

# Supporting and Sustaining Gifted Education

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Supporting the needs  
of high potential learners



# Is this Advocacy?

- You're a classroom teacher, and you volunteer to serve on the committee to bring an arts integration curriculum to your school.
- You're on a plane ride, and strike up a conversation with the passenger next to you about the needs of gifted learners.

# Is this Advocacy?

- You make a presentation to a local service organization—Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce—about a service project the gifted kids in your classroom are conducting.
- You get to know the education reporters at local media outlets.
- You share an article or report (A Nation Deceived!) with administrators in your district.

# Advocacy

- **Advocacy** is the act of arguing on behalf of a particular issue, idea, person or animal. An advocate is someone who does this. Both the terms *advocate* and *advocacy* have specialist meanings in certain contexts, and among some groups. For instance:
- In a political context: An 'advocacy group' is an organized collection of people who seek to influence political decisions and policy, without seeking election to public office.

# It Depends....

- Successful advocacy depends on several strategies, no matter what issue you are working on. For gifted and talented education advocates, in addition to familiarizing yourself with the most powerful data and arguments to meet your situation, and making sure that your message is aimed at the right audience, advocates should take the time to consider the most effective means to communicate directly with elected officials as well as ways to maximize their impact by working with others or working indirectly to affect officials' views.

# Presentation Overview

- I. The National Picture
  - a. The Changing Educational Landscape
  - b. State of the Nation in Gifted Education
  - c. Policies That Support Gifted Learners
- II. The Role of NAGC
  - a. Mission and Goals
  - b. National Strategy for Supporting High Potential Students
  - c. Resources, Positions, and Standards
- III. Advocacy Tools You Can Use



# Supporting and Sustaining Gifted Education

## I. The National Picture

- The Changing Educational Landscape
- State of the Nation in Gifted Education
- Policies That Support Gifted Learners



# The Changing Educational Landscape

## What's Out...What's In

1. **OUT:** Complacency among educational leaders

2. **OUT:** Preaching to the Choir

**IN:** STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math, Innovation

**IN:** Reaching Out to General Education/Forming Coalitions



# The Changing Educational Landscape

## What's Out...What's In

3. **OUT:** “Anything Goes”  
Approach to  
Teaching

**IN:** Linking Teacher  
Accountability to  
Student Performance

4. **OUT:** Marginalizing  
Parents

**IN:** Passionate Parents  
as Effective  
Advocates for  
Services



# The Changing Educational Landscape

## What's Out...What's In

5. **OUT:** Individuals  
Supporting High  
Potential

**IN:** Connecting for High  
Potential

6. **OUT:** Using Distance as  
an Excuse for Not  
Providing Gifted  
Services

**IN:** Exploding Online  
Content & Virtual  
Classroom Support



# State of the Nation in Gifted Education

- Services are “A Patchwork Quilt”
- Federal Funding Challenges
- State Policy varies widely



# Federal Education Budget – 2007

## Program Allocation For Every \$100 Spent



Gifted  
Children  
\$0.03

Drug  
Abuse  
Prevention  
\$2

Reading  
First \$3

Children with  
Disabilities \$31

No Child Left Behind \$57

# Supporting and Sustaining Gifted Education

## II. The Role of NAGC

- Mission and Goals
- National Strategy for Supporting High Potential Students
- Resources, Positions, and Standards



# Mission

- The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) is an organization of parents, teachers, educators, other professionals, and community leaders who unite to address the unique needs of children and youth with demonstrated gifts and talents as well as those children who may be able to develop their talent potential with appropriate educational experiences.
- We support and develop policies and practices that encourage and respond to the diverse expressions of gifts and talents in children and youth from all cultures, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic groups. NAGC supports and engages in research and development, staff development, advocacy, communication, and collaboration with other organizations and agencies who strive to improve the quality of education for all students.



# Goals

## **Goal 1: Public Awareness**

The public understands, recognizes, values, and supports high potential youth.

## **Goal 2: Legislative Advocacy/Policy Development**

NAGC is a leader in the development of and advocacy for public policies that affect high potential youth.

## **Goal 3: Enhanced Competency**

NAGC's stakeholders have the knowledge and skills they need to be effective and successful in their support of high potential youth.

## **Goal 4: Information Resources**

NAGC will be the national clearinghouse for knowledge about high potential youth and the field of gifted education.

## **Goal 5: Leadership Development**

NAGC will encourage and develop a broad based pool of prepared leaders committed to strengthening both NAGC and the field.

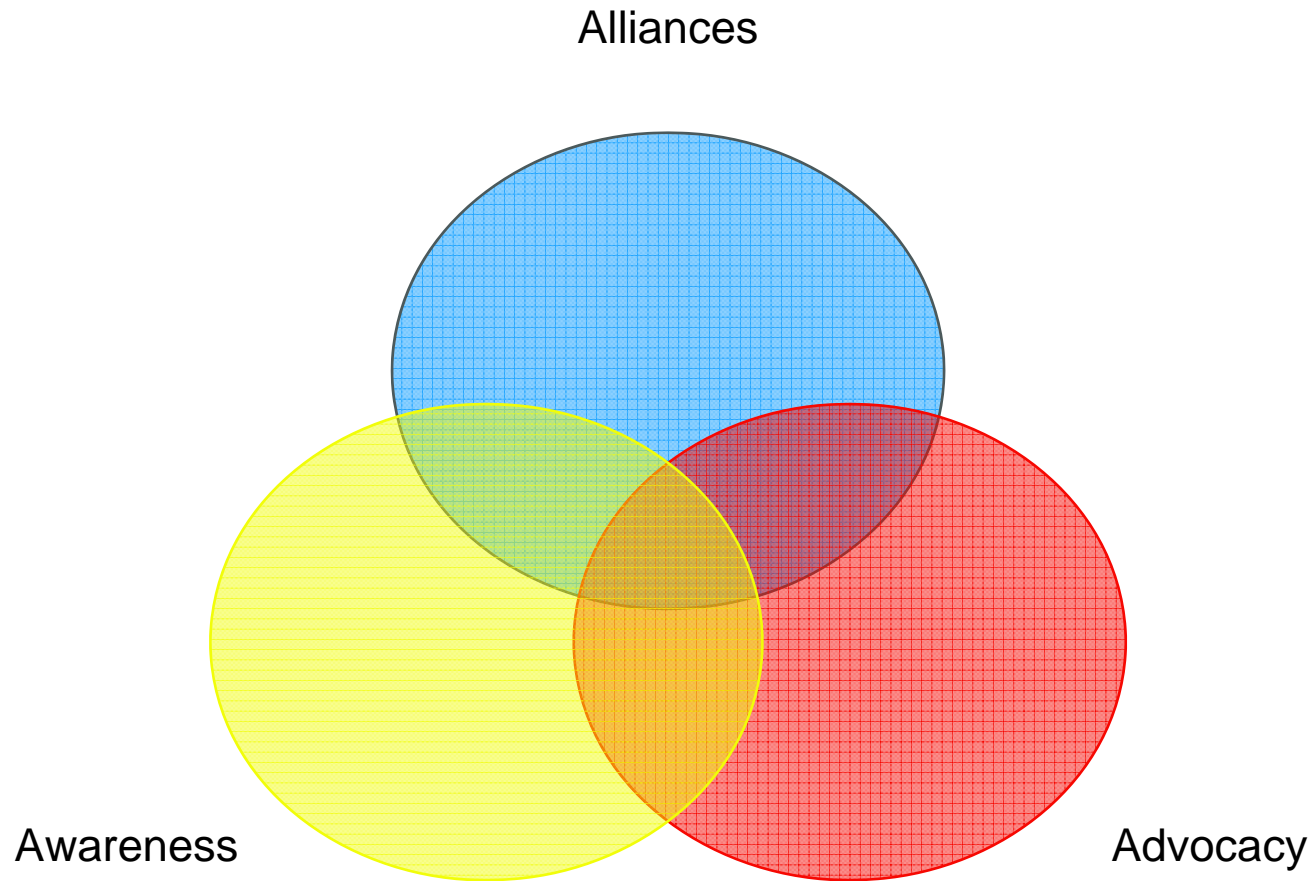
## **Goal 6: Strategic Alliances and Partnerships**

NAGC fosters strategic alliances and partnerships with other organizations in order to nurture high potential youth and develop talent.

## **Goal 7: Organizational Effectiveness**

NAGC is an effectively governed, diversely funded, efficiently managed organization that focuses its resources to address the needs of its growing membership.

# NAGC's Approach



# National Strategy for High Potential Students

All gifted and talented students in the U.S. are identified early and well supported to maximize their academic potential.

## Awareness

There are Gifted and Talented Students in All Student Populations

Gifted Students Don't Just Make It on Their Own

Gifted and Talented Students Need Specialized Educational Services

## Advocacy

**Policies Promoting Equity in Identification and Services**

**Accountability Systems Must Measure Advanced Achievement**

**Policies Should Accommodate Accelerated Learning**

**Advocate for Federal, State and Local Funding**

**Research Should Translate to Improved Instructional Practices**

## Alliances

Build Coalitions with General Education Organizations

Use Interest in STEM as Vehicle for Support

# Some Core Messages

- It is a national tragedy that our lower-income gifted students mirror their more affluent peers when they start school, yet steadily decline with each succeeding year.
- Our nation's ability to compete tomorrow depends on how well schools challenge advanced students in our classrooms today.
- Most gifted students are educated by regular classroom teachers who are not trained to meet their needs.

# Legislative Priorities

NAGC is currently promoting initiatives on Capitol Hill, which are tied to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the appropriations process.

- (1) ***Professional development funds in NCLB should include training for gifted & talented students***
- Currently, states must submit plans to the U.S. Department of Education on how they're using their federal dollars to train teachers under Title II of NCLB.
- We propose amending Title II, Part A (Teacher Quality) of NCLB to include a requirement that the needs of gifted and talented students are included in those plans

# Putting the Standards to Use

They can serve as:

- Benchmarks for measuring the effectiveness of gifted programming.
- Criteria for program evaluation and assessment.
- Guidelines for program design and development.
- Recommendations of the minimal requirements necessary for high-quality educational programming designed to meet the needs of gifted students.
- Tools for advocates of gifted education who are working on increasing the public's awareness of the needs of gifted and talented students in today's schools.

# Policies That Support Gifted Education

- A well-defined and implemented curriculum scope and sequence should be articulated for all grade levels and all subject areas.
- Possibilities for partial or full acceleration of content and grade levels should be available to any student presenting such needs.
- The designated gifted programming coordinator must have completed a certification program or advanced degree program in gifted education.
- Levels of services should be matched to the needs of gifted learners by providing a full continuum of options.

# Policies That Support Gifted Education

- Gifted education programming must receive funding consistent with the program goals and sufficient to adequately meet them.
- Gifted education policies should exist for at least the following areas: early entrance, grade skipping, ability grouping, and dual enrollment.
- School districts should allocate adequate time, financial support, and personnel to conduct systematic program evaluation.
- Counseling services should be provided by a counselor familiar with specific training in the characteristics and socio-emotional needs (i.e., underachievement, multipotentiality, etc.) of diverse gifted learners.

# **Policies That Support Gifted Education**

- All school staff should be provided ongoing staff development in the nature and needs of gifted learners, and appropriate instructional strategies.
- All personnel working with gifted learners should participate in regular staff development programs.
- Parents should be provided with specials workshops or seminars to gain a full meaning of giftedness.
- Student assessment data should come from multiple sources and include multiple assessment methods.

# **NAGC Position Statements**

- ✓ **ABILITY GROUPING**
- ✓ **ACCELERATION**
- ✓ **ADDRESSING AFFECTIVE NEEDS OF GIFTED CHILDREN**
- ✓ **COLLABORATION BETWEEN GIFTED AND GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**
- ✓ **COMPETENCIES NEEDED BY TEACHERS OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS**
- ✓ **COOPERATIVE LEARNING FOR GIFTED STUDENTS**
- ✓ **DIFFERENTIATION OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**
- ✓ **EARLY CHILDHOOD**
- ✓ **FINE ARTS EDUCATION**
- ✓ **APPROPRIATE EDUCATION FOR GIFTED GLBT STUDENTS**
- ✓ **STANDARDS FOR GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN GIFTED EDUCATION**
- ✓ **INCLUSION**
- ✓ **STUDENTS WITH CONCOMITANT GIFTS AND LEARNING DISABILITIES**
- ✓ **NAGC-NMSA JOINT POSITION STATEMENT**
- ✓ **MANDATED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS**
- ✓ **PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS**
- ✓ **USING TESTS TO IDENTIFY GIFTED STUDENTS**

# Supporting and Sustaining Gifted Education

## III. Advocacy Tools You Can Use



# Your Tool Kit

- **Program standards** in gifted education—a framework for policy development
- **The Data:** Research shows that gifted children need something different
- **Your Allies:** Parent groups, other education groups, corporate partners
- **Resources** from NAGC and other advocacy organizations around the world

# Reasons for Public Relations in Gifted Education:

- *to **promote** a better understanding of the nature and needs of gifted children and youth*
- *to **gain** positive support for appropriate programs*
- *to **keep** all constituent groups informed on key issues*
- *to **build** a knowledge base for advocacy*

# How to Get Started

- Decide on a clear goal.
- Identify objectives and activities to reach your goal.
- Select appropriate strategies.
- Determine cost effectiveness.
- Establish a reasonable timeline with dates for initiation, completion, and person(s) responsible.
- Develop evaluation criteria so you will know when you have achieved your goal.
- Get others involved so that you increase your support and communications base.

# NAGC'S Advocacy Toolkit

- [Know Your Information](#) - Check this out for fast facts about gifted and talented and why we need to advocate for students and programs!
- [Know Your Audience](#) - Look here for information about who works on what issues and how to contact them.
- [Effective Advocacy](#) - Read expert advice on effective communication and maximizing your impact.
- [Support Groups](#) - Advocating as part of a group gives you strength. Here are some suggestions on forming and finding support groups.
- [Local Advocacy](#) - Some of the most important decisions happen in your own community or school district, click here to learn more.
- [State Advocacy](#) - Advocating in your state? Check here for suggestions on how your state group can assess the legislative landscape.
- [Federal Advocacy](#) - Find out how to best communicate your message to Congress.
- [Legislative Update](#) - Read about current issues in Congress.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
**Gifted Children**

Supporting the needs of high potential learners

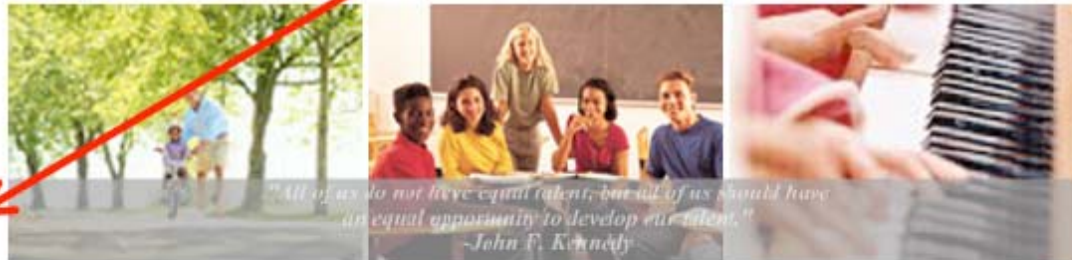
# NAGC ADVOCACY TOOLKIT



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## > Convention



The 2007 proposal process is now closed. You'll be hearing from us in the coming weeks!

## > New at NAGC



Conference Proceedings from the National Leadership Conference on Low-Income Promising Learners.

## > Resource Directory

NAGC's Resource Directory provides information on valuable resources for the gifted.

[Click Here](#) to view over 100 schools, programs, publishers, and other services for gifted students.

## > Gifted Left Behind



**Administrators wrestle with gifted and NCLB.**

AASA devotes magazine to meeting the needs of gifted learners in an NCLB environment. NAGC has compiled resources for

# And Finally...

NAGC has numerous resources to help advocates improve their skills. Visit [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org):

- *Advocacy Toolkit* (legislation & advocacy)
- Gifted Ed Standards (info & resources)
- Position Papers
- Articles and brochures

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has."*

*-Margaret Mead*

# Thank You!

[www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

