

Gifted Education Advisory Council-ISBE
Office of the Illinois State Board of Education
1:00-3:30 p.m.
May 10, 2012

Roll Call

Participants in attendance: Sally Thomson, Sally Walker, Marianne Manos, Terry Mohaupt, Diane Beedy, Laura Beltchenko, Mike Hatfill, Marcy Johnson, Jennifer Gendel

Approval of Minutes

Minutes were amended and approved

New Business

Report of state organization (Sally Walker)

A sub committee was formed as a collaboration of two councils (Special Education Advisory Council and Gifted Advisory Council) to develop resources to help with multi exceptional children.

Sally Walker represented the Gifted Advisory Council at the ISAC meeting in Springfield on December 8, 2011. She stressed the importance of continued collaboration of the two councils. Other ideas presented that were suggested by the gifted council included:

1. Recommend the definition of twice exceptional to qualify students for IEP and 504 plans that include gifted
2. Incorporate twice exceptional in language within RTI plans
3. Develop a glossary of terms for gifted and special education to post on websites
4. Use the state of Colorado's plan to go through section by section and chart what we currently do and do not do in gifted and special education. Set specific high goals to fill in what we currently do and don't do.

There will be a wide range of opportunities through IAGC going on this summer

Sally Walker went to Washington DC in March to promote the Talent Act. She asked Senators and Representatives to support the Talent Act, which would amend the elementary and secondary education Act (ESEA) to provide responsible federal leadership in meeting the needs of gifted and high-ability students. To aid gifted and-ability learners by Empowering the Nation's Teachers (TALENT) bill will replace the Javits Act and has 4 key components. If this passes it will allow gifted students to be included in Title II grant funding, provide research and dissemination, and accountability assessments to allow students to test above grade level. Policy advisor, Phil Milsk, presented a resolution to the legislators to support the Talent Act in the Illinois legislature. The Senate Executive Committee approved the resolution to support the Talent Act with no opposition. Getting funding for gifted for this next year was not possible with the Illinois budget in its present state.

IAGC has revised their standards to align with NAGC and IL state standards.

The IAGC conference will be at the Naperville Marriott during the second week in February of 2013. There was a drop in enrollment at the convention this year. There will be fewer costs at the Naperville Marriott than at the current site in Chicago.

Key stakeholders have been contacted regarding an endorsement for gifted.

Report of national organization (Laura Beltchenko)

The NAGC Leadership initiatives were discussed.

The NAGC-CEC Teacher Knowledge and Skill Standards for Gifted and Talented Education were shared.

NAGC may come up with a second edition with updated information about best practice in gifted education

The national version of the gifted seminar will be available for purchase from PA publishing. The royalty is going to be put in a special fund that needs to be spent on gifted education.

A video is being created to make administrators aware of gifted education

The Snapshot Survey of Gifted Programming Effectiveness Factors is on the NAGC website and was shared. Members supported the idea to have the state website have a link to this document.

Update on Endorsement

An explanation of why an endorsement is necessary was discussed. A mock outline of what credentials should look like was proposed. A summary of the current research and rationale statement for Illinois Gifted Education Endorsement was discussed. There was discussion about how a proposal of gifted hours in gifted professional development could be encouraged (requirements, number of hours, etc.) It was confirmed that the created IAGC gifted endorsement exam will not be used by ISBE because ISBE needs to have their own publisher create an exam. The IAGC exam can be shared with the publisher.

Sally Walker spoke with Jason Leahy, Executive Director of IPA, who said they would want any certification to be voluntary. They would then want to look at data from the voluntary effort to decide if it should become mandatory in the future.

Update on Waiver-NCLB

School districts can submit a waiver which gives more flexibility to school districts. It has to be submitted by the end of February.

State Roll out of CCSS

IASA is bringing in Jim Curry to look at CCSS from the gifted standpoint.

Twice Exceptional update

There was a positive experience with the combined committees (gifted and special education).

Resignation

Marci Johnson will be leaving ISBE as of June 1. Mike Hatwell will be the liaison for the Gifted Advisory Committee to ISBE.

Adjournment

May 11, 2012
9:00-3:00 p.m.

Meeting with Linda Tomlinson and Advisory Council members

Linda Tomlinson gave her feedback to the team about the proposal for gifted certification. She explained that the state is shifting towards having licensure and to have all information online. Requirements for eligibility will be for an applicant to take the course work and then the institution that he/she attend recommend for an endorsement. The grandfather clause applies for someone who have the endorsements; it could be written into the rules that those who apply by a certain date would get the endorsement. Linda prefers not to link professional development to a specific endorsement. She would rather link to accountability to show growth. There is going to be a new system for this. ISBE will write the exam. Once rules are passed it takes a year for universities to put together a program and to create an assessment. Existing educational programs will need to look to see if they can match the standards. Individuals that have 24 hours in gifted (even from out of state) and have the coursework to cover the standards and pass the coursework will be able to get certification.

Linda Tomlinson stressed the importance of aligning the standards to the common core standards. It will be important to prepare teachers so that they can teach the common core standards. Teachers need to have an understanding that student learning and growth is crucial.

There are many advantages to the schools by creating this certification. District administrators will need to understand how this will improve teaching for their students.

Stakeholders Meeting with the Advisory Council

Linda Tomlinson
Darrel Morrison-IEA
Carlene Lutz-IFT
Brian Schwartz-IPA

Sally Walker shared the historical perspective of why an endorsement is being presented. IAGC continued to work on developing standards for education. Starting in 2007 they began creating professional standards for teachers of the gifted and talented.

Sally Walker shared the documents that have been created.

Questions from stakeholders:

How do you see this aligning with the common core standards? (Darrel Morrison)

NAGC created standards. These will be aligned with the common core standards.

Linda Tomlinson explained that the gifted specialist can be working with the classroom teachers. There was discussion about how this certification can help students who are gifted in a variety of settings.

Is this voluntary? (Brian Schwartz)

It would be a voluntary certification.

Northwestern and Northeastern are currently offering gifted programs. Are there any other colleges who are willing to offer this program (Darrel Morrison)?

Many of the colleges have the coursework, and would be interested in having these courses.

Have you tracked how many gifted students there are in the state of Illinois? (Darrel Morrison)
There is no collection of this type of data because it is not required in the state of Illinois. The last time the state collected data was in 2002. At that time, 165,000 students in the state of Illinois were identified in schools that had gifted programs. We need to have coursework to try to help teachers learn to identify these students.

How many gifted students have you identified that have an IEP? How would this endorsement cause issues with special education? (Darrel Morrison)
Gifted students who have an IEP would be identified. Special education teachers and gifted teachers would work together to serve these students.

What about the idea of a true resource person? A route of having a differentiation specialist might be even more important. (Carla Lutz)
Without an endorsement there could be a person teaching in a gifted program who does not have gifted education.

The National Board does not favor an endorsement. I would want to have a gifted child in my classroom. Will this be too limiting? (Carla Lutz)
We are suggesting that classroom teachers could have this endorsement so that they would have better skills to deal with the gifted students. This would not be for teachers who only pull-out gifted students.

Reading specialist is a mandate. This endorsement would not have the mandate at this point. (Darrel Morrison)
This would be a start. In the future it might be mandated.

Brian Schwartz-IPA legal council (needed to leave)
He stated they will be able to support this if it is voluntary.

Is there any legislation that would need to happen? (Darrel Morrison)
No, we don't need to have that.

Is this something that we can run by some groups that have many higher education members sitting on them (Elementary and Middle School Advisory and Early childhood Advisory group)? (Carla Lutz)
Yes. Unfortunately, representation for today's meeting from these groups did not occur.

Carla Lutz said that she would hate to see an endorsement, but no programs to teach the required classes.

Darrel Morrison would like to have a conversation with his organization before making a final statement. His biggest concern has to do with special education. He wonders how it will affect the students that have special needs. He questioned how the endorsement be attached to a PE teacher. Would they have enough academic experience? What about the special education teacher?
Laura Beltchenko explained that she has not had any issues in her district in this area. All stakeholders for the twice exceptional child are present at a child's IEP meeting.

Gifted Advisory members stated that many of the things that are learned from the endorsement would be helpful to any content area. All staff members can benefit from the endorsement.

Final statement from Sally Walker:

“Gifted students are not succeeding with what we are doing. We are doing an excellent job of bringing the bottom up, but the top has also come down. We have ignored the top because we assume that they will do it on their own. Many students adapt to regular classroom expectations if not challenged. Students need to struggle. Giving kids things that they already know can actually lower self concept. We need to give them a challenge. The gifted students need the chance to struggle.”

We will be looking for more members of the gifted steering committee. It would be helpful to have representation for down state.

Dates for the next meetings will need to be coordinated with Mike Hatfill at dhatfill@isbe.net

Laura Beltchenko will send out a Doodle to try to get the next three meetings on the calendar.

1. Meeting to amend documents
2. Meeting with the stakeholder boards to review the amended documents
3. Meetings to create the rules and regulations needs to be written before the end of the summer.

Perhaps a two day meeting. The ISBE rule person must be invited. Mike Hatfill will propose dates

Adjournment