

New York: State of the State Advocacy Works!

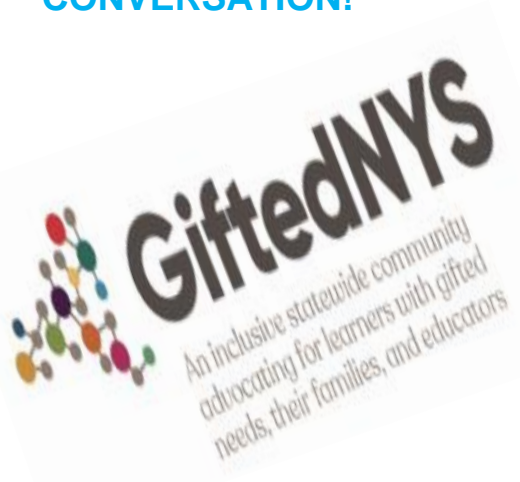
Dr. Elissa F. Brown
GiftedNYS
April 19, 2023



GiftedNYS

www.giftednys.org

VISIT OUR
FACEBOOK PAGE:
JOIN THE
CONVERSATION!



**NAGC'S NEW YORK STATE
AFFILIATE:**

<http://nagc.org.442elmp01.blackmesh.com/gifted-state>

Who we are...

Gifted New York State, Inc. (GiftedNYS) is a not-for-profit organization of parents, educators, and professionals who have come together to support the needs of New York State's gifted and twice-exceptional (2e) student population and their families.

OUR MISSION

- To build awareness and understanding of what it means to be gifted or twice-exceptional
- To promote federal, statewide, and local policies and initiatives that support and protect these underrepresented children in our schools
- To create community for gifted and twice-exceptional children and their families

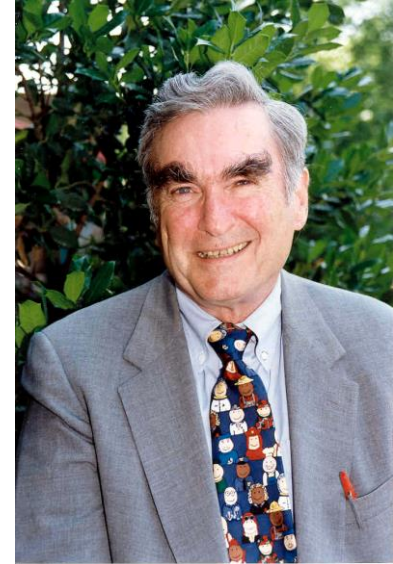
To learn more and join
visit us at giftednys.org

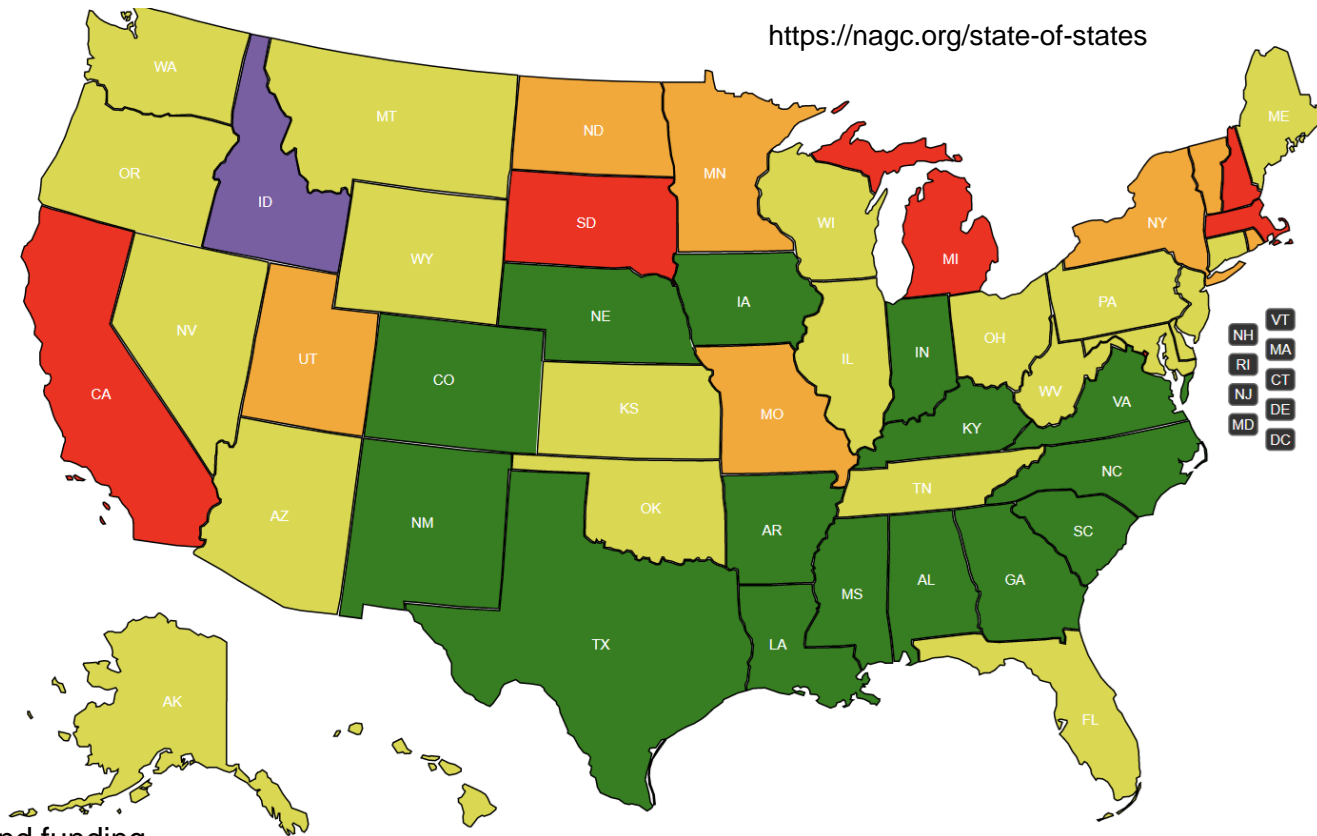


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Education should ask more of gifted children than that they be walking memory banks. They must also be problem solvers and creative thinkers; and they will not reach that goal by passively soaking up more information.

-James J. Gallagher





Green: Mandate and funding

Orange: Definition for gifted, but no mandate for identification or programming and no funding

Purple: No applicable data provided

Red: No mandate and no funding

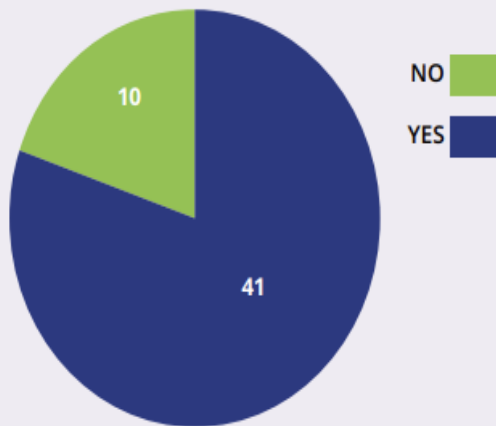
Yellow: Mandate for ID but not for programs and/or no funding

IDENTIFICATION FOR GIFTED SERVICES

Of the 51 respondents, 41 require by law or rule the identification of gifted and talented students and 10 do not (see figure 4 and table 6, which also includes the URL to the law or rule, as applicable).

FIGURE 4. State Mandates Identification of Gifted Students

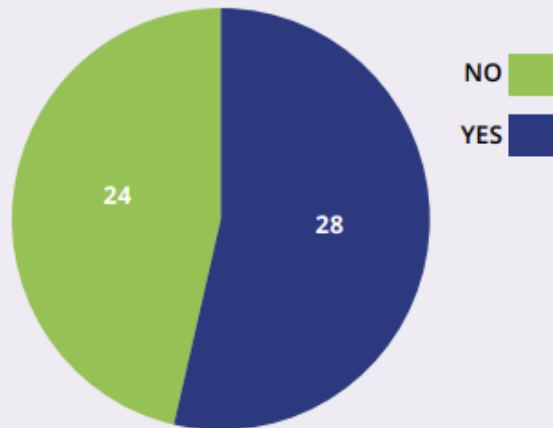
(n=51, multiple responses possible)



NAGC State of the States Report: 2020-2021

FIGURE 8. State Mandates Gifted Programming/Options

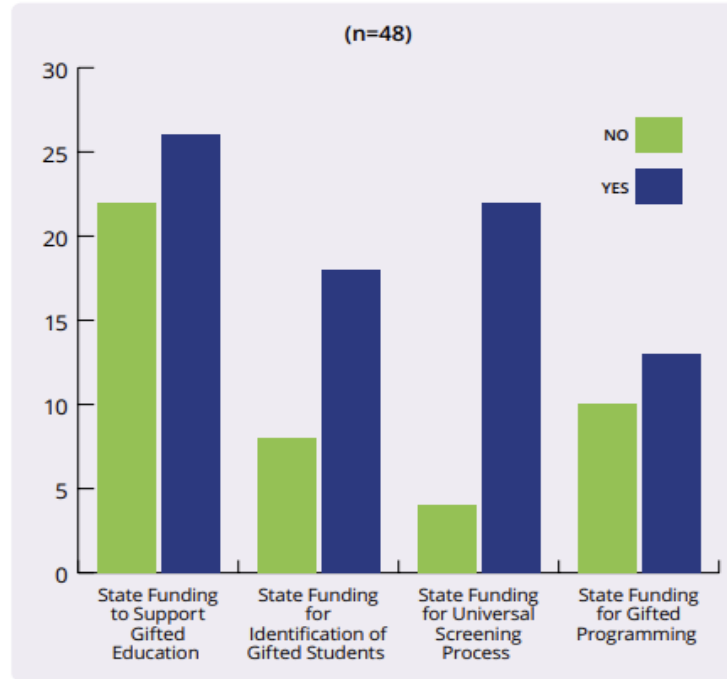
(n=51, multiple responses possible)



Respondents were asked if their states provide dedicated funding to LEAs specifically earmarked to support gifted education. Of the 48 respondents, 26 said their states provide dedicated funding and 22 said their states do not (see figure 27). See

<https://nagc.org/page/state-of-the-states-report>

FIGURE 27. State Funding for Gifted Identification



Gifted Education in New York: Definition § 4452

As used in this article, the term "gifted pupils" shall mean those pupils who show evidence of high performance capability and exceptional potential in areas such as general intellectual ability, special academic aptitude and outstanding ability in visual and performing arts. Such definition shall include those pupils who require educational programs or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their full potential.

<https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/4452>

Gifted Education in New York: Section 117.1 Scope of Part

The purpose of this Part is to establish standards for screening of every new entrant to the schools to determine which students are possibly gifted, have or are suspected of having a disability in accordance with subdivision (6) of section 3208 and/or possibly are limited English proficient in accordance with subdivision 2-a of section 3204 of the Education Law.

<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/lawsregs/117-1-3.html>

The Educational Political Landscape: Competing Demands

- *Covid19* refocused attention on low end learners and “learning loss”
- Standards movement is assessment driven
- Equity and Excellence still viewed as dichotomies
- Tensions between tradition and innovation
- Racial disparities have not abated (closing the gap)
- Competing values between standardization and personalization
- Wide disparity among states: local vs state control

Equity and Excellence

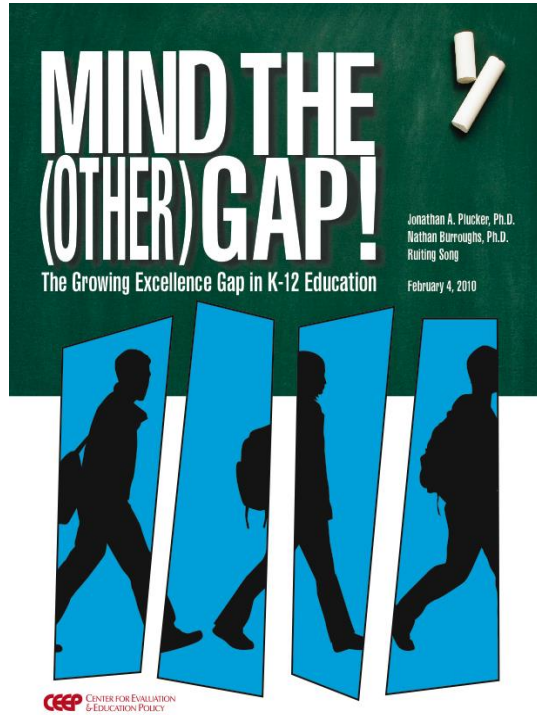
We

need to redefine

equity



The Excellence Gap



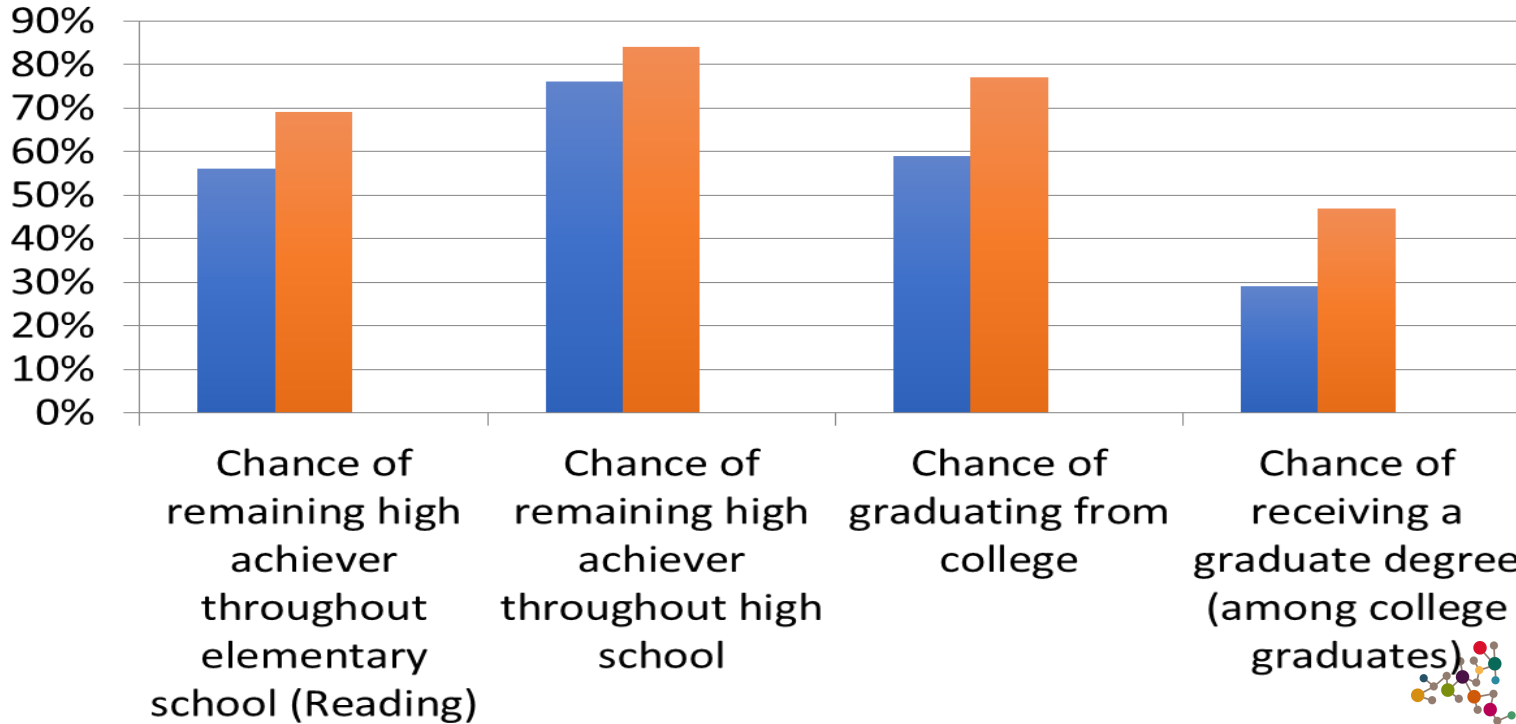
achievementtrap BY JOSHUA S. WYNER / JOHN M. BRIDGEMAN / JOHN J. DRULIO, JR.
How America Is Failing Millions of High-Achieving Students from Lower-Income Families



Excellence Gap Data

- Low SES children arrive at school less prepared.
- 80,000 students per grade (K-5) qualify for free or reduced lunch and *perform in the top quartile academically.*
- *Data reveal a 13 point gap* in reading scores between low income-high achieving vs. higher income peers as they progress throughout elementary school

Reality: Educational Disparities among High Achievers due to income



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Examples of Advocacy Success: State & Local Efforts

Colorado:

Advocates learned that a state mandate for gifted education was not possible in the current political climate. Rather than give up or alienate their legislative supporters, they re-grouped and worked with legislators to craft an amendment that provided increased funding and identified gifted learners.

Robinson & Moon (2021)

Examples of Advocacy Success: State & Local Efforts

Iowa:

A parent led advocacy group elected a school board member by endorsing a supportive candidate in a tight race. They activated a phone tree. The candidate won a seat on the school board.

Robinson & Moon (2021)

Examples of Advocacy Success: State & Local Efforts

New York:

A parent advocacy group succeeded in getting its district to adopt a local policy to specify services for gifted learners. They also started a Saturday enrichment program and organized a regularly published newsletter.

Robinson & Moon (2021)

Examples of Advocacy Success: State & Local Efforts

North Carolina:

The state association spearheaded an effort to pass legislation requiring local gifted education plans. They used a strategy called “Bag it.” Each member was given 2 paper bags and asked to take someone at their local level to lunch (eg PTA president, a principal, special ed. Director, newspaper reporter, superintendent, etc). They also provided advocates with suggestions for beginning the conversation. Through this strategy they built coalitions and new supporters.

Robinson & Moon (2021)

Lessons Learned

- **Advocates use a variety of strategies to achieve their goals.**
- **Advocates plan**
- **Advocates collaborate**
- **Advocates communicate**
- **Advocates are persistent**

Collaboration counts

1 parent= A fruitcake

2 parents=A fruitcake and friend

3 parents=Troublemakers

5 parents="Let's have a meeting"

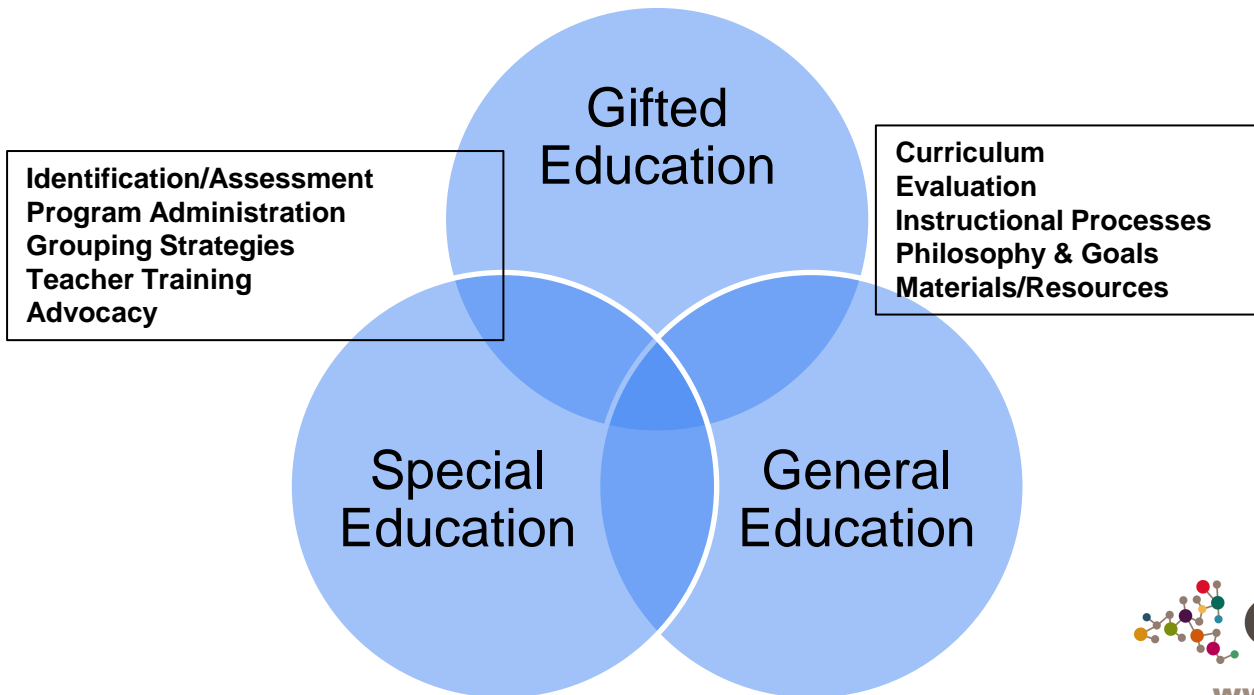
10 parents="We'd better listen"

25 parents= "Our dear friends"

50 parents=A powerful organization

Roberts, J. (2017). Planning for advocacy, in *Designing Services and Programs for High-Ability Learners*, pg. 209

Key Linkages (Allies) of Special Education and General Education in Program Development for the Gifted



New York State Education Dept (NYSED)

-A conversation with NYSED professional staff (Fall 2022):

- NYSED does not preclude any local school district from identifying or serving gifted students
- NYSED does not preclude any local school district from funding gifted education

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Although gifted education is a matter of local control, it is difficult to advocate for students with gifts & talents and twice-exceptional learners to be identified, receive programming, and ensure teacher preparation, without the necessary state mandate or funding to do so.

Tips for **State** Level Advocacy

- Build an effective state advocacy organization
- Build collaborative relationships with decision makers & other organizations
- Communicate a clear and consistent message
- **Tell your “story”-while data is important; stories make change**
- Say “Thank you”

Robinson & Moon (2021)

Tips for **Local** Level Advocacy

- Be knowledgeable
- Build awareness and support
- Find champions in the school system or local community
- Set clear goals
- Offer assistance
- Address issues of equity (as well as excellence)
- **Tell your “story”-while data is important; stories make change**

Robinson & Moon (2021)

Planning for an Advocacy Initiative

What is the goal?

Who is the target audience?

What is the specific message or ask?

What story can you share to persuade action?

Who will make the decision?

When will the decision be made?

Who are key individuals in and out of your organization to influence decision makers?

Table 1: Advocacy Messages Targeted by Audience

	Classroom Teacher	School Gifted Coordinator/ Principal	District Superintendent/ School Board	State Legislators Policymakers State Board of Education
Differentiation for advanced learning (quality vs. quantity)	Targeted			
Access to rigorous instruction and advanced content	Targeted			
Ability to skip already-mastered content	Targeted			
Opportunity to learn at a faster pace	Targeted			
Use of above grade-level curriculum materials and/or curriculum materials designed for gifted learners	Targeted	Targeted		
Creation of enrichment programming and competitions	Targeted	Targeted	Targeted	
A variety of programming and grouping options (e.g., advanced classes)	Targeted	Targeted	Targeted	
Equitable access to gifted programming		Targeted	Targeted	
Consistency of implementation across school and district with oversight		Targeted	Targeted	
Policies for acceleration: early entrance/graduation, grade skipping, curriculum compacting			Targeted	Targeted

Targeting advocacy messages by stakeholder

Reference:
 Brown, E. & Joerg, M. (2020). Planning for Advocacy: Levers for Change
Parenting for High Potential, NAGC, vol. 9 (1)

New York State General Assembly: Proposed 2023-24 Legislation

Name & Bill Number	Introduced		Referred to Education Committee	
	Assembly	Senate	Assembly	Senate
Gifted Education Reinforcement Act (A3954)	Yes	No	Yes	No
Screening for Gifted and Talented Students (A672 / S1821)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Expand Access to Advanced Courses to Improve Educational Equity (A514 / S5650)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

[Link to PDF](#)

Your turn: Yes, You Can!

1. Decide state or local
2. Decide tweet, text, or email
3. Have email, phone number or twitter name ready
4. Use one of the samples (or create your own) and SEND!
5. Tell your story

Sample Tweets:

Education in NYS must be equitable: All students means ALL students, including #gifted and #twice-exceptional! Learn more at [GiftedNYS.org](https://www.giftednys.org). #gtchat #gifteded #neurodiversity #ny #education @Benedetto4NY @NYSMA_Majority @ShelleyBMayer @NYSenate @GovKathyHochul @NYSEDNews

NYS is 1 of only 8 states that doesn't mandate or fund gifted ed. Meet the #gifteded needs of NYS's learners! Learn more at [GiftedNYS.org](https://www.giftednys.org). #gtchat #neurodiversity #2e #ny #education @Benedetto4NY @NYSMA_Majority @ShelleyBMayer @NYSenate @GovKathyHochul @NYSEDNews

I support passing legislation for New York State's #gifted and #2E learners. It's time to get it done. Learn more at [giftednys.org/news/if-not-now-when/](https://www.giftednys.org/news/if-not-now-when/) #gtchat #neurodiversity #ny #education @Benedetto4NY @NYSMA_Majority @ShelleyBMayer @NYSenate @GovKathyHochul @NYSEDNews

It's time for #GiftedEd for NYS: Pass and fund NYS Gifted Education Reinforcement Act ([A3954](https://www.giftednys.org/news/if-not-now-when/)). #gtchat #gifteded #neurodiversity #2e #giftedNYS #ny #education @Benedetto4NY @NYSMA_Majority @ShelleyBMayer @NYSenate @GovKathyHochul @NYSEDNews

Sample Phone or Email Scripts:

Email: My name is ____. I live in ____. My child attends__ (school/school district). Please join me in supporting our gifted and twice-exceptional learners to ensure that they receive equitable opportunities to excel.

Hi, my name is, _____ I am a constituent of Assembly Member/Senator _____ and I live in [name of your town/city]. I am calling to urge Assembly Member/Senator _____ to work with his/her/their colleagues to move _ (insert bill #) out of the Education Committee to the full Assembly/Senate for a vote. Furthermore, I encourage the Assembly/Senate to fund the mandate for gifted education programs.

New York State is one of only 8 states that does not mandate identification or services nor provide any state funding for gifted education opportunities. Gifted and twice-exceptional students have different learning and social-emotional needs than their age peers. They require a differentiated education that is responsive to their learning needs. It is imperative that New York State pass legislation requiring public schools to identify, serve and fund gifted education for all students, so that gifted students, like their peers, can reach their full potential. Thank you for your time! I'm grateful for your consideration of this matter which is critically important to__ [me/my family/community/child].



Collateral victims are a society and economy that thereby fail to make the most of latent human capital. It's not elitist to pour more resources into educating our brightest kids. In fact, the future of the country may depend on it.

-Chester E. Finn
President, Thomas B. Fordham Institute

Mark your calendar: Upcoming GiftedNYS events!

- **June 8, 2023: Meet-Up (7:00pm)**
- **September 2023: *Yes, You Can* (date: TBD)**
- **October 2023: Meet-Up (date: TBD)**
- **Fall 2023: Legislative Town Hall (date: TBD)**

THANK YOU!
TOGETHER WE WILL MAKE A CHANGE!

<https://giftednys.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

<https://giftednys.org/donations/donate-to-giftednys/>