

Questions and Answers

Webinar: One System: Reforming education to serve all students

1. Teri Burns: Why don't we have gifted/talented numbers for California?

Gifted and talented was separated from special education in 1980. The following history extracted from the CDE website may be helpful history:

In 1961, the California Legislature established the Mentally Gifted Minor (MGM) program for students scoring in the 98th percentile or above on standardized intellectual ability tests. By 1980, 454 school districts and 160,000 students were participating in the program. Assembly Bill (AB) 1040, enacted in 1980, established the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program allowing districts to set their own criteria for entrance and expanded service beyond the intellectually gifted to students who were gifted and talented in areas such as specific academic ability, leadership, visual and performing arts, and creativity.

In 2000, two pieces of legislation were enacted that amended provisions of the California Education Code (EC) for GATE. AB 2313 amended EC sections 52200-52212, requiring that GATE programs be planned and organized as differentiated learning experiences within the regular school day and established a categorical GATE funding formula. AB 2207 amended EC sections 48800 providing options for gifted and talented students to attend classes at postsecondary institutions regardless of age or grade level.

In 2014, California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) legislation redistributed state funding from several categorical programs into the general funds provided to districts, allowing local governing boards to make decisions about how to allocate the funds to best meet the needs of their student populations. GATE was one of the categorical programs repealed through this legislation, prompting Senate Bill (SB) 971 to repeal EC sections 52200-52212 later in the year. The LCFF provides a unique opportunity for local educational agencies (LEAs) to expand upon or develop new education opportunities for high-ability students in California public elementary and secondary schools, particularly those who are traditionally underrepresented in GATE programming. The LCFF requires stakeholder input during the development of Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP), further expanding the opportunity for educators, families, and other stakeholders to provide input as LEAs develop their annual budgets.

(Answer provided by Dr. Vicki Barber)

The pie graph for CA on the slide entitled "The Trouble with Normal" was lifted directly by a report prepared for the California State Board of Education by Tom Parish, the American Institutes for Research, and WestEd. The percentages were parsed to eliminate overlap in the populations. The breakdown did not include GATE, presumably because the CA Department of Education does not track those numbers. They are certainly not available through Ed-Data or DataQuest. As you can see from looking at the charts, New York does not report those data either, though Texas does. Generally speaking the percentage of Gifted and Talented in California is estimated at 5-7 percent and nation-wide at 6-10 percent (the difference attributable to counting methods more than anything else). Those percentages do not account for the overlap between other categories, e.g., English Learners. Apropos to your question Scott Barry Kaufman, Scientific Director of The Imagination Institute in the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania, writes [S]tates differ quite a bit in how they define giftedness. Some states stick with the label "gifted" whereas others use more broad and expansive definitions including "gifted and talent" or "high ability students". There is also indication of a change: 24 states changes or modified their definition of giftedness over the past decade." You can find more on this topic at:

http://www.creativitypost.com/education/who_is_currently_identified_as_gifted_in_the_united_states

<http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/gifted-state>

https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_049.asp

(Answer Provided by Dr. Lee Funk)

2. Shirley Sigmund: Teri Burns, I was wondering the same thing regarding gifted/talented numbers in CA.

Same answer as above.

3. Paula Martin: CTC credentialing and new models are critical in that all teachers need to be prepared to serve all students.

The Task Force came to the same conclusion and proposes fundamental changes to credentials for both general and special education educators.

In addition to the chapter in the Task Force report, there is a sub-committee report from the Educator Preparation Sub-Committee that goes into great detail on the proposed recommendations.

(Answer provided by Dr. Vicki Barber)

4. Sue Field: We have pediatricians giving parents referrals for IEPs and services. They need training as well so they don't put districts and parents at odds from the get go

This is a great point and one that we did not consider in the Task Force. (Answer provided by Dr. Vicki Barber)

However, the Task Force did elaborate on the need for parent engagement and education. Parents need to know their options so they don't feel pressed to run to a doctor as their only option. This was a large overarching theme in the Task Force Report. (Answer provided by Michael Gomez)

Years ago in the mid-eighties, CDE launched a small project called Ed-Med that was devoted to training physicians, parents, and teachers together on the various categories of disabilities. It was championed by Mary Hudler, who served for a time as Director of the Special Education Division for CDE before retiring. It was a worthy endeavor and it would make a lot of sense to do something similar on a larger scale. In the long run, though, as we stressed throughout the presentation, we need to be more proactive with parent involvement, diversified supports, and universal design so that parents and professionals do not rely on special education as the only option when students are struggling. (Answer provided by Dr. Lee Funk)

5. Paula Martin: Would you tell us more about the \$10 million and access to those incentive grants?

The specifics on the \$10 million are being worked on currently at the legislative level and with CDE and the SBE representatives. As more details are available, information will be disseminated.

(Answer provided by Dr. Vicki Barber)

6. Shirley Sigmund: Is there a link available to the Statewide Task Force Report?

The Task Force report and the Sub-Committee reports, as well as details regarding the membership of the Task Force and materials reviewed by the Task Force are available on the San Mateo County Office of Education website at <http://www.smcoe.org/about-smcoe/statewide-special-education-task-force/>.

(Answer provided by Dr. Vicki Barber)

7. Vince Rosato: Thanks, to Paula, wanted the same information on COE incentive grants.

Same Information as above.