

New Mexico Association for the Gifted Spotlight on Advocacy

January 2020



"Imagine what New Mexico would be like if the talents of all our demographic groups were developed equitably. Imagine what could happen if we made the dream of public education come true."

Geoffrey Moon

CREATING MORE ADVOCATES THROUGH PANGS

Pangs are defined as sudden feelings of mental or emotional distress or longing. This describes what it feels like as a parent of a gifted student when they are not receiving appropriate and equitable services. A new initiative for New Mexico Association for the Gifted is the creation of the Parent Advocacy Network for Gifted Students or PANGS. This is a free service for parents to assist them with information to appropriately advocate for excellence and equity of service for their gifted child/ren. We will be offering Facebook Live events, webinars, conference sessions and email blasts to keep the parents of our gifted up to date about advocating for their gifted child. You do not have to be a member of NMAG to join PANGS. Follow this link <https://forms.gle/EiRk18joU7QBp1Rq9> or scan the QR code to join. Please share this information with other parents of gifted children.

New Year, New Vision and Mission

NMAG has updated its mission to advocate that people with giftedness, talent or high potential are provided an appropriate educational experience matching their abilities and needs, and those who support these individuals are trained to appreciate, understand, and nurture them. We envision a future where giftedness, talent and high potential are fully recognized, universally valued, and actively nurtured.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY: IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUESTED

Your help is urgently needed!

NMAG is working hard to fulfill its mission to advocate that people with giftedness, talent or high potential are provided an appropriate educational experience matching their abilities and needs and that those who support these individuals are trained to appreciate, understand, and nurture them. We need your help to ensure that voices of the teachers, families, and others who support the needs of our gifted children are heard. We need your voice, too! We have learned that the NM Public Education Department has proposed a "Gifted Consultant" position for the Public Education

Department. New Mexico schools are mandated to provide equitable assessment, properly trained educators, and appropriate services to our gifted students. Over the last decade, the Public Education Department's support for gifted has faded and that has led to diminishing services in many parts of the state. One of the greatest losses was the elimination of the state consultant for gifted education in 2006. This position was solely dedicated to leadership in gifted education in our state. This position organized critical professional development in identifying and serving our best



Legislative Advocacy continued...

and brightest. This position provided parents with a forum for presenting concerns and finding solutions. This position assisted presenting concerns and finding solutions. This position assisted districts in remaining accountable in meeting our robust set of laws for providing for our gifted.

Gifted children are not born with their potential fully developed. Like every other child, they require education, nurturing, and support commensurate with their special needs and abilities. The gifted make up 5-7% of the population. These individuals make great contributions in all areas of endeavor and will make even greater ones if they are properly educated and nurtured. This starts with state support and leadership in the field of gifted education.

Please join us in encouraging legislators to pass this budget item through the following websites:

Legislative Education Study Committee Members

(https://www.nmlegis.gov/Entity/LESC/Committee_Information), Legislative Finance Committee

(https://www.nmlegis.gov/Entity/LFC/Committee_Information), House Education Committee

(https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Standing_Committee?CommitteeCode=HEC), and Senate Education Committee

(https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Standing_Committee?CommitteeCode=SEC).

EXAMPLE LETTER TO LEGISLATORS:

Dear Legislator,

For several years, the education for many of our children who are gifted in the state of New Mexico has suffered. Even though the state recognizes gifted children under the umbrella of special education, the underfunding of education in general has impacted gifted services disproportionately. As educators and professionals in the field of Gifted Education, and as parents of gifted children, we support the creation of a PED Position specifically focused on the needs of gifted learners and on supporting schools provide an appropriate education for their gifted students.

By ensuring that our gifted children receive comprehensive services targeted to their needs as New Mexicans, we will be able to grow our own future leaders and create well-rounded citizens. We will help build New Mexico's economy by attracting and keeping new businesses and providing a well-educated, qualified workforce. We will also be able to attract professionals to our state by providing a superior education for their gifted children. We must invest in our gifted children and set them up for success rather than just let them continue to "be fine" and remain unchallenged. Please support gifted education in our state by creating a position to oversee Gifted and ensure that gifted students receive equitable opportunities for excellence in instruction.

Sincerely,

[Enter Your Name], [Optional: Include your title or involvement in Gifted Education]

ADVOCACY THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Another focus of NMAG's new mission is assuring that parents, teachers and other supporters of the gifted are adequately educated to appreciate, understand, and nurture our gifted. Please help us to know what the needs are in the different regions of New Mexico by completing our Professional Needs survey at <https://forms.gle/dTP7QMxQ87HDCjog8> or scanning the QR code below. After analyzing the results, NMAG will develop webinars, regional trainings and Professional Learning Implementation Guides. Please help us know what you need to support the gifted in New Mexico.

