of a known volume (which we calculated) with different objects. After weighing them, we calculated the density. We compared these to the density of water and guessed whether or not they would float. We then tested our hypothesis. Thanks to our knowledge of science, we were right every time! We moved then to building model boats. We began by observing a few floating objects with different shapes. This provided a few ideas to get going. Each design was different and not every model worked which provided an excellent opportunity to test and discuss why different boats have different shapes (and different purposes).

When it was finally time to begin construction of the actual kayaks, students were introduced to reading a blueprint. We discussed design, pattern placement and of course all the safety rules associated with using power tools. Eye Protection at all times!

Since our initial building session, students have created the skeleton, sanded, attached to bow to the keel, attached the stern to the keel and added the ribs and the strakes.

When we meet again in February, we will begin covering our kayaks. They are really beginning to look like boats and the students have been engaged in the process each step of the way. They have been asking questions, using resources, collaborating and communicating with each other in new ways. They have had to consider how to best use their time and how to make adjustments when we face a problem. For instance, some of our strakes have knots and the wood is easily prone to snapping at these points. They determined that a splint was the best fix in some instances and in others; a different solution was required. The culmination of this project will include a trip down the San Juan River, observing and studying the riparian ecosystems which may lead to problem based learning activity for next year!



Obviously, this is a very specialized and unique project which could never occur without our collaboration with the NM Wildlife Center. There are certain projects which teachers cannot easily tackle given the restrictions we encounter: space, time and resources. But I wonder: What project-based learning have you used? What was successful and what would you do differently in the future? This is my first experience with such activities; it has been a powerful learning experience not only for the students but for me as well. It makes me want to incorporate more project oriented learning in the classroom. Please share your thoughts about

Resources
Lieberman, G.A. and Hoody, L.L., (1998), Closing the Achievement Gap: Using the Environment as an Integrating Context for Learning, State Education and Environment Roundtable.

NMHU Offers Gifted Endorsement Courses

By: PJ Sedillo

Only 3% of colleges and universities across the country offer courses in gifted education and the need for courses are high. (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2006) According to the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), 61% of classroom teachers in the U.S. have no training in gifted and talented, yet gifted and talented students spend over 80% of their time in their regular classroom. Further, with so few opportunities for graduate courses in gifted education, we cannot expect teachers to effectively address the needs of gifted learners. (Ford, Grantham, & Whiting, 2008)

According to the report, National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent (October, 1993), "Teachers must receive better training in how to teach highlevel curricula. They need support for providing instruction that challenges all students sufficiently. This will benefit not only students with outstanding talent but children at every academic level." For these reasons State of New Mexico educators who instruct gifted individuals must have an endorsement in Gifted Education.

NMHU Student Center

Gifted Endorsement Requirements

12 credit hours at NMHU (Based on NCATE/CAEP & NAGC/CEC Standards)

After June 30, 2012:

Teachers currently licensed in New Mexico at any level and seeking an endorsement in Gifted Education will complete the following requirements:

- *Pass the state-approved licensure NES® (National Evaluation Series™) Test or an accepted comparable licensure test(s) from another state.*
- *Successfully complete 12 credits hours in the pedagogy and methodology of teaching gifted students through a regionally accredited college or university.*

State Rule: [6.64.18.8 NMAC – N, 01-29-10]

- *Foundations of Gifted Education (Standard 1 and 2)*
- *Instructional Strategies for Gifted Education (Standard 4)*
- *Instructional Planning and Curriculum of Gifted E*ducation (Standard 7)
- Twice Exceptional & Individual Learning Differences of the Gifted (Standard 3)

After June 30, 2012:

***Beginning teachers who are seeking a Gifted Education endorsement* to add to an initial Level I teaching license must have 24 semester hours in the pedagogy and methodology of teaching gifted students from a regionally accredited college or university. In addition to the endorsement, beginning teachers will also need to satisfy all general licensure requirements from the NMPED.**

State Rule: [6.64.18.8 NMAC – N, 01-29-10]

24 credit hours at NMHU (Based on NCATE/CAEP & NAGC/CEC Standards)

- Foundations of Gifted Education (*Standard #1Foundations and #2 Development and Characteristics of Learners*
- Twice Exceptional & Individual Learning Differences of the Gifted (*Standard #3 Individual Learning Differences)*

(List continued on next page)

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- Instructional Strategies for Gifted Education (*Standard #4 Instructional Strategies)*
- Learning Environments and Social Interactions for Gifted Education (*Standard #5 Learning Environments and Social Interaction)*
- Instructional Planning and Curriculum of Gifted Education *(Standards #7 & Instructional Planning)*
- *Working with Families of Students who are Gifted (Standard #10 Collaboration)*
- Professional Ethical Practices for Gifted Education (*Standards #6 & #9 Professional and Ethical Practice & Language)*
  Assessment Issues for Gifted Education (*Standard #8 Assessment)*

These are some of the needs currently in the State of New Mexico that New Mexico Highlands is trying to resolve by offering these courses.

- Many public school districts have reported their need for gifted educators.
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- New Mexico Highland's University primary area is northern NM (Rio Rancho, Farmington, Santa Fe, and Espanola) and statewide ITV/online.
- The NMHU Gifted Education Program would be available via ITV, live online, and face-to-face which makes it available for may rural areas of New Mexico.
- areas in the northern section of the state are not adequately offering the gifted licensure/endorsement.

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NM's gifted percentage is almost 5% estimating that there are 16,800 gifted students. Considering half are receiving minimal services and half are receiving moderate service in gifted education, 28 students fit in each caseload, and assuming all caseloads are as close to one as possible, then 600 full-time equivalent teachers would be needed in the State of New Mexico. Eastern New Mexico University, Central New Mexico Community College, San Juan Community College all provide Gifted Education Coursework. Each program graduates between six to fifteen students per year. While these numbers might be adequate for the area that each university services, it is evident that vast areas in the northern section of the state are not adequately offering the gifted licensure/endorsement.

NMHU is the only university in the State of New Mexico to offer a Master's Degree in Special Education with an endorsement/ licensure in gifted education and the courses at the undergraduate and graduate level.

For further information about obtaining your gifted endorsement please contact Dr. PJ Sedillo.

PARCC and Gifted Education

- By Geoffrey Moon

The PARCC, who publish the eponymous test used to measure educational progress toward college and career readiness in New Mexico, has released version 4 of its Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual. Accommodations for PARCC are specifically targeted at English language learning students and those with 504 or IDEA disabilities. Gifted students who are not ELLs or twice exceptional are not part of that group.

I have met many educators who have written testing accommodations into individual plans for gifted students. I have myself. For those smart students who have the slow, deliberative processing style of a creative person, it can be tempting to extend testing time. Students who express anxiety around testing or who are affected by high levels of perfectionism may present a need for a customized testing experience as well. Fortunately, the PARCC provides two sets of features that may be applied to any student: "administrative considerations," and "accessibility features." Administrative considerations include small group settings, special timing allowances, or frequent breaks. The PARCC's accessibility features include spell checking, highlighting, selective text-to-speech, glossaries, and noise buffers. But which features should you consider for your gifted students? The answer is dependent on the purpose of and way we interpret standardized tests.

The Purpose of Standardized Tests

Ask any random group people why we give standardized tests, and you're likely to get as many answers as you have conversations. Policy makers and school administrators use tests to evaluate the efficacy of programs and teachers. Colleges and special programs employ them to determine the likely success of candidates and select participants. Teachers may see tests as diagnostic tools for best planning educational opportunities. In the era of Value Added Modeling, tests become opportunities for greater pay and accolades on one hand and liabilities weighing against their evaluations on the other. Parents might view tests as a measure of whether their students are doing well in school or which school to select. Students may see tests as measures of their success or failure or simply trials to get past, depending on their experience.

While some purposes of testing may have more merit than others, any meaningful use of a test requires that it be reliable and valid.

While some purposes of testing may have more merit than others, any meaningful use of a test requires that it be reliable and valid. Reliable tests produce consistent scores. Valid scores measure what they purport to measure. And both reliability and validity require that test administration be controlled.

If validity and reliability are dependent on standardization, why do we give some students accommodations, changing those usually controlled conditions? Because for some students, accommodations produce a significantly *more* valid and reliable result. In my humble opinion, this should be the test of when to allow a change to the standardized administration of a test, through accommodations, administrative considerations, or accessibility features.

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Some Gifted Need Accommodations

ELL students and students with disabilities that may coexist with giftedness, such as AD/HD, learning disabilities, autism spectrum are allowed accommodations on the PARCC. Since these children may require much more processing time to show what they can do, or may have special needs related to understanding and communicating their answers, it makes sense that their testing circumstances sometimes be modified. On its face, if a student has a *significantly* different and better performance with accommodations, it seems more valid to use those accommodations.

While many gifted students may score better on tests that do not have time limits, for disabled and ELL students, the differences are quite large. For these students testing without accommodation would not be a measure of their knowledge and skill. Put another way, accommodations are to level the field for those who could not otherwise play, not to optimize scores.

Test Anxiety

According to the American Test Anxieties Association, as many as 20% of students have high test anxiety, with 18% troubled by moderately high test anxiety. Physical symptoms like panic, elevated negative feelings, and difficulty concentrating and organizing thoughts may occur. In addition to or as a result of these symptoms, students with high levels of test anxiety may have score significantly lower on standardized tests.

While these symptoms may sometimes rise to the level of a diagnosable condition that could result in accommodations, often that is not the case. In fact, some level of anxiety is necessary for good performance on any test. A relationship known as the Yerkes-Dodson Law shows that just as high anxiety may decrease test performance, so may low anxiety by causing students to not to give enough attention and energy to a task. The key is moderate or "facilitative" anxiety.

So what if a student has just a little too much? Three research-based strategies for decreasing test anxiety are worth trying: relaxation exercises including breathing and body awareness exercises, asking students to think about something they value and write about why they do, and simply unloading their worries by writing about them. The team may implement these strategies via administrative considerations, which allow special test timing or frequent breaks, creating time for the student to practice anxiety-reduction techniques.

Perfectionism

Many gifted education teachers I know have given test accommodations because of students' perfectionism. They perceive students slow down too much to complete all of a tests' problems, and could perform better with more time.

While perfectionism may generate concern similar to test anxiety, it does not constitute the same problem. In a study of gifted students' math test performance by Tsui and Mazzocco (2007), the presence of math anxiety or perfectionism decreased the difference between timed and untimed test performance. Another study by Stoeber and Kersting focused on the effect of perfectionism on tests of reasoning and speed: it showed either no relationship or positive relationships between perfectionism and test performance. Perfectionism, in both cases, increased performance on timed standardized tests.

Non-Disability Learning Problems

No one gifted student is like another, due to the asynchrony in their learning profiles. It is important educators look for differences in students' profiles that may cause problems.

Though the law allows for identification of disabilities in students who are gifted, the fact that a student is gifted may mean that learning disabilities go undiagnosed. When gifted students use their intelligence to compensate for learning or processing problems, they may maintain performance at or above grade level, though well below expectancy. Gifted education teachers should keep watch for problems with attention, distraction, communication and processing, and respond to those needs accordingly.

Look to PARCC's administrative considerations including small group testing, and accessibility features such as spell checking, highlighting, selective text-to-speech, glossaries, and noise buffers to address characteristics of learning problems where a problem exists but no disability is diagnosed.

Put Future First

Standardized tests make a convenient record. Our students' test scores will inevitably be interpreted by people without any richer information about them. In planning standardized testing, the IEP team ensures data recorded about our students is valid and reliable.

One study found the PARCC a valid predictor of college success, comparable to the SAT, but any test's prediction is only as valid as its administration. Think forward – does your testing plan today help your student do what they he or she will tomorrow? Whatever accommodations, administrative considerations, or accessibility features you elect to use, your gifted students will likely take the ACT and/or SAT, which only allow accommodations in cases of well-documented disabilities. What happens if your student relies on taking tests with supports she or he cannot access in transition to college?

Everything we do in education prepares our students for something else. After identifying the best way to administer standardized tests to your gifted students, practice other tests same way. As a result, you will know if your plans work, and your students will grow confidence, knowing the success of approaching standardized tests in the best ways for them.

Consider your gifted students' standardized testing as carefully as other parts of their individual plans. Thinking through the delivery of each gifted student's standardized tests can ensure they are a meaningful part of public education.

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Welcome New NMAG Board Members!

Christy Jewell-Roth-**President**

Christy Jewell-Roth is in her 24th year of teaching. For 16 years she taught in 3rd, 4th and 5th grade general education classrooms and has taught gifted education for the past 8 years. After completing a year as an intern teacher in Albuquerque Public Schools, she transferred to the Moriarty district, where she taught at Mountainview Elementary. She then transferred back to APS where she has been ever since, teaching at Comanche Elementary and North Star Elementary. She earned her Masters degree in Elementary Education in 2012 and successfully completed her dossier for Level 3 in 2014. Christy is very active in the Albuquerque Teacher's Federation and earned the Fed Rep of the Year award for 2013-14. This is her third year on the board for the New Mexico Association for Gifted.

PJ Sedillo-**President-Elect**

Currently an Assistant Professor at New Mexico Highlands University offering the gifted course work for endorsement. Gifted coursework offered at the graduate and undergraduate level, also offering a Masters in Special Education with a Gifted Emphasis.

Geoffrey Moon-**Past President**

Geoffrey Moon leads the SAGE program for Santa Fe Public Schools, where he teaches, identifies, designs programs for, and supports teachers of gifted children. He conducts professional development on identification and programming for gifted children. He has two children of his own, and a snowboard that doesn't like to be in the garage.

J Ortiz-**Secretary**

J coordinates gifted services at Espanola Public Schools and serves as Recording Secretary of the Board of NMAG. She has two amazing children; one of whom is an artist and university student and the other a video game loving, wrestling, middle school student.

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Brook Haines – **Treasurer**

Brook Haines has been a "most of her life" long resident of New Mexico and loves it here! She is the proud mother of a 16 year old, Connor, and a tuxedo cat, Mini-Moo. Her hobbies include reading, traveling, hiking, learning & exploring. She has been a teacher for 15 years and has spent 8 of those years working in gifted education. She has taught kindergarten through fifth grade in APS & RRPS. The last 12 years she has been at Stapleton Elementary in Rio Rancho. Teaching has been so much fun for her, but gifted education has been the best!

Steve Heil-**Publicity**

Steve supports gifted students at three Santa Fe Public Schools and helps to implement the district's FTAP 2 school-wide screening. As Publicity Chair on the board of NMAG, Steve manages this website and mailing list. Previously, as an art teacher in Gallup, NM, he earned National Board Certification and received the Golden Apple Excellence in Teaching Award in 2010.

Kathrine Kelton – **Membership**

Jessica Carlisle – **Newsletter**

Jessica is the head of the Gifted Department at Farmington High School. She also teaches Dual Credit Sociology, general elective sociology and AP Seminar. She has also worked with students as a youth director, camp counselor, Upward Bound tutor and Boys and Girls Club counselor.

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