

Attachment A

The State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education

Purpose:

KRS 158.648 established and defines the purpose and duties of the State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education (SACGTE). The council acts in an advisory capacity to formulate and offer recommendations related to identification and services for gifted and talented students.

Membership:

Members of the Advisory Council are representative of: parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, coordinators of gifted/talented programs, local boards of education, visual and performing arts, the private business sector, post-secondary education, and the Kentucky Association for Gifted and Talented Education. The Council works closely with the Kentucky Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and the Education Professional Standards Board.

Advisory Council Work:

Each year the Advisory Council determines the most immediate statewide concerns that need to be addressed on behalf of gifted and talented students. To meet these needs, the Advisory Council designs and develops projects, which are generally informative, action-based and statewide in scope.

2012-2014 Projects:

The “FAQ for Parents” and the “FAQ for Teachers and Districts” was merged into one document entitled “Gifted Education: Frequently Asked Questions”. Later the document was converted to a brochure by the Communications Division which could be used by schools, districts and conferences.

2012-2013 Model Service Delivery Option Sites: Several sites were selected by the council for exemplary practices. The sites were:

- The Celtic Academy,– Enrichment through Innovative Curriculum for grades 3-7 - Glasgow Independent Schools
- Pull out services in Math and Science for grades 3-6, Warren County and The Center for Gifted Education at Western Kentucky University
- Mentoring Services for students 9-12 grade identified in Leadership - Marshall County
- School for the Creative and Performing Arts for grades 4-12 -Special school designed to foster the growth of the Visual and Performing Arts - Fayette County

2013-2014 Model Service Delivery Sites

- Bullitt Academy for Math and Science (BAMS) Self-Contained High School/College - Provides intellectually gifted and highly motivated students an opportunity to prepare themselves for the challenge of college through engagement in a rigorous and expeditious four-year curriculum
- Talent Development through Service Learning To - utilizes service learning to focus on critical thinking skills and talent development and to provide students with the opportunity to be active learners and strengthen school-community relationships Phillip Sharp Middle School & Pendleton County High School

The council worked with the Kentucky Department of Education's Early Childhood Branch to develop a guidance document for districts to use when creating policies and procedures for Early Entry to Kindergarten.

Sponsored and conducted a Post Secondary Symposium--a day and a half of professional development for teacher educators at Kentucky colleges and universities.

Sponsored and conducted the Symposium on Kentucky's Children Who Are Gifted and Talented. This awareness and discussion day and half is specifically designed for decision makers at the school, district, community, and state levels. Former Kentucky Commissioner of Education, Gene Wilhoit, was a keynote speaker at this event.

Continued to promote awareness and understanding through the reprinting and distribution of Advisory Council publications:

- *Primary Talent Pool - Frequently Asked Questions*
- *Nurturing Our Future – A Parent's Guide to Meeting the Needs of Kentucky's Gifted and Talented Youth*
- *Building the Future – Providing qualitatively differentiated educational experiences commensurate with the interests, needs, and abilities of Kentucky's gifted and talented youth*

Provided scholarships and funding for educators to participate in professional development in gifted education:

- KAGE Summer Workshop on Identification of Gifted Students
- Issues for Leaders in Gifted Education – Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted Students
- The Advanced Placement Institute

The council was also requested to review and give feedback about the Gifted Education Task Force Recommendations. The Gifted Education Task Force was created by

Commissioner Holliday and several members on the task force also served on the council. Membership on the task force included stakeholders who represented the interest of all gifted students from across the Commonwealth. The task force was charged to review:

- Current policies and procedures which effect gifted and talented students
- Successful services and where improvement should be made
- Challenges and barriers to gifted education
- Resource recommendations to the 2014 Legislative session

The task force met from December 2012 to September 2013. After several meetings, the group formulated 18 draft recommendations in the areas of accountability, professional development and funding. The taskforce then narrowed its recommendations to three overall recommendations to the 2014 Legislative session and 9 recommendations, three per area (see attachment). Below are the top three recommendations for the Legislature and for the Kentucky Department of Education.

Top Legislative Recommendations

1. Provide Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) funding for a child who is enrolled in kindergarten by a district, but does not meet the kindergarten age requirement of turning five years of age by a specific date.
2. Request a funding study of the gifted and talented state-allocated funds and their distribution among school districts. The goals of the study should be recommendations for implementation of short and long term funding plans that bring the allocation in line with inflation and the needs of districts to provide appropriate educational opportunities for gifted and talented children. In addition, the study should include recommendations for more equitable and adequate distribution of funds without penalizing any school district for the current allocation it receives.
3. Augment funding for the Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science to bring the total number of students at any year to 200.

The Recommendations from Each Area

1. **Accountability**

The Kentucky Gifted Regulations provide guidance and direction for district and school leaders, as well as, all educators to follow in providing services for children who are gifted and talented. Limited accountability is a barrier to children who are gifted and talented reaching their potential. There is a need to ensure that all children, including children who are gifted and talented, are learning in classrooms and schools in which they are making a minimum of a year's academic growth.

- a. Immediately add Gifted and Talented students to the categories of students for which disaggregated data are obtained and used for assessment, accountability, and performance information. Develop a comprehensive system to gauge effectiveness of gifted services that extends beyond K-PREP and ACT performance data, including the use of measures targeted to students' areas of high potential. Incorporate data on gifted and talented children in the data set included with the school report card.
- b. Include Gifted and Talented indicators in all existing program reviews, as required by Senate Bill 1, in order to increase awareness of and accountability for meeting the needs of Gifted/Talented students as well as integrating quality GT services across all facets of instruction.
- c. The Department shall encourage the mindful and conscientious implementation of the Gifted Student Services Plan (GSSP) according to KRS 157.196 as a tool to 1). Outline goals to address individual student's interests, needs, and abilities, 2). Communicate to parents those goals and student growth toward those goals will be reported, and 3). Provide progress reports related to the student's GSSP to the parents as part of other communication on student progress at least once a semester as stated in 704 KAR 3:285 Section 5, (3).

2. **Professional Development**

The role of professional development is vital to building teacher capacity to identify and meet the needs of gifted and talented students. The Professional Learning Standards regard the role of professional development in guiding instructional leaders and decision-makers in the development of programming and policies that maximize the potential of every student as critically important. It is essential that

ongoing professional development is in place so that students are prepared for admission and success in selective programs and careers that utilize their talents and abilities. According to the 2013 TELL Survey in Kentucky, 92% of respondents reported that they had not had Gifted and Talented professional development in the last two years. The professional development demands in Kentucky schools are so extensive that GT professional development is difficult to sustain as a priority.

- a. Require all professional development activities to address the needs of the Gifted and Talented students and consider the impact on gifted/high ability students by all initiatives.
- b. Require professional development for all staff on gifted education pedagogy including strategies to reduce underachievement among gifted students.
- c. Develop and deliver training about the nature and needs of gifted schools to school boards, school administrators, Site Based Decision Making councils, community civic groups, parent groups, and business leadership.

3. Funding

Gifted and talented students represent diverse experiences, skills, ethnicity, and cultural and economic backgrounds. All of them require a responsive and challenging educational system if they are to achieve to their highest potential (“State of States”, 2010-2011).

Funding to support gifted education is about meeting student needs and the needs of Kentucky’s future.

- a. Advocate or Request funding for Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) funding for a child who is enrolled in kindergarten by a district, but does not meet the kindergarten age requirement of turning five years of age by a specific date.
- b. Request a funding study of the gifted and talented state-allocated funds and their distribution among school districts. The goals of the study should be recommendations for implementation of short and long term funding plans that bring the allocation in line with inflation and the needs of districts to provide appropriate educational opportunities for gifted and talented children. In addition, the study should include recommendations for more equitable and adequate distribution of funds without penalizing any school district for the current allocation it receives.

- c. Include in the Kentucky Department of Education's budget additional support for developing and implementing a monitoring program to support and assist districts whose gifted students do not make adequate annual growth. The monitoring program would support Kentucky school districts in providing comprehensive professional development, identification, and service delivery options for their gifted and talented students as outlined in 704 KAR 3:285 Programs for the Gifted and Talented.