

WAETAG

Washington Association of Educators of the Talented and Gifted

WAETAG Newsletter Winter 2015

www.waetag.net

In This Issue

[Gifted Education Day 2015](#)

[Student Scholarship Opportunity](#)

[Celebration of Talent 2015](#)

[WAETAG Board](#)

[WAETAG Mission Statement](#)

[President's Message](#)

[A Distinguished Leader Through the Years](#)

[A Response to a Question](#)

[The Ultimate Plan to Help Gifted Education](#)

Dear Jan,

President's Message

Kari DeMarco



WAETAG Conference 2014 Wrap-Up

"Beyond the Stereotypes" was beyond my dreams! I was on a high for two solid days, just hoping and believing we were helping teachers to better serve kids.

Planning began a year ago. Kathleen Casper and I met at her cute little cabin in Packwood and began dreaming. We took the feedback of what attendees enjoyed and suggested from 2013. With that, we knew what to keep doing but also what to change.

We dreamed and schemed.

As vice president, conference chair and "grown up gifted kid," Kathleen took our vision and made it a reality. She added longer breaks between sessions, hands-on tours, social media and nabbed an inspirational keynote speaker. With her tireless efforts and the support of the rest of the board, we gave you our best.

Nevertheless, we always want to do better! Just like you, we want to keep upping our game, delivering the best possible education to those we serve. We are continuing to listen to your feedback; thanks for providing it.

Probably the biggest participant concern this year was that we didn't have much in the way of descriptions for the sessions. The title and speaker were not enough to make a decision on which session to attend. We totally agree and will fix that next year!

Another issue was the clock hours. This was out of our control, and has to do with WACs that OSPI must follow. Being that OSPI issued the clock hours, we were merely thankful that they did so, and we are sorry that it felt "miserly" to at least one of you.

Another common concern was that the speakers did not provide enough handouts. We tried to avoid this by having people sign up for which sessions they wanted when they registered. Therefore we hoped to have enough chairs, handouts, and room in general. But it seems that when secretaries signed up their teachers, the individual session selection did not happen. So, we apologize. We are looking into perhaps using DropBox or some other method to circumvent this issue for 2015.

Overall, we got a lot of great feedback. People loved our theme, enjoyed the inspirational message from Dr. Joy Lawson Davis, enjoyed the offerings of our breakout presenters, tours, and more.

Save the Date!

WAETAG Conference 2015
"Bulk Up Your Toolkit!"
October 16 & 17
Hotel Murano, Tacoma

Gifted Education Day 2015



Gifted Education Day will be **Wednesday, March 11, 2015** in the Columbia Room of the Capitol Building on our State Capitol campus.

This is a critical year for our legislature in terms of educational funding. It would be great to see many parents and students at this

event! It is an opportunity to participate in state government by talking with legislatures and seeing first hand where our laws are made.

Summer Scholarship Opportunity

This year WAETAG will again grant scholarships to students in grades 3-11 wishing to attend summer university programs. Up to four \$500 (not to exceed tuition costs) scholarships will be awarded.

To apply, students must complete and submit an application packet, which includes an information sheet, an essay and a teacher recommendation.

For more information, including criteria and application packets, please visit the [WAETAG website](#). Look under the "Resources for Students" tab.

Contact [Vicki Edwards](#) for more information.

The application deadline is April 1, 2015.

Prodigy Northwest Celebration of Talent 2015 Inland Northwest Conference

Saturday, March 21, 2015

Whitworth University
Spokane, Washington

Don't miss this fourth annual conference designed to enlighten **children, parents and educators** on the topic of giftedness and the unique challenges and benefits that it all brings. A variety of motivating activities for students and youth, and breakout sessions for parents

Some of the feedback made all our volunteer hours worthwhile. We do it for teachers so they can serve highly capable students. Some of you made us feel happy to give our time again for 2015:

"Thank you so much. Feel so supported in what can be a very lonely vocation... a voice crying in the wilderness."

"Can't wait for more!"

"First time here and I will be back!"

"Super. Lots of 'bounty.' I'm enthused!"

"Great presentations with knowledgeable presenters. Great ideas shared between presenters/attendees... Lots of applicable activities for my classroom to engage higher level thinking, collaboration and to develop classroom community."

"I enjoyed meeting my colleagues and was able to take back several ideas to my classroom."

"Loved the breakouts today. Very useful and down to earth. I will use it all. Wonderful groups!"

"Great conference overall! Thank you!"

"I can't wait to put the new ideas into effect!"

"Presenters are experts in their fields, provide first-hand knowledge of subject. I came away with PowerPoint presentations and written materials I can translate into lessons in my classroom. Great experience."

"Awesome conference."

"Great selection of speakers."

"The conference topic was very interesting and I look forward to next year."

"Inspirational speakers."

"Fantastic as always! "

"The workshops were especially helpful. Also, many presenters gave out free and excellent lesson plans!"

"I learned a lot of much needed information."

"I very much enjoyed the conference again this year. I attended last year and enjoyed both years tremendously."

"It was very hard to wake up on a Saturday morning at 6:45 to drive to Tacoma from Seattle for this PD but I AM SO GLAD I DID!! I learned so much today in all four breakout sessions. I will rave about this conference to my colleagues."

Thank you SO much for the kudos. We can live on them to get back to planning an even better 2015 conference! Soon I will meet with Vicki Edwards, incoming conference chair, to use your ideas to keep improving.

You asked for your tool kits to be filled with handy tools such as identification strategies, instructional tips for 2e students, technology ideas, how to deal with Common Core, acceleration guidance, and more. We will be responding to your wishes the best we can!

Meanwhile, consider submitting a speaker proposal. (Speakers get free attendance they day they speak!) Breakout sessions are the meat and potatoes of any good conference. So we need YOU, the front-line experts, to give your best lesson plans, a-ha's, and visions to the rest of us! Share, share, and share some more. That's what we do as a community of Washington educators of the talented and gifted.

A Distinguished Leader Through the Years for WAETAG's 30th Birthday!

Charlotte Akin

Dr. Nancy Robinson, co-founded the Robinson Center for Young Scholars at the University of Washington with her late husband Halpert in 1977 - seven years before the birth of WAETAG. This year, for WAETAG's 30th birthday, we were thrilled to announce a leader who has distinguished herself throughout all of those years. The Center remains a vital part of gifted education in Washington and is recognized in our nation and world as a model for early entrance to

and educators.

www.prodigynw.org

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college for our brightest students. Dr. Robinson, now retired, has remained active in the gifted education community nation-wide. She has accrued many awards over the years, and we felt it was time to honor her in her own state.

In addition to honoring Dr. Robinson, WAETAG celebrated its 30th birthday in other ways at our conference this year. Dr. Jayasri Ghosh, founder of WAETAG and its first president, spoke at the conference giving a history of her route from Bombay, India to Washington and the \$50 grant she got to found a state professional association! We also hosted a Founder's Reception during one of our breakout sessions at the conference where past presidents and those early founders of WAETAG got together to reminisce and catch up with old friends. Attending the reception were Jody Hess, Stephen Martin, Dr. Nancy Robinson, Dr. Jayasri Ghosh, Charlotte Akin, Mary Freitas, Marcia Holland, to name a few. We discussed putting together a document about WAETAG's history. Stay tuned!

A Response to a Question

Mike Cantlon



In the late summer of 1979, it was my good fortune to be hired by the Kent School District as a teacher in their intermediate self-contained gifted program. Following a rather quick tour of Spring Glen Elementary School just two days prior to the arrival of my fifth/sixth grade students, we finally entered the classroom where I would begin my teaching career. A cursory scan of the room revealed desks, chairs, empty book shelves, and a wonderful view of the Olympic Mountain Range, but no textbooks. The principal, soon to be retired, and I had a nice chat about bus schedules and other school policies and then I politely inquired about the lack of text books. His response took me by surprise, "This is a gifted program; I didn't think you needed them." At that moment I came to the realization that I would need to create my own curriculum. With the help of some great friends and brilliant colleagues (and the University of Washington book store), I developed a project based, individualized program for five subject areas. All of this required curriculum compacting, curriculum acceleration, and higher level questioning strategies. Over time, my students and I made many adjustments to our curriculum and the feedback from both students and parents was very positive.

Many, if not all, teachers who were developing educational opportunities for highly capable students in those days most likely went through a similar process and as a result we have created a multitude of experiences for gifted youngsters. As teachers in general education classrooms began to discover these more specialized curricula, they would inquire about the possibility of using many of these activities with their students. Many times, I was asked, "What are you doing in your gifted class that we shouldn't be doing in our regular class?" That was a great question and it often led to very interesting discussions. As I reflect upon my history as a teacher in the five programs for highly capable students of which I have been a part, I realize that perhaps the single most important aspect of my "gifted" curriculum has been higher level questioning strategies. Creative activities are great, yet they should be infused with well-placed questions that evoke more thoughtful and complex responses and, in this way, it is possible for teachers in a general education classroom to begin accommodating the needs of their highly capable students.

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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

Recently, gifted education has been placed within the purview of basic education in Washington State and thus each district must ensure that highly capable students from grades K-12 have access to programs that meet their special needs. In nearly every district, it becomes incumbent upon the general education teacher in the neighborhood schools to develop programs/activities for this population and, in many cases, to identify the students who are eligible for these services. Each teacher will fulfill this responsibility in her/his unique way, yet when considering the additional responsibilities of the new teacher evaluation system (TPEP) and new curriculum based on the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the work load can feel quite overwhelming and, as a result, cause a fair amount of frustration. And here's where higher level questioning strategies can help to save the day. Programs such as Bloom's Taxonomy, Costa's Levels of Inquiry, and The Six Types of Socratic Questions are great tools for helping to achieve the goals of challenging highly capable students in any subject area. All of these tools are extremely teacher friendly and with a relatively short in-service, teachers can become comfortable with the process of asking the right question of the right student at the right time. With minimal adjustments to the required curriculum in the general education classroom, learning can become more challenging and meaningful to students of all intellectual and academic abilities.

The Ultimate Plan to Help Gifted Education (and Improve Education for All Kids in the Process)

Kathleen Casper



Gifted education is not going to fix itself. No matter how many gifted people talk to each other about how much their children need different educational experiences, we still cannot move the mountains of politicians and corporations who stand in our way. We can have all the gifted education conferences that we want. We can publish magazine articles and counsel gifted families and teach gifted children and beg our school districts and states to change policies. Sometimes they throw us a bone. But mostly the states and federal people take bones away from education in general these days. Or if

they are giving things to education usually it is tied in with things like standardized testing, standardized teaching, standardized everything... which we all know do very little to help gifted children in schools.

What would we ask for if we had the support of our state and federal governments for gifted education? Well, the things the gifted support organizations like NAGC and SENNG and others ask for- teachers who understand gifted children; flexibility in teaching so that kids with gifted traits can achieve and learn every day, no matter what their skill levels (as all kids deserve); schools that are able to work with families to support gifted kids with social and emotional needs; time for students to explore and invent and create; socialization opportunities for gifted children to find peers (be it other children of all ages, or adult mentors); to have gifted education recognized and students identified well and supported on a daily basis with activities that enhance their strengths and build up areas of weakness...

How do we get to these goals when education in general is moving away from flexibility and individualized learning and towards standardized testing and standardized curriculum and "standards" that do not support thinking outside of the box? How do we help those who

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.

hold the funding and the rule-making roles in our education society to break away from misunderstandings and to move forward in ways that are healthier for children and that help kids enjoy learning so that cramming their heads full of facts to be tested on is only one little piece of the bigger puzzle of education?

Here are some ideas of where we can start:

1. Educate gifted children about giftedness. It amazes me how many adults grow up never truly understanding what makes them so different from other people...how many gifted adults never even knew what gifted was, or that they were gifted themselves. And many gifted education programs identify gifted children and group them in classes, but never actually teach them about the social-emotional traits that they possess, that can make life easier for them, or harder, depending on how well they are supported or how well they understand and embrace and work with those traits themselves.

There are multiple books on gifted traits. Many are written for parents and teachers, but parts can be used with children of all ages. Read them and then share them with your children as parents and as teachers. If gifted children understand the reasons their minds react in different ways than how their friends may be reacting, or the traits they have that make them more intensely interested in some things than in others, they are more likely to speak up and request support for their needs than if they feel like they are just "odd" and try to fit in or dwell on the things as if they are negative traits.

So many gifted children get lost in the shuffle because they try to blend in or because they do not raise the red flags that other students wave when they need assistance. The high intellect that gifted children have make them smart enough to evaluate whether it's even safe for them to talk about their gifted traits. They can tell who is going to be receptive and who will make fun of them or use the information later to harm them, even if the harming is not intentional. Gifted children need to know about their strengths and about their weaknesses so they can work on their weaknesses while buoyed by their interest areas and strengths.

It is hard for gifted children to acknowledge weaknesses, but when they realize they have the power to overcome those weaknesses with hard work they can get through the tough spots. But that brings us to the issue that gifted children are often not taught to struggle, as academic skills usually come easy to them at first while other kids are catching up with what they already come to school ready to do. So if they are not taught about the need for learning to struggle, when they hit their first hard project or concept they are likely to shut down and begin to slip academically behind other students because they are afraid to fail or because they do not want to have to work very hard. By teaching gifted children about their gifted traits and recognizing the tendency to rely on things being "easy," we can help gifted students achieve when the going gets tough.

When gifted children know more about giftedness and can effectively communicate about giftedness, they become our best spokespeople for gifted education. By teaching gifted students to ask for things they need and then who to go to for help when they aren't successful at getting the support they require, we give the whole field of gifted education examples in the world on a daily basis. Teach the kids who they are and what they need to do to strengthen their own abilities and make them their own best advocates early. Lead by example by being your own best advocate and show them that they will use self-advocacy throughout their lives. And give them tons of hugs and as much support as you can, because being a gifted kid is hard and until the education system changes to support them better, they will need as much love and support as they can get from us at home.

2. Educate gifted parents. Wouldn't it be great if as soon as gifted traits are identified in children, their parents were given a resource list and access to parent groups so they were surrounded with support?

Some schools provide information to families about gifted characteristics and needs when they identify students, but not every school does. And many doctors and other care providers are not equipped with enough resources themselves to adequately support parents of gifted children. In order to help parents help their children and the teachers and administrators who work with their children, the parents themselves need more knowledge.

Many parents do not even know enough about giftedness to know that their child is different than other children (this happens a lot when raising young kids- we tend to think since we have never parented before, that maybe we just don't know how to deal with the unique needs of our own children, when really our kids are different than others and may need additional support throughout their educational lives... but we don't always know to ask for it.) And if we are not prepared to advocate for support for our gifted children early and often then our children lose ground quickly and the schools are not always going to catch on and step in like we would hope they would. Gifted children are sometimes lost in the shuffle and parents are the ones who can call the attention of the schools to the needs of their child better than anyone can.

We need to find new parents and mention giftedness when we hear about things their little children are doing that sound like gifted traits. We need to reach out in parenting organizations and in parenting publications and blogs and mention gifted support resources (both locally and nationally.) And if there are events going on in your community such as trainings for gifted education or speakers that parents can attend, or just gifted issues that are affecting students in general, ask the local newspaper reporters to cover these events and issues so that giftedness is not a foreign word to your neighbors. When you visit your children's doctors talk about gifted issues, when you see the dentist, talk about gifted issues, and ask them if you can leave articles or other resource lists for them to share with other parents.

Don't forget the local foster care agencies and other organizations that work with families who are traditionally are left out of the information exchange. We have so many gifted children who are underserved by gifted education programs in the schools because their parents have no idea the programs even exist, or that they should be advocating for their child because the teachers and administrators do not understand gifted traits themselves.

We need to help other parents know what they can ask for and where to go for help, and we need to continue to educate ourselves so we can stand strong when we ask others to support our children.

3. Educate teachers and administrators in schools about gifted children. Even teacher preparation programs spend very little time on the topics of giftedness when they are training the next generation of teachers. But those who were trained years ago were given little if any training at all on giftedness. Many of the teachers and administrators that children encounter in the school systems now have no idea how to really identify gifted children and are stuck on misunderstandings and stereotypes and biases that have no basis in real gifted education theory or research.

Several states do not require gifted education endorsements for teachers who work with gifted children, and the states that do require the endorsements often leave out the educators who work in general education classes (the very ones we have to rely on to identify and refer the students in the first place in many school districts.) We need to reach out to more educators, but we are competing with so many other important issues right now- especially in light of the push for lower achieving students to pass standardized tests.

But this is exactly where we need to be coming in and educating the teachers and administrators about what gifted children look like, because often gifted children are underachieving too. And sometimes the behavioral issues that slow student progress down has a lot to do

with gifted traits- gifted children often misbehave or refuse to work for teachers who do not understand them, or when their abilities are under-estimated due to misidentification, or when their need for complexity is not fulfilled and they find it is much more interesting to get a rise out of the teacher or their other classmates than do the work. Many gifted children have social emotional issues due to being misplaced in classes that do not have other gifted peers in them, or because they need additional support to communicate with children who are not on the same thought waves as they are. And gifted students with a strong sense of right or wrong or emotional intensities may be so wrapped up in needing help resolving social and emotional issues that they cannot effectively concentrate on academic skill building in a classroom without further support.

The more we help teachers understand gifted students, the more time and energy they can devote to the other students in the class when our children are effectively engaged in true learning opportunities that stretch their minds.

So how can we help? We need to reach out to districts and request that they provide their teachers with resources and educational opportunities and offer ourselves as a way for them to receive these support systems. We need to ask our local teacher colleges if they are focusing on gifted education issues and ask student teachers to advocate for more gifted education in their programs. We should talk with parent teacher associations and school board members (maybe even by taking individuals out to coffee to talk to them about our children's individual needs and then slip them a few articles to help them understand the need for supporting other kids like ours...) We can work with other gifted organizations like state gifted associations and national organizations to bring in trainings for the community and then make sure we market the event very heavily to teachers (with flyers, emails, whatever works!)

And if we are already on the outside of the district's network (perhaps because we've hit their last nerve with trying to reach out to them,) we need to find other local allies who have positive relationships with the people who lead our schools and inform them, so they can go forward for us. We do not always have to be the spokespeople or the face of gifted education in our communities if we are not as effective as another person may be- knowing when to take a back seat and work from the sidelines is a very important advocacy skill.

And we can bring in gifted speakers such as book authors and researchers to speak to community groups and invite important school personnel to attend with us as our guests. Keep in mind that sometimes the secretaries and the custodians are just as important to network with as the principals and teachers and school board members because they also interact with the kids every day and can influence the way the children are treated in the schools on a daily basis too. The more we flood the schools with gifted education in positive ways, the more likely teachers and administrators will be open and receptive to hearing the messages. If they think it is their idea to make changes, the changes are much more likely to take place than if we try to force it.

4. Educate others outside of the education systems about giftedness. It isn't sufficient to talk with those inside the system in order to make permanent changes. Unless our communities also understand the realities of giftedness rather than believing the stereotypes (such as "every child is gifted," or "gifted children are top performers", or "gifted children don't need as much support as lower level students,") then we are never going to gain any real ground. And it isn't really just the politicians who need to hear the messaging because politicians come and go based on the voting public. If we have community members who believe all children should learn every day, rather than just focus on those with lower intellect or abilities, then they will support gifted children in all their walks of life. Gifted children in sports teams will be better understood and supported; gifted children at their doctors' appointments will be better served and

families will be treated better (and misdiagnoses based on gifted traits will be limited); and gifted children at the local parks and libraries will have better interactions with other children and adults.

Imagine back before people understood Downs Syndrome as well, or understood Asperger's even as much as we do now (which is still a developing area of understanding even now,) people did not know how to interact with children who had these characteristics and often those children were excluded and treated poorly by the public. With increased education of our national population we can see an increase in understanding these children and that has created a more welcome environment for children with issues such as these. Imagine how much education could help others to understand our gifted children in society.

But even more importantly, it is our communities who elect and place our leaders who make decisions about education. And those leaders often come from within our neighborhoods and our local businesses and nonprofit organizations. If we start by educating others in general, then we grow our army of soldiers who are willing to argue for stronger supports for gifted children in our schools.

If we inform them about the underserved ethnic and cultural populations then we can impact the support for multicultural gifted programs and create advocates who are willing to refer kids in local sports clubs and after school care programs for gifted support in their schools. We can change the way whole communities think about children by helping them understand that underperforming kids could be much smarter than they ever imagined but their abilities are untapped. And we can help bring communities together by showing advocates for groups of kids what we have in common with them rather than the differences that stereotypical views of giftedness usually emphasize. We can help special education advocates understand twice exceptional (2e) kids, and help promote culturally aware education policies.

There are so many ways we can impact the way the wind blows in education by merely educating the masses and then asking them to help with this journey too. And it will likely surprise you how many people will use the information that you gave them when they are discussing education with other people in the future. This information is like wild fire- spread it everywhere you go.

5. Encourage gifted children to be advocates. Gifted children have so much intellect that many politicians could only dream of having, that they can focus on changing the world if they only knew how to use their intellect to effectuate change.

This is not a dig on politicians, because there are many brilliant politicians out there. But many gifted adults shy away from getting involved in politics for multiple reasons- some of them are naturally introverts who do not enjoy being in the limelight; some of them have other interests and never really cared much about politics in general; and some of them (I would argue, many of them,) never got involved in politics at young ages so they grew up believing politics and politicians were just not accessible or that politics in general did their families weren't involved so they never got involved either.

"Getting involved" in politics may not have been explained well to this latter lot of individuals- perhaps they believed that to be involved you had to run for office, or work at the Capitol, or donate tons of money. Or maybe they felt that politicians did not do things the way they should do things, so they wrote politics off as being a negative thing. But if gifted children are taught early that getting involved is a positive thing... that their voices mean something... that they can bring change in multiple ways and influence others with their knowledge... then perhaps gifted children can grow up to be strong advocates for education and other things that influence the lives of gifted children and adults, and eventually our world would shift in a more supportive direction for the goals of gifted advocacy in general.

So how do we encourage this? By helping all students realize their worth in their communities- connecting them to organizations, local leaders of all types, and providing them with knowledge of the processes and the interactions that bring forth decisions that impact everyone on a day to day basis.

We need to teach them civics, economics, history of the world and of the United States, and how to effectively communicate with strong vocabularies and effective word choices in both the written and oral skills including debate, speech writing and presenting, letter composition, using reading comprehension to focus arguments and read innuendos and literal expressions and poetic language and to respond appropriately.

We ought to teach them to look at governmental decisions across history and evaluate them based on their own moral codes and society's ethics and the goals of their regions and their neighborhoods and the country as a whole.

We can connect them with leaders who will welcome their voices in discussions by bringing in speakers to talk with classes of children and bring lessons to them from real life, to discuss current events that impact their own lives and interest them- to help them craft letters to ask politicians to change things to help their families or improve their playgrounds or their families' transportation options.

And we need to bring them to the places where decisions happen- both in the bigger governmental picture (like court rooms and legislative chambers and city council meetings and parks district meetings,) as well as in the more smaller detailed picture (nonprofit board meetings, neighborhood council events, meetings with school administrators and PTAs and other groups of people who care...)

We have to show children how to contribute and get involved in issues they care about so that they feel like they have an impact as youngsters. By doing this, they can put their gifted intensities to work on things that help others and make things better for themselves and those they care about. And when they have questions or doubts, we need to show them where to go to learn more and adjust their sails and move forward even through hardships. Because struggling for something that is bigger than just a classroom assignment is often much more worthwhile and larger life lessons come out of those moments than anything teachers can create in a text book.

And once we teach them how to harness their knowledge from history and the skills they need to interact effectively with others in society, they are like arrows going forward into society, finely tuned to create change and create other leaders along their path by infecting them with their excitement and passion for their causes.

Imagine how much more effective we could be as education advocates if our children knew even more than we did about the topics we are interested in fixing... how much more powerful the masses would be if they understood how their actions can be used to effectuate change for the better. And think about how many negative gifted traits (such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, hopelessness, etc.) can be turned around by teaching children how they can use their talents and natural desires to make a difference, to be heard by people they otherwise may never believe would listen to them, and to help them actually give back in ways that can change things for so many others.

This is a work in progress. Some teachers are already pushing forward in these areas. There are multiple places you can go to get information about educating children, parents, community members, advocates and others on gifted education needs and gifted characteristics. Start with reaching out to your local schools and ask them about the resources they have. If they don't have resources or only have limited resources, send them more information as you find it and become a team in your search to improve access to resources for their staff. Look online for local advocacy groups and parent support groups. Check the [SENG](#) and

[NAGC](#) resource lists and libraries and look at websites like [Hoagies](#) that list multiple sources. Get involved with parent organizations like gifted home school groups and parenting gifted children groups that have blogs and Facebook pages and keep up on local research and education opportunities by attending state and national gifted education conferences- parents are often welcome and appreciated at those events.

As individuals we are only as strong as our arms can reach and our voices can be heard, but by reaching out to others who share our concerns for education in general, we are much stronger. Use the networks you have and create new ones as you go and together perhaps we can see education change to better serve all children by leading with our example of asking the schools to differentiate, to understand every child better, and to help every child learn, every day. Thank you for all that you do for these kids and all that we will do for them as we continue down this path together.

WAETAG Winter 2015

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