

From the President ...

As I begin my 2 years as president of the Board of Directors for The Association for the Gifted, I am humbled by the opportunity to serve in this important time for gifted education. Thank you for trusting me to demonstrate the leadership we now need. Two goals that are of highest priority at this time will be to keep the voice of diversity at the table where decisions are made and to keep the definition of diversity inclusive of all gifted children and youth who are underrepresented in gifted education services.

Working toward these goals, I encourage each of you to attend the TAG symposium this year in Louisville, KY. We have set aside the day of April 18, 2007, to discuss the problems of gifted students from low-income families. A number of well-known speakers in gifted education will be featured at the symposium. The registration is only \$35 for the entire day, so please consider attending this important event. Your valued input is needed, and this is a wonderful opportunity to share your ideas for advocacy efforts with other people who are also committed to the education of all gifted and talented students. This will be an informative and enjoyable time for everyone who is able to participate in the symposium.

On another note, it is important for you to have a voice within this organization. We want to hear from you about your priorities for gifted education and how TAG can influence the work that you are doing. Please feel free to e-mail any of the board members with your comments and suggestions.

I look forward to serving TAG as president during my 2-year term. It is a great honor to have been selected for this position, and I am fully committed to making our goals reality.

Tom Southern

Responding to the Reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act

Susan Johnsen

President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) into law in 2002, requiring schools to test students in reading and math annually in grades 3–8, establishing criteria for “highly qualified” teachers, and identifying penalties for schools that failed to make adequate progress. Congress is scheduled to renew the NCLB this year. In analyzing the effects of the act on state agencies, teachers, and students, researchers conclude:

1. States use tests of varying difficulty levels to assess students’ knowledge and skills so that more students are likely to pass standards (Linn, Baker, & Betebenner, 2002).
2. Student scores are decreasing on national tests such as the SAT, ACT, AP exams, and the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP; Amrein & Berliner, 2003).
3. Teachers feel pressure to concentrate on skills that are assessed by each state’s minimum competency test (Herman & Golan, 1993).
4. Teachers tend to repeat the same skills over and over again, narrowing the curriculum (Herman & Golan, 1993).
5. Teachers use fewer performance-based assessments (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000).

TAG Symposium

On Wednesday, April 18, 2007, The Association for the Gifted will present its annual research symposium in conjunction with the Council for Exceptional Children’s Convention in Louisville, KY. “Teaching Promising Students From Low-Income Backgrounds” is a daylong event that features five sessions led by some of the field’s most well-known researchers and advocates for gifted and talented students.

Allen R. Sullivan of the Sullivan

6. Teachers create lessons that reduce the opportunities for students to learn higher order skills and often teach scripted lessons (Moon, Callahan, & Tomlinson, 2003).

With a focus on knowledge that is tightly aligned to minimum-competency state assessments and limited opportunities for higher order skills, the No Child Left Behind Act is leaving gifted students behind.

To address these challenges and identify opportunities in the reauthorization of the act, CEC-TAG and CEC are collaborating with the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) in identifying assessment and policy goals and outcomes as part of a 3-year action plan for gifted and talented advocacy. Some of the goals that the two national associations are considering include (a) the development of a “Centers for Excellence” model within the Javits Act to enhance regional and state equity for availability of resources in gifted education; (b) the disaggregation of demographics on gifted and talented students within state and national databases to determine the status of learning among the top 10% of students in key academic areas; and (c) the promotion of a K–16 growth model for gifted and talented students that would increase ceilings on state assessments and increase the number of states that align assessments with university requirements.

To become involved in this im-

portant work, you will want to join CEC-TAG and become an active participant in shaping these new assessments, policies, and personnel preparation outcomes. To join, please visit <http://www.cectag.org> and complete the TAG membership application.

References

- Amrein, A. L., & Berliner, D. C. (2003). The effects of high stakes testing on student motivation and learning. *Educational Leadership, 60*(5), 32–38.
- Darling-Hammond, L., & Snyder, J. (2000). Authentic assessment of teaching in context. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 16*, 523–545.
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- Linn, R. L., Baker, E. L., & Betebenner, D. W. (2002). Accountability systems: Implications of requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. *Educational Researcher, 3*(16), 3–16.
- Moon, T. R., Callahan, C. M., & Tomlinson, C. A. (2003, April 28). Effects of state testing programs on elementary schools with high concentrations of student poverty—good news or bad news? *Current Issues in Education* [Online], 6(8). Retrieved March 8, 2007, from <http://cie.ed.asu.edu/volume6/number8>

Collaborative Group will provide an overview of poverty and how it affects both the educational outcomes and the lives of gifted students and their families. Sullivan will present various strategies, methods, and recommendations he has found to make a positive impact on some of the negative effects of poverty.

Joyce VanTassel-Baska of The College of William and Mary will share the findings from a 6-year study. The longitudinal study focused on low-income, minority, and twice-exceptional students who were identified as gifted through alterna-

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Attend the
Council for
Exceptional
Children’s
2007 Annual
Convention & Expo

April 18–21, 2007

Kentucky
International
Convention Center

Louisville, KY

**The Association for the Gifted
Presents a Research Symposium**

**Teaching Promising
Students From
Low-Income Backgrounds**

Wednesday, April 18, 2007
8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Gault House Hotel & Suites
Louisville, KY

Presentations by Joyce VanTassel-Baska,
Margie Kitano, Tracy Cross, David C. Williams,
Virginia Burney, Allen R. Sullivan, Susan K.
Johnsen, Todd Kettler, and Alex Shiu.

To register, e-mail Elaine Dumas at
edumas@aristotle.net or call 501.663.7180.
The fee for the symposium, including
lunch and materials, is \$35.

tag
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tive assessments. VanTassel-Baska will present qualitative and quantitative results of the study and focus on both curricular and instructional implications that can be taken from this important research.

More and more secondary gifted programs are now focusing on Advanced Placement (AP) classes, and research in this area is of interest to many educators. Susan K. Johnsen, Todd Kettler, and Alex Shiu of Baylor University will describe a program in which eighth-grade Spanish-speaking students were placed in an AP Spanish course. Data has shown that participating in this particular program has affected students' performance on the AP Spanish exams, native language development, academic performance, and academic self-concept.

Margie Kitano of San Diego State University will discuss the relationships among poverty, diversity, and high potential. Kitano will share strategies for working with high-potential students from low-income backgrounds in both gifted and general education classrooms.

Finally, Tracy L. Cross, David C. Williams, and Virginia Burney of Ball State University will explore the findings from Project Aspire. Project Aspire focused on developing the academic skills of high-ability middle and high school students living in rural poverty. The program attempted to increase the number of these high-ability students who participated in rigorous math and science classes in their schools. Faculty members from 14 schools worked together to develop a scope and sequence to help meet this goal.

All five presentations provide a great opportunity to discuss current research in the field of gifted education. The symposium's focus on promising students from low-income backgrounds is a timely topic and one that is foremost on many educators' minds across the country.

The symposium will be held from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Gault House Hotel & Suites. The fee is \$35. The presentations are scheduled to begin at 9 a.m., and lunch and symposium materials are included in the cost. To register, please e-mail Elaine Dumas (edumas@aristotle.net), or call (501) 663-7180. Spaces are still available and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. The symposium is a great venue to meet with others who are passionate about gifted students and to share your ideas for advocating for these students, so please consider attending this annual event.

Membership Application

To: CEC
1110 N. Glebe Road, Suite 300
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TAG Dues

US/Canada: Regular \$25-Student \$10
Overseas: Air Mail \$50-Surface \$35

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Country: _____

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* Please call (888) 232-7733 (toll free) or (703) 620-3660 for information on current CEC dues. Join online at <http://www.cec.sped.org>.

The Association for the Gifted

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The TAG newsletter is a quarterly publication. If you have news or upcoming events you'd like to share with other TAG members or have a brief article you'd like to have featured in the newsletter, please contact Jennifer Robins at jenniferrobins@mac.com.