New York:
State of the State
Advocacy Works!

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March 12, 2025

GiftedNYS

An inclusive community advocating for learners with gifted education needs, their families, and educators.

www.giftednys.org

Thank you for sharing your evening with us!

AGENDA

- Welcome & Introductions
- GiftedNYS overview & 2024 highlights
- Gifted Education in NYS & broader education landscape
- Legislation we support
- Local Advocacy
- Advocacy tips and advice
- Q & A

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

We place a high value on unity across New York State…

and believe it's the only path to success.

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Committees & Priority Goals

Communication	• Create and implement 2025 Communications plan.
Advocacy	• Advance NYS gifted education legislation and support NAGC's Federal legislation efforts.
Programs & Services	• Provide relevant programs & services to maintain & increase supporters.
Membership, Fundraising & Development	• Create and implement 2025 member/ supporter development plan.
Operations & Leadership	• Grow volunteer operations while maintaining current distributive leadership structure.

2024 Highlights: By The Numbers

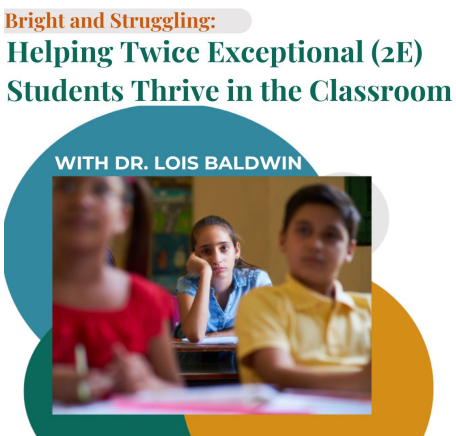
12% Growth in Membership

4 Newsletters

Catch up and Connect with
GiftedNYS

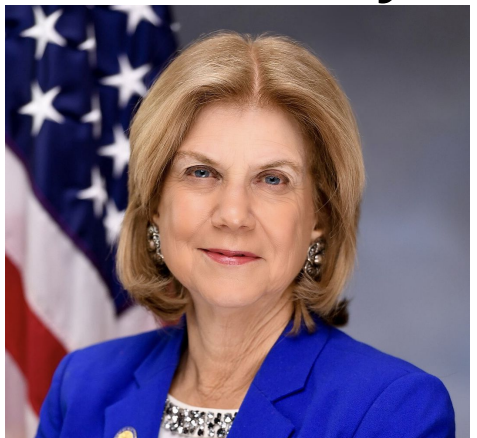
3 Virtual Meetups

2 Events



1 FAQ

1 Meeting with Senator Mayer



What Is “Gifted”

New York State

SECTION 4452

Education (EDN) CHAPTER 16, TITLE 6, ARTICLE 90

“Gifted pupils are those who show **evidence of high performances 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.”**

Federal

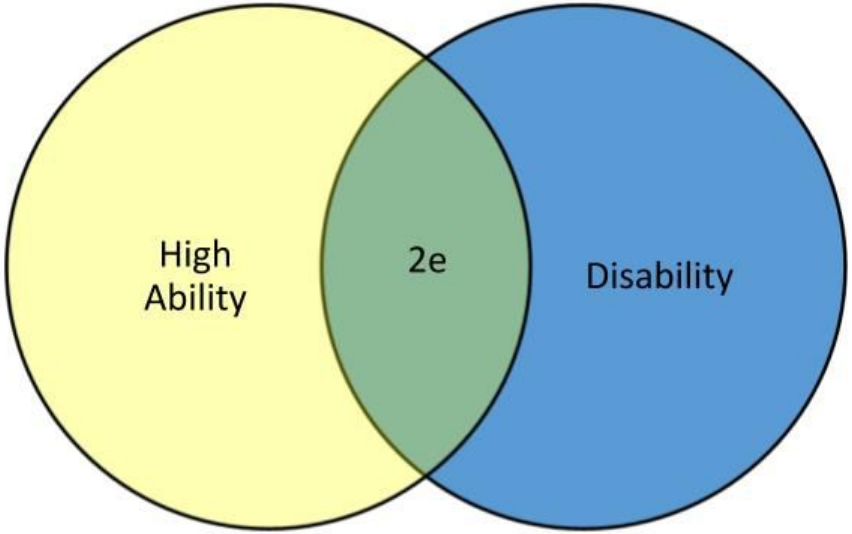
The Elementary & Secondary Education Act

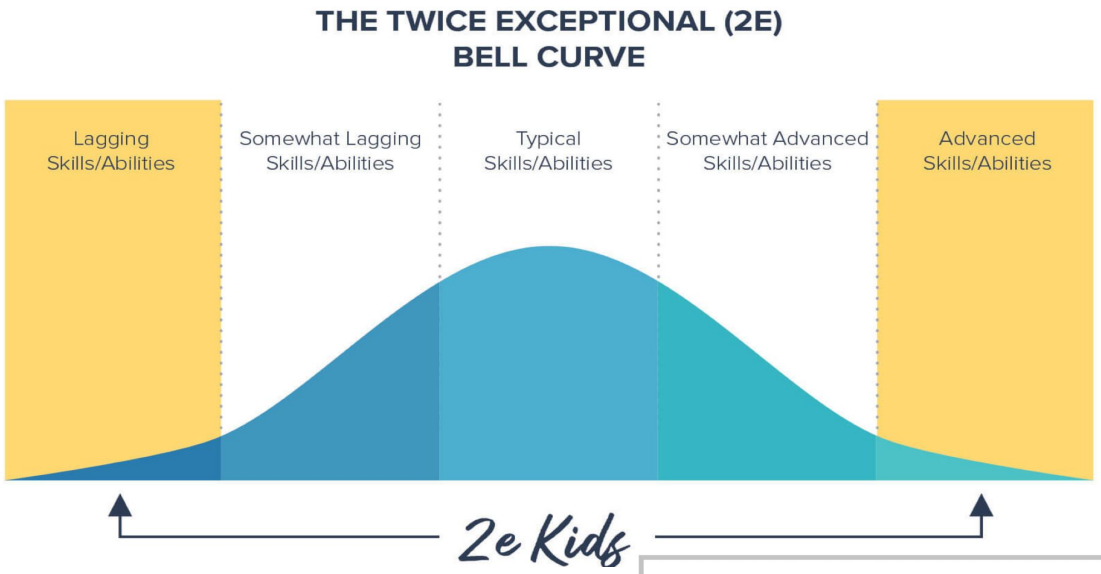
“Students, children, or youth who give **evidence of high achievement capability** in areas such as **intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields**, and **who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.”**

Note: States and districts are not required to use the federal definition, although many states base their definitions on the federal definition.

What is “Twice - Exceptional (2E)”

“Twice exceptional individuals evidence exceptional ability and disability, which results in a unique set of circumstances. Their exceptional ability may dominate, hiding their disability; their disability may dominate, hiding their exceptional ability; each may mask the other so that neither is recognized or addressed.” – National Twice Exceptional Community of Practice





Asynchronous Development

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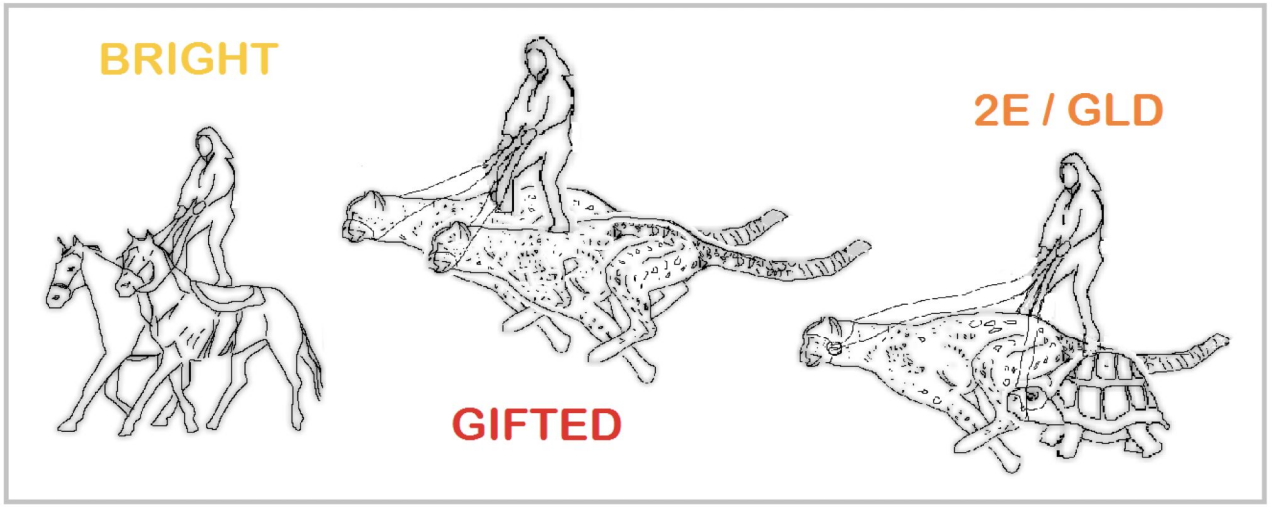
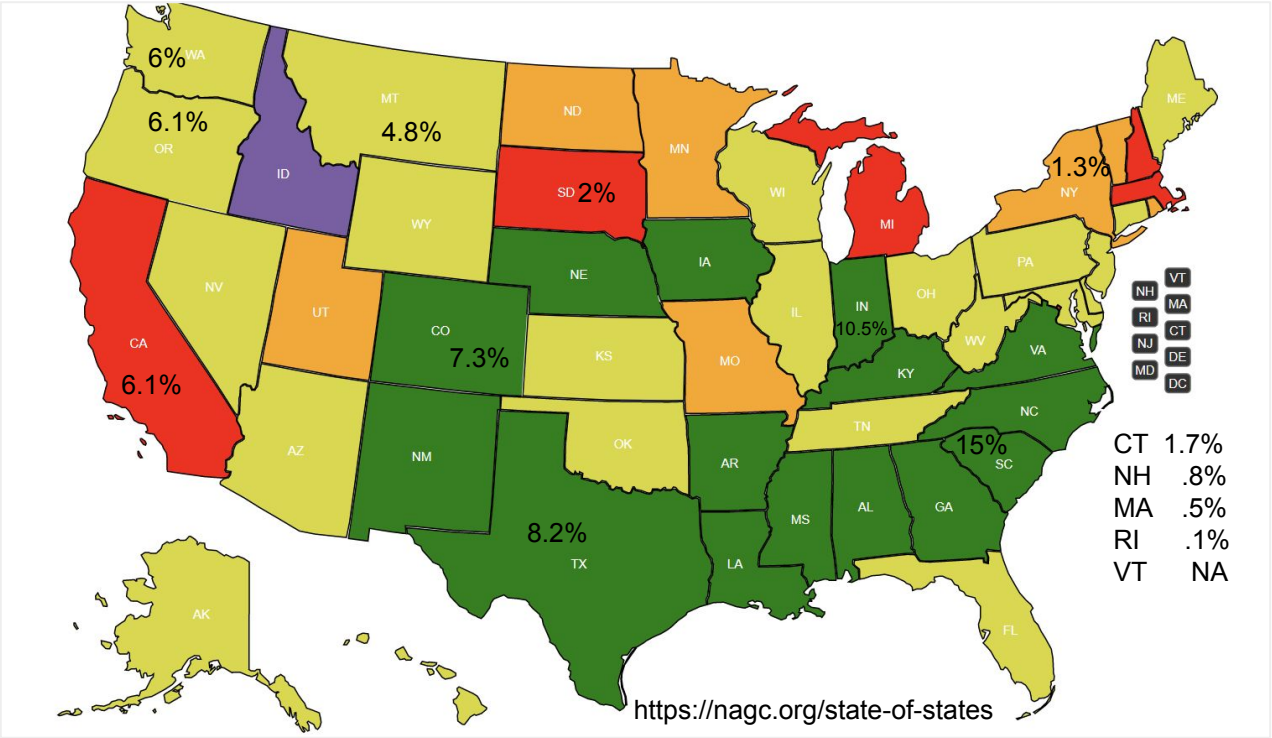
A discrepancy between your real age and your mental age



Gifted Education In The United States



Dark Green: Mandate to identify & funding

Light Green: Mandate for ID, not for programs & funding

Orange: Definition for gifted

Red: No mandate and no funding

Purple: No applicable data provided

National Average of k-12 public school students enrolled in G&T: **6%**

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Being A Gifted Learner In New York State

NYS does not mandate or direct funding to gifted programs.

It is up to local districts to decide if they will provide and how to implement.

This has led to disparities in access and resources across the state.

G&T Enrollment Across The State

Geography	Total Public School Student Enrollment	Number of Students Enrolled in G&T	% of Students Enrolled in G&T
NYS	2,561,406	33,929	1.3%
Top districts with G&T data			
NYC Public	873,894	13,996	1.6%
Buffalo CSD	31,689	980	3.1%
Rochester CSD	24,381	1,691	6.9%

National average: 6%

Highest:
15% South Carolina

Lowest:
.1% Rhode Island

NOTE: OCR district level data may not include private, charter, and any other non-public schools within a district's footprint.

Source: Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, U.S. Department of Education. https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov/profile/us?surveyYear=2020. Accessed February 16, 2025.

Legislation We Are Following

New York State

Changes to *Article 90*: Education (EDN)
Chapter 16, Title 6 §4451-4453
https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/A90

Federal

The *ACE Act* (S3279; H.R. 6328)
https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/3279
https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/6328

5 Calls

5 calls is all it takes for a topic to be elevated to a member of congress

5calls.org

Advocacy For Gifted & 2E Students

Lack of understanding & awareness

Teacher training gaps

Identification & Access

Funding

Elitism & Stigma

Unique social emotional needs

The 2E challenge

I am not an expert in….

YOU ARE THE EXPERT ON YOUR CHILD

Reframe The Challenges

Equality

The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.

Equity

Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

Justice

All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Cycle Starter

vs

Stigma Breaker

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What does

Mean to you?

How can one person initiate change???

Advocacy successes Nina has championed:

1. New position created to support high-ability students at the middle school level

2. Sessions on high-ability students added to district teacher PD course catalog, plus onboarding schedule for new hires

3. Brought national expert to our area: teacher session, parent session, hour-long radio interview, met with NYS Regents

   District leadership takes my calls and the Board of Ed is receptive to my public comments and invitations

Where do I even begin??

1. What's your passion, biggest priority, top concern?

2. Start small, do it well, and work your way up to bigger projects

3. Do your research
   a. Gifted education in general
   b. Your district
   c. Nearby districts
   d. Parent advocacy groups

Create/grow your network

Numbers matter! The more parents / stakeholders involved, the more leadership will listen, meet, and act.

1. Find like-minded people
2. Keep a list of everyone who is receptive
3. Stay in touch with them

©DESIGNALIKIE

The Power of Parents

- 1 Parent = A fruitcake
- 2 parents = A fruitcake and a 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

From the Parent Leadership Associates www.plassociates.org

Guiding principles on this journey:

1. Know your stuff
2. Stay positive, be respectful, show gratitude
3. Be aware of language: gifted / high-ability / advanced learners
4. Listen, and be flexible
5. Be solutions oriented
6. Ask how *you* can help *them*
7. Make it easy for people to say “yes”

Helpful tips and strategies:

1. Align language and approach with district mission/priorities
2. Meeting the needs of high-ability students helps *all* students
3. Volunteer in ways unrelated to high-ability students
4. “If you’re not at the table, there’s a good chance you’re on the menu”
5. Be politely persistent

Meetings with administrators & teachers

1. Bring treats to the first meeting
2. Ask how *they* are doing
3. Establish their baseline of G/T knowledge
4. Come prepared
5. Share what you're hearing from other parents, not just you
6. Advocate for *all* students, not just yours

Meetings, continued

1. Be sensitive to their limitations (budget, staffing, etc.)
2. Agree on next steps and timeline, follow up in writing
3. Stay in touch
4. Go higher up the chain of command if needed
5. Respectfully hold people accountable when necessary

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“The man who moves a mountain begins by carrying away small stones.”

-Confucius

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THANK YOU!
TOGETHER WE WILL MAKE A CHANGE!

Your Voice Matters!

bit.ly/JoinGNYS

Lend a Helping Hand!

bit.ly/HelpGNYS

Meet up with Us!

bit.ly/4-08Meet

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