

WAETAG

Washington Association of Educators of the Talented and Gifted

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WAETAG Newsletter Winter 2016

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Dear Jan,

Gifted Education Day
January 29, 2016
9 A.M. - 2 P.M.

The Columbia Room, Legislative Building

*Join us in advocating for full and equitable funding of
Highly Capable Programs.*

Save the Date



Hotel Murano
Oct. 14-15, 2016

President's Message

Kari DeMarco



Conference Wrap-up

To those of you who came to October's conference, I sincerely hope we succeeded in helping you to "Bulk Up Your Toolkit!" I know I learned a lot, and not just about how to get by on very little sleep...

Our keynotes, Lori Comallie-Caplan and Ian Byrd, were very well received. They seemed to have the research base, practical experience, and delivery style that appealed to most of us.

Our attendance, at over 450 registrants, was our best ever. Woo hoo! WAETAG's primary mission is to equip teachers to serve highly capable students, so we are pleased you came. Might I suggest something? Ask your principal if you can have a few minutes to share the best "tools" you gained with your colleagues. Let's keep getting the word out that ALL kids should be able to learn something new every day!

Thank you to those of you who filled out our online survey. Overall the responses were very positive, and we surely appreciate it. Of course, we keep learning and relearning what we need to try to improve on, too. As an example, many of you said the Saturday lunch was too long, and then the Saturday sessions too short, as a result. We hear you! And we will seek to adjust accordingly for 2016.

Speaking of 2016, our theme is "Oceans of Excellence - Navigating the

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High Caps." Clever, right?! We will hope to provide you a few theoretical and a lot of practical ways to help you navigate your way through another successful school year with highly capable kids, even when sometimes the waters get rough. We hope to see you October 14 and 15, 2016, at the beautiful Hotel Murano in Tacoma!

Federal Javitz Grant Awarded to Washington State OSPI

Shelley Seslar



OSPI was delighted to discover in October 2015 that their federal Jacob K. Javits Gifted & Talented Students Education grant application was funded for the next three years. The purpose of this grant program is "to carry out a coordinated program of research, demonstration projects, and innovative strategies designed to build and enhance the ability of elementary and secondary schools to meet the special education needs of gifted and talented students."

OSPI realizes that there is not currently adequate specific funding at the districts to do much more than identify our highly capable students, so the purpose of their Javits grant proposal is to develop staff capacity for school-based services that go beyond identification, prepping general education teachers to provide appropriate programming to highly capable students in the regular classroom setting. OSPI will be focusing on sending best-practice research-based strategies straight into classroom practices delivered by teachers.

The 3-year OSPI Javits program will create professional development modules, provided to teachers over a simple online-learning platform to make it accessible statewide. The modules' content will be developed in partnership with the experts at University of Washington and Whitworth University. Then, these learning modules will be made available first to teachers in Professional Learning Communities in pilot sites within seven districts and two ESDs. Concurrently, OSPI will be vetting these modules out to in-state experts for feedback. The first content developed will be quite basic, starting at the beginning for all teachers and administrators. Content level will build over the three years of the grant period, while evaluating the progress and effect of the training on teacher practices and student learning.

One provocative idea that has been offered to OSPI for consideration is the development of parent awareness modules for district use to help parents become aware of Highly Capable student needs and issues. Early plans include a parent awareness heading, so this may be an idea with staying power. OSPI has begun inviting partners and experts to assist in this training development with a kick-off meeting held January 7th at Puget Sound ESD. More to come!

Legislative Listening Tours

Charlotte Akin

From September 30 until the last week in October, the Senate Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee went around the state, stopping at seven of the nine Educational Service Districts on a listening tour to gather input from constituents and professionals regarding education funding. With support from the Coalition (The Washington Coalition for Gifted Education), we were able to have people at each and every one of these speaking of the need for funding in highly capable. Some of the speakers were parents, some were school board members, some were teachers, and some were administrators.

OSPI Representative
[Gayle Pauley](#)

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Each time the nine members of the legislative committee were faced with people advocating for highly capable children who told their stories and asked for help.

Be proud of the people who took the time to advocate for our kids, our schools, and our programs. And then contact your state senator and legislator(s) and make your voice heard, too. Click [here](#) to find your legislator.

WAETAG Mission Statement

WAETAG was formed by educators dedicated to the improvement of educational opportunities for gifted students, by strengthening services to and providing information for professionals serving these students in all settings. Toward that goal, WAETAG has adopted the following aims and purposes:

Increase public and professional awareness of the need for appropriate educational opportunities for talented and gifted students.

Encourage development of programs for professional preparation and growth in gifted and talented education.

Assist with national, state, and local legislation to provide consistent challenge for all students.

Cooperate with other groups to organize and to enhance educational opportunities for all students.

Support quality programs which increase challenging educational opportunities for all students

Successful Hi-Cap Partnership in Cooperative Agreement with North Central ESD

Shelley Seslar



North Central ESD maintains a cooperative agreement in 2015-16 with 17 small (2nd Class) school districts in its region for technical assistance with their highly capable programs. The cooperative has been in existence for two years now, and is funded annually at a low rate per student FTE. The agreement includes support for a part-time Highly Capable Program coordinator at North Central ESD - Shelley Seslar - who is then available to attend state meetings and develop regional capacity to respond to the

new legislation and developments in the state requirements for highly capable programs.

To date, the cooperative has also funded no-charge local professional development opportunities for general education teachers on differentiation strategies for highly capable learners. The cooperative also supports annual meetings for administrators to learn the latest on hi-cap topics and requirements and network together to learn how other districts are responding. The cooperative funding allows districts to request technical assistance at their sites at any time as well, to consult on annual plans, identification procedures, hi-cap services, and end-of-year reporting.

The presence of the HCP cooperative funding allows North Central ESD to maintain capacity around highly capable issues and bring up those issues in meetings of the ESD Learning & Teaching Team on a regular basis. Without this capacity, the Learning & Teaching Team would tend to consider only the needs of struggling learners, rather than the advanced learner, as often happens in schools as well. This creates ripple effects on the professional development and resources available to districts from their ESD, relevant to considering advanced learner needs within the context of other instructional strategies and ed reform, that would be unlikely to happen otherwise. It has been a successful model in the North Central region in raising awareness of highly capable student issues and needs, and improving school districts' responsiveness.

WAETAG, Winter 2016

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