

WAETAG

Washington Association of Educators
of the Talented and Gifted



Fall 2018 Newsletter

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Learning Without Limits

THE WASHINGTON COALITION
FOR GIFTED EDUCATION

The Washington Coalition for Gifted Education has Started a New Fiscal Year

MORE THAN EVER they need your financial support for their important work.

The Coalition is the advocacy branch of the gifted community in Washington state. They work closely with Legislators and connect frequently with OSPI. They operate on the narrowest of budgets (a net operating loss last year), so



INNOVATION & EQUITY

OCTOBER 12-13, 2018

Hilton Bellevue, Bellevue, WA

4 KEYNOTES | 3 WORKSHOPS | 4 BREAKOUTS
2e2 FILM SCREENING | up to 14 CLOCK HOURS

WAETAG

2018



Dr. Kristina Collins



Lisa Van Gemert

[Register today!](#)

STANDARD REGISTRATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 1

Register before October 1st to avoid late registration rates.



President's Message

Welcome to WAETAG 2018: Innovation and Equity

Wendy Clark
WAETAG President

Each year as the annual WAETAG conference draws nearer; I can feel my excitement build. This year is no exception. There are few things in life as powerful as surrounding yourself with several hundred professionals, all coming together to bring the very best of ourselves to each other so we can bring the very best to our students.

The lineup of keynote speakers, workshops and breakout sessions this year truly has something for everyone. By using the Whova app you can preview everything right now and start building your personalized Agenda*. Gone are the days of rapidly skimming the paper program upon checking in at the site and feeling rushed to make decisions of where to go first. Oh, and then try to figure out how to get there! Did I mention the Whova app also has venue floor maps? Other beneficial options that can enhance your conference experience include finding sessions based on your desired Tracks*, connecting and networking with other Attendees*, and myriad additional tools on the Community* page.

w e urge you to be generous in your support.

The Coalition relies heavily on the counsel, guidance and contacts of our lobbyist Donna R. Christensen. In order to afford her monthly retainer fee of \$850.00, they need contributions of \$10,200. In addition, there are other expenses.

The next Legislative session is going to be extremely important, so, to be on the safe side, the coalition needs income this year of \$14,000. Every contribution counts, no matter how large or small it might be.

Donations are accepted online by credit card through PayPal. Please [CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#) on PayPal. You don't need a PayPal account to use a credit card with them.

The Washington Coalition for Gifted Education is a registered political advocacy organization, chartered in the state of Washington. We are not a 501(c)(3) organization.

THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU ARE DOING TO SUPPORT GIFTED CHILDREN!

WAETAG

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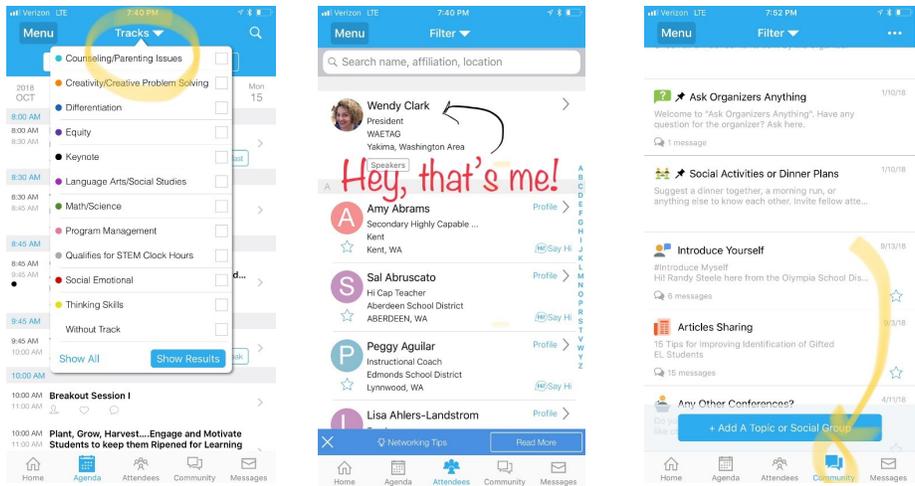
Immediate Past President

we will be having a film screening. This year's film is the sequel to the highly acclaimed documentary released in 2014, *2e: Twice Exceptional*. *2e2: Teaching the Twice Exceptional* was recently released at this summer's SENG conference, and we've secured screening rights for you to see it with us at WAETAG.

Please join us in Bellevue on October 12-13 for WAETAG 2018: Innovation & Equity. In the meantime, download the app, create your profile, explore the options, build your agenda, read the shared articles, and introduce yourself. I can't wait to hear from you, and I'll be waiting to see you in Bellevue!

Directions for downloading the Whova app can be found [here](#).

*Useful tools found on Whova app. See images.



Click Here for a Message from The Gifted Guru, Lisa Van Gemert!



Pst! Did you hear the part in her video about bringing her good friends Ian Byrd (a two-time WAETAG keynote) and Patti Bear with her to also present at WAETAG 2018? We just love those kinds of awesome surprises! Don't you?

National History Day: An Authentic Project-Based

Affiliate Representatives

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WA Gifted Coalition
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Stay Connected



Learning Experience

Robert Fawcett, Treasurer
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National History Day is a state and national program that allows students to explore events from history and is ideal for project based learning in the classroom. Students have the opportunity to enter and defend their projects in authentic competition, raising the levels of rigor and standards. Nationally, more than 500,000 middle and high school students participate in NHD.



Project-based learning provides students the opportunity to learn, practice and hone multiple skills, while working on a project for an extended period of time. It also allows for the possibility of multi-disciplinary teaching and learning. National History Day projects' learning meets (exceeds) standards in the social studies and language arts content areas, and depending on the student's project choice, can involve technology and drama instruction, as well.

The 2019 National History Day Theme is Triumph and Tragedy in History. Students choose a topic that works within the theme, research the background information, and analyze its significance in history. Final projects evidence much higher levels of critical thinking and analysis than simply reviewing history. Students are engaged in learning and teaching the "why" as well as the "who, when, and where" of their topics. Further, students analyze why their topic is important to our past and how it will influence our futures.

While researching a topic in history, students learn how to find primary and secondary sources, determine credibility of sources, and read and analyze informational texts. As they move forward in preparing their information, students participate in the informative/expository writing process, drafting, revising and preparing their information for publication. They cite sources with in-text citations and prepare an annotated bibliography. Students then have a choice of how they want to present the information they have researched. The project may be an exhibit, website, documentary, performance, or a paper. All of the options allow for either individual or partner project, with the exception of the paper, which must be an individual project. The projects range from being fairly simple to extensive, depending upon the desires and skills of the student, allowing for choice and differentiation. Throughout research and project development, students also learn project planning and time management skills by breaking the larger project into small pieces and meeting deadlines or checkpoints established by the teacher and themselves.

Presentation of the projects during class provides an opportunity for the students to further their presentations skills and gain confidence. Students may compete in regional competitions around the state in March. Those who place have the option to participate in the WA State competition on May 9, 2019 at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, WA. Washington State's contest winners will have the opportunity to represent our state at the National Contest June 9-13, 2019 at the University of Maryland, College Park. All of these competitions are incredible growth experiences for our students.

The National History Day organization has resources on [their website](#). Teachers using NHD in their classroom will want to bookmark the [NHD Theme Book](#), for resources and guidelines.

What More Can We Possibly Want?

Jan Kragen
Legislative Liaison



Highly Capable education has scored some big wins over the last few years-being added into Basic Education, doubling the funding for the formula. What more can we want?

Several members of the Washington Coalition for Gifted Education, WAETAG, and NWGCA traveled to Olympia on August 13 to meet with representatives from three different organizations; OSPI, Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA), and members of the Senate Committee Staff.

Coalition members had two goals in mind: build connections with other groups and share our vision of what still needs to be done for highly

capable students in our state.

OSPI with Jody Hess

Being in charge of Highly Capable Education for the state of Washington, Jody really knows gifted issues. She regularly meets with WAETAG at our annual conference and often our summer retreat.

Jody shared the new and improved online reporting system. David Berg, the Coalition member who tracks data for the group, commented that if the state continues to use this system consistently, it will be much easier to compare data from year to year.

Jody's duties at OSPI include guidance to districts in terms of programming. She also assembles districts' annual plans and End of Year Reports, and she analyzes the data and reports data from these. If a concerned parent calls OSPI because of problems in the district, it is Jody who takes the call. She also follows up with each district each time. The task is daunting, given the fact that half the districts in the state have needed to start programming for the first time since the inclusion of highly capable as part of Basic Education.

In addition to her regular duties Jody has shepherded our state's Javits grant and the development of the HiCapPLUS Professional Learning Modules as well as WaKIDS, the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills. She's traveled around the state helping to introduce those programs and train educators in their use.

Jody's position is only half-time. She has one staff member. One goal the Coalition has is more staffing at OSPI.

WSSDA with Executive Director, Tim Garchow

Tim introduced himself by giving his background in gifted education, including early on, when his fifth grade student patented and sold his science fair project to the Air Force! He said that's when he realized gifted students really were different. He's very sympathetic to our concerns, but there are limits to what he can do within the structure of their organization.

One goal we have is requiring that when students are screened for highly capable programs, the testing is done at their home school and inside the school day, instead of Saturday testing, sometimes at a different location. He was not aware that some districts did Saturday testing. Another goal we have is universal screening, testing all students from at least one grade level every year. Yet another goal is mandated professional development, not only for teachers, but for principals, counselors, and superintendents. Tim added, "and bus drivers."

What? Tim then he told the story of the driver who had a bus full of highly capable kids, so he started a book club with them. He got them all copies of the same book and read it with them. Then, they all discussed the book together while he drove them to and from school. Genius!

As Tim said, everyone who comes in contact with these kids needs to know how to deal with them.

Members of the Senate Committee Staff, Susan Mielke and Sarian Scott

Susan and Sarian were quick to point out that they are nonpartisan. They cannot advocate for any position. All they can do is research and provide information to the legislature to answer their questions. On the other hand, they were happy to have us come down and introduce ourselves. One thing they do is figure out how much bills will cost.

A goal we mentioned repeatedly during the day was the need for transportation to programs, as an equity issue.

Post Aug. 13

After August 13, the Coalition worked to prioritize the goals we shared with the groups on that day of meetings:

- Additional staffing at OSPI
- No Saturday testing
- Universal screening
- Professional development at least for principals, superintendents, and counselors
- Transportation

Teachers of highly capable around the state, you are always welcome to write to your legislator or local newspaper and advocate for any or all of the Coalition goals! See the sidebar for information on the Coalition and a link to make a donation.

Teach Them Early: EASY ≠ SMART

Wendy Clark
President
(revised Fall 2018)

With the beginning of another year upon us, I have come to expect the same conversation

with several parents of gifted students. These conversations began when I was a third grade teacher with the newly identified gifted students clustered in my room, and they've continued with my new role as a K-12 district coordinator. The parents are concerned. Their child is upset that school is too hard, perhaps the teacher doesn't like him or her. They don't understand. In past years, their child enjoyed school, even though sometimes it was too boring. They are worried. Will their smart child dislike school and not reach his or her potential?



My end of the conversation usually goes something like this: "I understand why you're concerned. Your child is very capable, and so far in school most things have come quite easily, possibly too easily. We're trying to meet her needs by providing work at her level, which may be higher than her grade level's standards. It's important for your child to work through these new challenges and learn now that EASY does not equal SMART." At this last comment, I get mixed reactions. While many recognize the need for a mindset that welcomes challenge and hard work, some don't agree that even eight-year-olds should be expected to work through difficult tasks that challenge their abilities, no matter how far above grade level their abilities lie.

Understandably, the majority of the K-2 years are spent learning the most technical aspects of reading, that letters make sounds which translate into words. It is extremely important that we spend much energy getting students to learn how to read in K-2, so that they can more easily transition from *learning to read*, to *reading to learn*. So, what happens with students that come to school already knowing how to read? The same can be wondered about the ability to compute and decompose multi-digit numbers or compose sophisticated stories.

If we're not careful about the kind of feedback and praise we give students - "That was so fast, you are so smart!" - students may end up thinking that they must be so, because things come easily to them. What happens then when they come upon a challenge? As analogies go, once young kids think that "easy = smart," then it isn't a huge leap for them to feel that "hard = dumb."

How do we prevent or fix this kind of thinking? We need to be careful with our praise and focus on the effort put forth. This will help to develop a growth mindset as opposed to a fixed one. Carol Dweck, a Stanford University psychologist, has published a lot of research in this area. People with a fixed mindset believe that their intelligence and talents are static and may not spend time trying to develop them. Years of praising students for tasks that require little to no effort may inadvertently help lead them to a fixed mindset, and keep them from attempting challenging tasks that put them at risk of failure. By recognizing the high intelligence and talents in our gifted students early, and providing encouragement and praise for efforts during difficulties, we can help them to develop resiliency. To not only persevere through challenges, but to also seek them out in order to foster capabilities is a worthy goal for all students. Hard work does matter, and students need to develop grit. However, having either a fixed or a growth mindset won't make anyone more or less gifted. [This article](#), published in *Psychology Today*, shows that while hard work may trump talent, that's only the case if talent doesn't also work hard.

In small districts where the basis of the highly capable program in the early grades is clustering students with teachers that have had some training in the area of giftedness, it is essential that teachers learn to foster a growth mindset. Clustered students are in general education classrooms, where it may be easy for them to get the message that putting forth little effort will result in the highest grades, rewards, or praise. Simply measuring their work against the grade level standards or bell curve of the class isn't enough. We need to keep them challenged, recognizing attempts and failures as opportunities to help them develop a growth mindset. This [video](#) by Northwest Gifted Child Association is a fabulous example of how students that don't experience challenge in their early elementary years don't learn how to learn and develop grit. This often leads to underachievement and fear of failure when they are older.

Carol Dweck has outlined four steps to help develop grit and move from a fixed to a growth mindset. You can read about them [here](#). These steps can help students recognize and talk back to negative, fixed mindset thoughts. Using this kind of metacognition, students then begin to take action and seek opportunities for growth. Gifted students need to know and understand their giftedness, to recognize that their unique traits and strengths. Teach them early. Yes, many tasks may still come easier to them because they are smart or talented, but when the going gets tough the easy:smart::hard:dumb analogy will no longer hold them back.

For more on this topic:

[How Not to Talk to Your Kids](#)

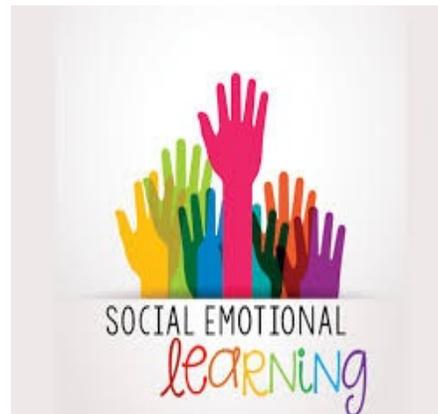
[Living and Creating: Fear is Not a Disease](#)

[The Power of Belief - Mindset and Success](#)

What is it and why is it important?

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) involves processes through which children and adults cultivate essential life skills, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and learn how to constructively handle adversity.

John Hattie studied what works best in schools and released his findings in *Visible Learning*. Influences were rated as to how much they affect student outcomes and all influences above 0.40 are labeled as "zone of desired effects." ***Developing relationships with students has a 0.71 effect size on student growth.***



How is this important to gifted students? Aren't they doing just fine?

Asynchronous development (mismatch between cognitive, emotional and physical development) is a part of the definition of gifted children. And, they often have intensities that accompany their giftedness. Gifted students are at risk for difficulty with self-regulation, self-confidence (imposter syndrome), developing resilience, challenges finding and building friendships (social outliers), maintaining motivation (underachievement), perfectionism, and more. These students will benefit from support in managing their empathy, issues with bullying, and emerging leadership skills. One of the biggest myths about highly-capable students is that it is assumed that they will be just fine.

Where can I start learning more?

[OSP's Social Emotional Learning](#)

[Edutopia: 5 Keys to Social and Emotional Learning Success](#)

[Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#)

[Ecological Approach to Social Emotional Learning \(EASEL\)](#)

[Character Counts](#)

[Bibliotherapy and Gifted Learners](#)

[Whitworth University Center for Gifted Education](#) (online classes available)

Understanding the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Students (2010) by Thomas Hebert

Creativity in Education

Kim Kooistra
Secretary

Creativity in the Classroom

As educators committed to preparing students to become flexible thinkers, we can create a learning environment that fosters inquiry and creates tasks that combine a vacillation between divergent and convergent thinking. Asking dialogic questions instead of monologic questions produces a classroom committed to thinking together. Bronson and Merryman (2010) encourage developing a classroom space where "there is never one right answer." Powerful learning combines choice and authenticity; it engages students in producing an authentic end product, creating a process that is student led, and simulates the methods of an expert in the field.



There are many small prep strategies that can be used frequently in any classroom. Counting the number of questions that students ask during a class, with the goal of increasing the number, results in creating a space that is open to inquiry. Encouraging our students to think with us and modeling the use of our curiosity to drive inquiry into areas that interest us helps to provide a model pathway that our students can emulate, as well.

Another strategy that can be used, to develop a love of reading, is to use cliffhangers and

mysteries to discuss events in books. This fosters a need to know what comes next in books (Engel, 2013). Additionally, Engel (2013) suggests that this curiosity hooks students into a more in-depth exploration of novels. Finally, using problem-based learning projects can achieve multiple objectives while still meeting the requirements found in the Common Core State Standards.

As teachers, we are constantly engaged in the act of being creative within certain boundaries. I heard Ron Beghetto speak at EduFest in 2016, and he defined creativity as being innovative within constraints. I think my practical nature resonates with this idea. In Beghetto's *Teaching for Creativity in the Common Core Classroom* he takes the stance that "creativity can be thought of as originality expressed within the conventions and constraints of academic subject matter" (p. 18).

Creativity for Leadership

We need leaders who can be creative. In *Big Wins, Small Steps: How to Lead For and With Creativity*, Ron Beghetto encourages us to "sit with uncertainty" (30), because it is at that point that a creative solution is most needed. Beghetto offers the following checklist to help us face uncertainty:

- Consider and discuss creativity-stifling fears
- Reframe uncertainty as a starting point that signals the need for a creative solution
- Approach the discussion with an ability to reconsider the route you have taken in the past and be prepared to "engage in possibility thinking"(40)
- Be vulnerable and ready to let go

If we can teach students to become flexible thinkers who can engage in facing uncertainty, then I think we can prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow.

References

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