

WAETAG

Washington Association of Educators of the Talented and Gifted

Newsletter

Winter 2012

Gifted Education Day

Monday
January 23, 2012
Olympia, WA

For more information:
Washington Coalition for Gifted Education
<http://wcge.wordpress.com/>

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Visit our website
www.waetag.net

ABCs, PLCs, GTs, IEPs, and RTIs

Kari DeMarco, ESD 171

As alluded to in my title, education has long been noted for its alphabet soup. The bottom line is we want all kids to learn the three R's to the best of their ability. We want all kids to reach their individual potential.

RTI (Response to Intervention) came about as a way of saying that all kids can learn, even those with IEPs. Including those without IEPs, but with 504s (if we want to start adding numbers to our soup). I like this attempt at addressing the learning needs of kids along a continuum from average down to the most struggling.

But what say we educate ALL students according to their need, even those starting from average and moving up the continuum to the most highly capable?

That is the goal of a growing movement to view RTI as part of the gifted model, not just special education. (Incidentally, there is a corollary movement to apply the concepts to behavioral interventions, too.)

Tamara Fisher, a K-12 Gifted Education Specialist in Montana, said that gifted kids' "learning needs are often not met by typical curricula because they have already mastered all or most of it before it's even taught." She therefore advocates use of an RTI model to address highly capable students' needs, just as it does for struggling learners. "After all, they come to school to learn, not to make us look good by providing the same excellent test score in April that they could've just as easily achieved in October." She concludes by saying, "RTI has the potential to help us make sure every child gets to grow academically as much as [he or she is] able."

RTI is also known as PRTI (Pyramid Response to Intervention). The visual image is of a pyramid, with the lower third being Tier One (grade level core curriculum, 80% of students), the middle third being Tier Two (strategic interventions, perhaps for small groups of kids needing re-teaching), and Tier Three at the pointy top (being for just the 1-5% of students needing individually focused, intensive assistance).

What seems obvious to many who care about highly capable learners is that the mirror image can apply to gifted kids. All kids should be offered some level of differentiation at Tier One, but some will need more small group or individualized curriculum to meet their advanced learning objectives (Tier Two), and some will need intense changes in

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President's Message

Stephen B. Martin
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Recent pronouncements from the National Association for Gifted Children have caused quite a kerfuffle in the gifted education community. In her inaugural address last November, NAGC President Paula Olszewski-Kubilius stated, "I suggest that we take a bold step and consider making talent development, rather than giftedness, the major unifying concept of our field and most importantly, the basis for our practice."* This is a bold step, indeed, if it means a radical change of course from the traditional focus on giftedness to a quite different emphasis on talent development.

However, it may be seen as neither a completely unexpected, nor a necessarily unwelcome, development. For some years now, NAGC has had as its motto "Supporting the needs of high potential learners," which can be seen as a broadening of the NAGC mission to serve both high-performing and high-potential students. If it is indeed the intention of the bold new step to direct more attention to an underserved population of bright children, most thoughtful people will applaud. If it is rather a turning away from one community in favor of another, a continuing kerfuffle is guaranteed.

My own work in gifted education has until recently been focused on traditionally identified, high performing students. I understand this population and have always enjoyed working with these enthusiastic, engaged, capable students and their parents. But last year I had the opportunity to take a bold step of my own, accepting a position with the Seattle Public Schools with the focus of identifying high-potential students from underserved populations. Talent development is key to this effort. I now more fully appreciate both sides of the issue.

The creative tension caused by the NAGC decision to rethink giftedness brings with it energetic debate, examination of core beliefs, and re-assessment of where we stand as a profession. I hope that our bold steps never cause us to neglect traditionally gifted students. An intentional broadening of focus to include talent development, however, would be a welcome enhancement.

* <http://parentingforhighpotential.com/2011/11/18/from-the-nagc-president-paula-olszewski-kubilius/>

*"Learning is forward
progress from the point of entry."*

~ Susan Winebrenner

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.

2011 - 2012 WAETAG Board Members

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NWGCA Representative

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Did you know that districts now must provide for highly capable children as part of their **basic education**?

How do we get started?

You can access hop grant funds to use for start up staff and program development this year even if you don't yet have a program.

How do I do that?

Just contact Gayle Pauley at OSPI at gayle.pauley@k12.wa.us

Your WAETAG Regional Representatives

ESD 114: Jan Kragen
jkragen@nkschools.org



Your Reps are There for YOU

Do you ever wish you could meet together with other gifted teachers, just to talk, to share stories, and to get ideas you could take back and use with your students?

Have you ever thought about scheduling a parent-teacher information night? Are you looking for ideas for speakers or topics?

Or is your district just starting the process of creating a gifted program? How much would it help you to visit nearby programs that are already up and running?

There is a reason WAETAG has its representatives spread out geographically, by ESD. We want each of our WAETAG members to have access to a local representative who can meet with you and help you. We can schedule informal gatherings in our areas and help with ideas for parent nights. We are all resources for districts who are starting new programs.

It really IS all right to call your representative—I asked, and they all said they were happy to hear from you and happy to help!

The contact information is on page 2 and on the WAETAG web site: www.waetag.net.

“Cultivating Powerful Programs for the Gifted” 2011 WAETAG Conference

Mary Freitas, Past President

The 2011 WAETAG annual conference was held on October 28th and 29th in Wenatchee, Washington. Dr. Karen Rogers was the keynote speaker. Dr. Rogers is Professor of Gifted Studies in the Special Education department at the University of St. Thomas in the College of Applied Professional Studies. She is also the author of four books, including *Re-Forming Gifted Education: Matching the Program to the child*.

In Dr. Roger's research, she looked at successful programs for gifted students. She surveyed students, and they responded that effective teachers of gifted students should have a sense of humor, be patient, move quickly through the material, treat each student as an individual, avoid being a “sage on the stage,” and consistently give “accurate” feedback. Throughout the conference, Dr. Rogers presented her findings and research on how to meet the needs of gifted students and components of successful programs.

On Friday morning, forty-three school administrators attended an all day workshop to hear Dr. Rogers present on “Effective Programs for Gifted Children.” Friday night and all day Saturday, approximately 150 administrators, gifted coordinators, teachers, and parents joined together to learn successful strategies for teaching gifted students.

Conference goers were serenaded by the Wenatchee Mariachi Band, and there were a variety of vendors, networking time and many breakout sessions. Breakout sessions included presenters from all over the state such as Charlotte Akin, Melanie Bondy, David Berg, Roger Fisher, Ann Koch, Rozanne Lind, Lisa Morgan, and Dr. Kathryn Picanco. Attendees gave rave reviews of the breakout sessions. Be sure to mark your calendar now and plan to attend next year's conference in Tacoma, Washington on October 19 and 20, 2012!

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, 2012.

News from a WAETAG Past President Jayasri Ghosh, Ph.D., Founding President

One of the great pleasures of my professional life is to see that WAETAG, an organization which I helped found over 25 years ago, is thriving and serving teachers and students of highly capable programs. Many of you may not know the impetus came from a \$50 grant I was able to obtain from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). I was invited to write a proposal and then travelled to Reston, Virginia to present the idea, which was approved by CEC. Educators like Dr. Wendy Roedell, Henry Reed and Janice Watson from the NW Gifted Ed Center at ESD 121 helped to write the founding documents and organize the first WAETAG conference. We felt like pioneers then, but I recognize that, even today, WAETAG continues to be led by dedicated educators who are breaking new ground. We are all working hard to ensure that highly capable programs in this state are funded and that highly capable students from diverse backgrounds are given a chance to have the benefit of our programs. This is very important as we see the demographics of our schools change.

I have had the pleasure of leading programs for highly capable programs in public and independent schools, serving on state committees and now work as an educational consultant. I remain committed to advancing the work of WAETAG and to creating better training opportunities for teachers across the state. Kudos to all of you for the exemplary work you do in supporting the differentiated needs of highly capable students.

You can continue to count on my support.

Visit our website today!
www.waetag.net

Important Dates

January 23 **Gifted Education Day 2012,**
Olympia, WA
<http://wcge.wordpress.com/>

March 1 **WAETAG Summer Scholarship**
Application Deadline
www.waetag.net

Save the date!
2012 WAETAG Conference
October 19 & 20 , Tacoma



Endowed Chair to Honor Margo Long, Longtime Whitworth Professor and Leader in Gifted Education

A \$3 million anonymous donation was announced in October to fund a new endowed chair in gifted education at Whitworth University in Spokane, named after Margo Long. Margo was the founder and director of the university's Center for Gifted Education, as well as associate professor of education, until retiring last spring. She was also instrumental in developing the national and state standards for teaching the gifted. The landmark gift recognizes Whitworth's commitment to preparing teachers who pursue a vocation in serving gifted and talented students and will support the university's Center for Gifted Education & Professional Development, which is the only one of its kind in Washington. The Margo Long Endowed Chair in Gifted Education will allow Whitworth to hire a national leader in this important field, and assure the commitment to gifted education.

Center for Gifted Education

Whitworth University

(509) 777-3222 or gifted@whitworth.edu

ABCs, PLCs, GTs, IEPs, and RTIs *continued from page 1*

pace, depth, or complexity, perhaps even at a full-time school for gifted learners. The level of differentiation should meet the level of need.

Hey, turn this pyramid and its mirror image on its side and what do you get? A diamond, or flatten the bottom and you see something similar to the normal curve. Something that implies one size does not fit all. One curriculum, one pace does not fit all of these very different learners we've grouped by accident of age.

As Susan Winebrenner said in 2001, "learning is forward progress from point of entry." We want all students to learn, to maximize their potential, from where they are. RTI is a service delivery model that can tap into the current trend of progress monitoring and intervention based on data, and serve all kids according to their learning needs.

Not only do those of you reading this far want learning for all, but it is now legally required. **Section 708 of HB 2261 states in no uncertain terms, "The legislature finds that, for highly capable students, access to accelerated learning and enhanced instruction is access to a basic education."**

You might choose to bring this up when your own PLC is discussing RTIs in light teaching of ABCs and the three R's to kids with LDs, IEPs, and even SLPs. And do it ASAP!

2011-2012

Washington Highly Capable

Membership Campaign

Be a part of the force to further gifted education in Washington

Board Members

NWGCA—since 1963

- Marcia Holland , President
- JC Hodgson—Spokane, Treasurer
- David Berg, Puyallup
- Pauline Bowie, Seattle
- Sherrie Flaman—Dayton
- Christine Holland—Puyallup
- Ann Koch—Kent
- Patrice Torres—Bothell
- Elizabeth Williamson-Bothell

www.northwestgca.org

WAETAG—since 1984

- Stephen Martin, President
- Charlotte Akin, - Vice President
- Mary Freitas- Past President
- Betty Buzitis —Financial Mgr
- Susan Casey - Secretary

Area representatives by ESD—
See WAETAG website for contact information

www.waetag.net

WCGE—since 1985

- Barbara Poyneer—Treasurer

wagfted@earthlink.net

TOGETHER

WE'RE STRONGER

Northwest Gifted

Washington Educators

Washington Coalition

Child Association

of Talented and Gifted

for Gifted Education

NWGCA

Mission:

To support highly capable/gifted children by:

- Supporting **parents**
- Disseminating information
- Encouraging development and maintenance of programs for gifted students
- Supporting legislation

Major Activities

Publishes a newsletter with local, state and national resources for gifted families

Why join?

Parents need a voice at the state level as well as a way to connect on a local level.

WAETAG

Mission:

To improve educational opportunities for gifted students by strengthening services to and providing information for

professionals serving these students in all settings.

Major Activities

- Annual Statewide Conference and Workshop
- Quarterly Coordinator meetings by ESD
- Newsletter
- Student scholarships for summer opportunities/ Distinguished student awards by ESD
- WAETAG Web site

WCGE

Mission:

To work collaboratively with key state governmental decision makers on issues related to the education of highly capable students, their families, and their schools.

Major Activities:

- Employ a **lobbyist**
- Educate key decision makers on issues
- Provide legislators with current information and seek their support for funding and programs .
- Work with state agencies on highly capable issues
- Inform members about legislative issues.

JOIN TODAY for the 2011-2012 school year

Membership Information

Does your employer match contributions?

Name

Address School District

Join: NWGCA \$35/year

Mail to PO Box 10704, Spokane, WA 99209

WAETAG \$35/year

Mail to 830 Cary Rd., Edmonds, WA 98020

WCGE \$35/year

Mail to B. Poyneer, 18149 147 Ave SE, Renton, WA 98058

JOINT MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL

Mail to B. Poyneer, 18149 147 Ave SE, Renton, WA 98058



PO Box 94045, Seattle, WA 98124

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 president.waetag@gmail.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 WAETAG, c/o Betty Buzitis, 6811 191st Place SW, Lynnwood, WA 98036. The WAETAG Newsletter is a publication of Washington Association of Educators of Talented and Gifted and is sent to all current WAETAG members as part of membership dues. Materials published herein may be copied for personal use only, and may not be published elsewhere without permission. Copyright 2012 by WAETAG. All rights reserved.