

WAETAG

Washington Association of Educators of the Talented and Gifted

Newsletter

Winter 2013

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 our website: www.waetag.net.

Please forward this information, and/or copy and distribute the forms to interested students, 3rd to 11th grades.

The application deadline is March 1, 2013.

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Visit our website: www.waetag.net

Gifted Education Day

March 19, 2013

Olympia, WA

For more information:
Washington Coalition for Gifted Education

<http://wcge.wordpress.com/>

What is gifted education?

Helping all students learn and grow is a goal of every school. Implicit in that goal is an understanding of how to work with special populations of children. Highly Capable Programs encompass the expertise needed to properly identify and serve not only the students who demonstrate high achievement, but also those who have the potential to achieve at high levels. Recognizing and nurturing giftedness in children presents an important challenge to educators. Schools need to respond to their educational needs before their abilities diminish or become less recognizable to those who can do something to nurture them.

Highly Capable Programs cover the specific services and programs offered as well as the teacher training necessary to provide the academic guidance gifted students need in order to thrive. Gifted and talented education, then, is the system by which districts recognize and serve this special population of children.

Whose duty is it to amply fund gifted education?

The state Constitution says it is the paramount duty of state government to amply fund education. Highly Capable Programs are an integral part of basic education.

The McCleary decision finds that the "paramount duty" falls on the state, not on local districts; that the state has failed to amply and fully fund education; and orders the state to do so by 2018, based on the provisions of ESHB 2261.

How many gifted children are there in Washington?

No matter how much money is put into K-12 education, basic education is not fully funded if the percentage used in the formula for Highly Capable supplemental categorical funding (currently 2.314%) does not match the actual number of qualified students.

Continued on page 5

President's Message

Charlotte Akin

charlotteakin@msn.com



We had an exceptional conference this past October at the Hotel Murano in Tacoma. It was exceptional because of the speakers, Roger Fisher and Drs. Brock and Fer- nette Eide. The balance between theory and practice was just right. It was exceptional because of a donation by former WAETAG Board member, Chandra Tebay, of hand made ceramic bowls for auction. These earned \$1,000 for WAETAG which will go toward student scholarships. It was exceptional because we had real depth and expertise in our breakouts. All reviews were so positive! And it was excep- tional because we had fun – fun! – learning with creative problem solving Friday night and “speed lessons” Saturday morning. This was mixed with student music and art, wonderful food and accommodations, an array of ven- dors with books and games for the classroom, books for children, and books for families. Finally, the conference was exceptional because of very smooth processes due to the work of the WAETAG Board and our conference plan- ner, Lisa Morasch.

WAETAG presented three awards this year. The first was to Stephen Mar- tin, the Distinguished Leadership Award. Stephen has twice been WAETAG President; his capable leadership on the Board and also working with the National Association for Gifted Children were noted. Betty Buzitis finished fifteen years of serving WAETAG as Treasurer and Financial Manager. Betty's career in gifted education spans four decades. It is fitting that she was honored for Exceptional Service. Representative Pat Sullivan was also honored this year with WAETAG's Advocacy Award for his work with the State Legislature on behalf of gifted children.

I sat at lunch during the conference and marveled at the group around me. Dr. James Webb, founder of SENG, was at the table with his wife Janet. Across from me were Drs. Eide. To my left was Representative Sullivan with NWGCA former president Ann Koch. And directly across from me was Kari DeMarco, WAETAG Vice President, who was co-chair of the conference with me. It was an exceptional conference!

Important Dates

March 1	WAETAG Summer Scholarship application deadline
March 19	Gifted Education Day 2013, Olympia, WA
May 1	WAETAG Distinguished Student nominations due

Save the date! 2013 WAETAG Conference: October 18 & 19, 2013
Hotel Murano, Tacoma, WA

2013 - 2014 WAETAG Board Members

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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 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.

Your WAETAG Regional Representatives

ESD 112: Lisa Morgan
3rd Grade EXCEL Teacher
Evergreen School District
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Simulations and Role Playing In the Classroom

Hidden under one of the tables in my classroom, is a large box of costumes and props that I use throughout the school year to engage students more deeply in the topics I teach, provide them with lasting memories of their 3rd grade year, and add fun and excitement to their learning. If you don't mind picking up your kids from recess dressed as, let's say, a Spanish Explorer, an Alien Commander, William Bradford or a Greek Goddess of the Sea, then you will enjoy this style of teaching. Following, are some of the roles I play in the classroom and the curriculum I use.

I hope they will spark your imagination and inspire you to tweak one or two of the outstanding lessons and units you teach.

In September I become "Whiza Morganza" a highly intelligent alien counterpart to Mrs. Morgan (which we all have) to teach quality scientific documentation. I give the students each an Italian plum and tell them that this strange egg or object must be precisely described, sketched and labeled so that the scientific team on my planet can use the student's notes to progress their learning. We then dehydrate the plums and decide if they were put through a chemical or physical change. This ushers in our study of Vancouver, which was the Prune Capitol of the World at one time. Whenever we do science, the students ask if Whiza Morganza will come back.

In October, I put on a Lord of the Rings costume to become a Spanish Explorer who "conquers" the classroom. This helps connect the students to our study of Native Americans and Colonists of the New World. We create "Know Before You Go Guides" to teach would-be explorers and colonizers about the different indigenous nations of people they will be coming in contact with. In November, I change up the costume with a different hat to become William Bradford for our "Patuxet from Both Sides of the Beach" unit. Portraying William Bradford and reading primary documents that he wrote, allows me to convey the emotion, heartache, compromise, and hope of the Pilgrims and Wampanoags in 1620. I use the "Interact" Pilgrims unit as the base for this adventure.

I spend January and February as "Commander Nagrom," an alien commander from the "HHIIF: Have to Have a Habitat Investigation Federation." I created a storyline out of Gems kits, Discovery School videos and non-fiction research sources. The kids think they are the "best and brightest" aliens who have come to earth to study animals. They don't seem to mind the rigorous non-fiction reading, note taking, writing, investigation and documentation. They even walk silently in the halls so they won't get

"discovered" as aliens. It is almost worth all the effort and planning, just for that.

Finally, I round out the year as Thetis, Goddess of the Sea and mother of Achilles for our Ancient Greek studies. Portraying Thetis allows me to unload a massive amount of detailed information in a visual and personal way. Also, it is a good gig to be a classroom goddess. I've got nine year olds eagerly bringing me peeled fruit and chocolate each day. . . . Dressing up and making a spectacle of yourself in front of the staff has its perks and goes a long way toward engaging students and helping them to take ownership of their learning.



WAETAG Distinguished Students

WAETAG likes to honor students who have distinguished themselves in academic achievement with a certificate and publication in our newsletter. To nominate a student (K-12) for this honor, please write a brief one page nomination on why you feel this student is worthy and send it to your area ESD representative (see page 2 for your representative's contact information). One student from each ESD will be selected. The deadline is May 1 for nominations. Winners will be published in our fall newsletter. Be sure to include the name and address of the student's school as well as your name and contact information.

Camp Metamorphosis at Whitworth University

Spokane, WA
July 8-12, 2013
Monday—Friday
9:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.



This exciting day camp is for gifted children entering grades 4-6 to develop communication and collaboration skills, while having the opportunity to explore academic areas of interest offered by enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff. The cost is a little lower this year at \$250. Contact 509-777-3226 or www.whitworth.edu/campmetamorphosis.

Reflections on the 2012 WAETAG Conference

Susan Casey, WAETAG Secretary



I hope that at our last conference you had a chance to meet someone who works in a district close to yours, who may be regarded as a rich educational resource, as we all truly are. As dialogue increases between teachers throughout their ESD regions, the exchange of better learning ideas can be implemented.

I really believe the “speed lessons” is one of the brightest and best ideas WAETAG has had for a conference activity. We have learned it will benefit attendees at large if we make our groupings more specific to meeting the needs folks have at that particular time, whether they are parents or educators.

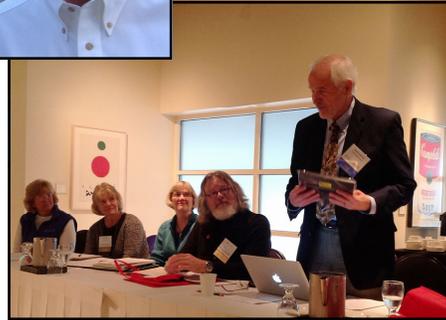
Since I recently began teaching 8th grade language arts, in October I continued to need basic education curriculum ideas. At the last speed-fire sharing, I simply stood up, looked around and said, “I need people who teach 8th grade language arts.” Fortunately, the colleague next to me said, “That’s what I teach!” Our twenty-minute conversation reinforced my belief that *there is nothing more meaningful than dialogue between teachers throughout the state who are currently working in similar learning environments.*

It’s exciting to see how we can utilize technology to help document and quickly share classroom activities. If you would like to write a brief description of any great ideas you may have gained from any of the speed lesson sessions, or any idea you wish you could have shared, please send your text to charlotteakin@msn.com. With your suggestions, WAETAG will begin to create an internet library of classroom activity ideas that are helpful to teachers and parents.

WAETAG will continue to facilitate helpful interactions between teachers at the appropriate grade level and subject area, who work under similar circumstances for the next conference because classroom activities and curriculum suggestions meet a core need for any educator or parent.



Stephen Martin, receiving the Distinguished Leadership Award at the 2012 Conference.



Betty Buzitis receiving an award in appreciation of 15 years of service to WAETAG.



SENG Model Parent Support Groups *Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted*

Parent Groups Forming Now!

Do you ever wonder if you are doing what is best for your gifted child?
Would you like to meet and talk with other parents who are raising gifted children?

What: Guided Discussion & Support Group for Parents/ Caregivers of Gifted Children

When: Tuesdays, February 5 through March 26, 2013 - 8 Sessions

Time: 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Where: Whitworth University, Dixon Hall, Room 104

For more information, visit Prodigy Northwest at <http://prodigynw.org/seng-model-parent-discussion-groups>.

Gifted Student Spotlight

A Giggle or a Smile

By India Dykes
8th Grade Odyssey Student
Spokane, WA

I feel a little tingle
stirring in my heart,
a smile locked away,
not ready to depart.
A clever use of words
has made a little glow
but not enough to make
my wary smile show.

His words are turned against him
and slap him in the face.
So quick and sharp the person was
to put him in disgrace.
A giggle I cannot suppress,
although my lips are tightly pressed.
I cannot help but smile
at his unforeseen distress.

I can't believe she said that!
What an awful thing to say.
But wait, I think that's clever;
I'd never thought of it that way.

The humor that provokes me,
scratches, claws, or pokes me,
and even gets a giggle or a smile,
is not intentional or joking,
but a consequence of talking
to those who may be cynical,
uncaring and even clinical
when talking to the target of their travesty.



Gifted Education Day *continued from page 1*

As the Recommendations of the Highly Capable Program Technical Working Group and the Funding Formula Technical Working Group state, the 2.314% is based not on actual need but on perceived shortfall of funds. It is a number plucked out of the air and based on prior budgets which underfunded HCP.

Why Gifted Education Day?

The fact that too many of our most talented students are not receiving the services they need to turn their untapped potential into tremendous achievement is not just a problem for gifted educators, but challenges all educators, policy makers, and our society at large to take action in to reverse this failing.

We must expect more than proficiency from many more students. For better or worse, policies mirror priorities and actions speak louder than words. Policies, funding and practices at all levels should consistently support high expectations and high achievement, going well beyond grade level for many more of our students.

We must ask ourselves whether aiming for minimum performance levels for all students is an acceptable singular goal for the nation and whether achieving minimum levels requires that we abandon support for a goal of more students reaching advanced levels of achievement.

Gifted Education Day, Tuesday, March 19, 2013, is the day to talk with your Legislators. Come to Olympia alone or as part of a group. To be most effective, make appointments with your legislators well in advance of Gifted Education Day.

* Tell Legislators the 2.314% funding basis is too low. We currently serve 4.62%, with the vast majority of that funding coming out of local levy funds; every task force that's looked at it said 2.314% was inadequate and that 5% was more appropriate; and that in the end we want the inclusion of Highly Capable Programs in basic education to be meaningful, providing adequate and appropriate programming.

* Ask that funding be based on 5% immediately and that a study be authorized to determine the appropriate percentage of FTE to be included in the funding formula in the future.

* The Quality Education Council recommends that the hours in the funding formula be doubled. Ask your Legislators to do this.

* Ask the Legislature to provide funding equivalent to the total of state and local funds currently spent. A new funding formula will go a long way toward achieving this.

What if you can't go to Olympia?

If you can't join us in Olympia on March 19, 2013, contact your Legislators by email, phone calls or the Legislative Hotline - **1-800-562-6000**.



918 College St., Wenatchee, WA 98801

WAETAG membership is included in your conference registration. If you did not attend the latest conference, your membership has expired. Please renew it by sending in \$35 and the form below. Membership includes newsletters, advanced conference mailings, student scholarship mailings and news of advocacy and training opportunities. Stay with us for the students' sakes!

IF YOU DID NOT ATTEND THE LAST CONFERENCE, YOU MAY NEED TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

YOUR NEWS AND VIEWS ARE WELCOME!

Share or review a favorite curriculum resource, describe your program, or a lesson, teacher, or student. We all need new ideas. WAETAG Newsletter offers you one more way to network. Please send material within an e-mail message or attached as a Word document .

Contact Kyra Richardson for newsletter details: dustinandkyra@msn.com, (509) 489-1175 (please do not call after 8 P.M.).

For other information about WAETAG, please contact the WAETAG President at charlotteakin@msn.com

If you receive this newsletter at work, please send us your home address on a membership form to assure you continue to receive prompt WAETAG mailings. Label it UPDATE.

WAETAG Membership Form

I wish to support meeting the needs of gifted children in Washington State.

WAETAG membership category: Individual/Parent (\$35) Student (\$15)

Name _____
Address (h) _____
Address (w) _____
e-mail _____
School District _____ ESD No. _____

Phone (h) _____ Phone (w) _____
City (h) _____ State _____ Zip _____
City (w) _____ State _____ Zip _____

I am a:
 Gifted Program Teacher Counselor
 Classroom Teacher Researcher
 Parent Student
 Administrator Other
 Public School Private School

As an educator, my level of work is (check one):
 Preschool Primary
 Intermediate/Middle Junior High
 High School College

Mail membership form and check to Tina Tidd, WAETAG, 918 College St., Wenatchee, WA 98801.

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