Re-Forming Gifted Education: Matching the Program to the Child With Dr. Karen Rogers

Last April’s two-day Alliance conference on The Non-Traditional Gifted Learner was a great success. Linda Silverman, Cindy Anne Strickland and our other presenters were well-received and everyone had a chance to meet and network with others interested in gifted and talented issues.

One thing we heard over and over again, however, was that with budget cutbacks in our schools, educators were having a harder and harder time finding the money and time to attend “conferences.” Parents too were finding it harder to come up with the money and the time. Simultaneously, the ISD gifted and talented consultants, who met in conjunction with our conference, were telling us that the most important thing that the Alliance could do to support gifted education in the current environment is to provide quality professional development.

A New Conference Format and Dr. Karen Rogers

After weighing all of your comments, the Program Committee has decided to experiment with a new format for this year’s Alliance conference programming that we think will be just as enlightening, but more convenient, more flexible and less expensive.

Rather than having a single two-day conference at a single, more expensive venue in the spring, we have arranged to have Dr. Karen Rogers, renowned national expert and researcher in gifted education and author of *Best Practices in Gifted Education* and *Re-Forming Gifted Education: Matching the Program to the Child*, join us in November 2004 and again in April 2005.

We hope that Dr. Rogers’ presentations will help you answer the questions, “What can we do with the kids who already know It?” … and “How can we do it on a shoestring?” Because we know that districts across the state are agonizing over shrinking budgets, our focus will be on how schools can provide services that will have the greatest impact on students for

(Continued on page 10)
FROM THE PRESIDENT
Sue Goering

Hello, all friends of gifted! It’s great to be back again! Thank you for entrusting me with the leadership of this organization once more. I will try to follow the excellent direction provided by recent Alliance presidents Gayle Kirker and Carol McCarthy who, along with other Board Members, are tirelessly committed to improving opportunities for advanced and accelerated children, adolescents and teens across the state of Michigan.

These leaders have guided the Alliance through difficult years, keeping it strong and viable. As national legislation has focused state and local attention, energy, and resources on “children left behind,” increased (and often confusing) requirements, greater accountability, and stiffer penalties for low performance have diminished the very limited resources available for another group of children traditionally left behind in all too many school districts. Advanced and accelerated students are also at great risk without differentiated programs and services which allow them to develop their abilities, talents, and potentials.

Despite the severe budget cuts, the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education is committed to providing support for these students, their families and their educators in order to fulfill the belief that quality education provides equitable services for all students to learn and to grow at rates commensurate with their abilities. The Alliance strives to see that no child is left behind. In response to the suggestions of participants at the April Alliance conference, the Board of Directors is focused on four priorities:

• increase visibility for advanced and accelerated students;
• continue to provide professional development for educators;
• support families and affiliates;
• identify new sources of revenue to support these efforts.

I am well aware that the greater mission of this organization is advanced on many fronts by the countless contributions of the hundreds of parents and educators who advocate for bright young people on a daily basis. I look forward to working with you as we all seek improved services for the bright young people entrusted to our care.

FROM OUR PAST PRESIDENT
Carol Rohrer McCarthy, 2003-2004 President

Changes: A Vision For The Future

The past year was one of significant change for our organization. The state’s drastic reduction in gifted funding—from $5 million to $250,000—affected the Alliance, even though we receive no direct funding from the state. Greatly reduced funds available to schools and ISD support services resulted in fewer paid staff development days (to attend our conference) and a compromised state-wide communication infrastructure. Decisions made by the Board during this transition year have allowed us to finish the year as a stronger organization.

Our Board of Directors took action to eliminate or reduce most of our major expenses, This change means that our Board, always a group of committed volunteers, must now function as a volunteer working board, providing most of the services previously filled by a full service management company.

As with all things, though, there are unforeseen advantages that can emerge during difficult times. Enjoy, as I now do, a retrospective look at some of the highlights of our past year:

• The Alliance now contracts part-time for administrative support services. Our Executive Secretary, Sue Bellaski, is our most valued, and least expected, positive “find” during our transition. Sue is committed to gifted kids, is on top of every administrative detail, and finds unique ways to reduce our expenses. Most of all, she enjoys working with our constituency. She will work hard to find answers to your questions.

• Our annual conference, now organized by (volunteer!) Board Member Mary Nell Baldwin, was re-structured to offer more focused and in-depth sessions. Our nationally recognized speakers as well as the conference organization received resounding high marks. As predicted, fewer schools had funding to support staff attendance at the conference; even with fewer registrants, we realized a small net gain in revenues. We plan to use this conference experience to further enhance future conferences!

• As a non-profit organization, we qualified to receive funding from a Foundation that requests anonymity. Revenues from this Foundation helped us survive our transition year, and gave us a needed safety net to make plans that could be financially supported. Without the strong infrastructure of the ISD communication and resource network, we are now the sole statewide organization dedicated to gifted students’ needs. Finding

(Continued on page 11)
Midwest Academic Talent Search: 
Resources to Help Assessment and Programming Needs for Third Through Ninth Graders 
Carol Rohrer McCarthy

Traditional grade-level achievement tests often do not adequately show the extent of gifted students’ abilities. The Talent Search process offers a more powerful measure of bright students’ potential by giving them access to tests usually taken by older students, called “above-grade level” tests.

This process is available to Michigan’s 3rd through 9th grade students through the Midwest Academic Talent Search or MATS (formerly known as MTS/MTSY).

Above-grade level tests offer more difficult questions, and thus act like high-powered microscopes, illuminating aspects of a student’s abilities that cannot be discerned with less powerful instruments such as in-grade achievement tests. Above-grade level tests can discriminate different levels of ability in several specific content areas (mathematics, verbal, reading, science). They are far better measures of the students’ intellectual abilities than the standardized in-grade achievement tests gifted students typically take in school. Above-grade level testing of the kind that occurs in the talent search can provide vital information for parents, students and educators as they plan appropriate educational activities that will further develop individual talents.

What is a Talent Search?

Michigan students can participate in the Midwest Academic Talent Search (MATS) process through The Center for Talent Development (CTD) at Northwestern University, one of four universities conducting talent searches within the United States. MATS serves an eight state region in the Midwest.

MATS is based on the philosophy that early and accurate assessment of exceptional academic abilities enables the development of appropriate and individualized curriculum. MATS participants in grades 6-9 take the ACT or SAT, both achievement tests typically taken by students in grades 10, 11 and 12 who are preparing to go to college. Over 20 years of experience has demonstrated that these tests are appropriate for middle school students who are capable of achieving at high levels. Third through sixth grade MATS participants take the EXPLORE, a test developed by the American College Testing Corporation for eighth graders to determine their knowledge in four key areas: mathematics, reading, language and science reasoning. Some sixth graders take the ACT or SAT.

How do Students Qualify for the Midwest Academic Talent Search?

Students can qualify for MATS in several ways:

- a 95th percentile score or above on a nationally normed, standardized in-grade achievement test,
- a Michigan MEAP test score of 1, or a score of 2 when combined with an adult nomination,
- qualifying for a school’s gifted program,
- receiving a teacher or parent nomination.

Students who qualify and complete a MATS registration form receive materials to help them prepare to take these tests, such as practice questions and a preview of the test format. The ACT, SAT, and EXPLORE are offered during specified January or February test dates at many sites throughout Michigan. Students receive their scores in the mail at home four to six weeks later.

Why Take the ACT or SAT Through MATS?

Students may sign up to take the SAT or ACT without registering through MATS, but they will only receive score reports comparing them to students who normally take the tests—college bound seniors. At the core of the talent search process is assessment of a student’s potential, and recommendations for what degree of acceleration and what curriculum would most challenge him or her—information available through many years of experience with bright students taking above-grade level tests. This information is generated by comparing a student’s scores with those of other students of similar age and potential and is only provided to parents and educators through MATS. Soon after test scores are available from the testing companies, MATS processes scores of all talent search participants and provides assessment results and course recommendations both to families and to school counselors. Without this assessment, and other continuing mailings from MATS, the only benefit a student could expect would be from practice taking the test.

Benefits of Participating Through MATS

One of the most immediate benefits that participation in MATS provides is information to help parents, students and educators understand the meaning of students’ test scores. Through statistical information that is compiled on each participant, students can see how their scores compare to older students who typically take the ACT, SAT, or EXPLORE test, and more importantly, how they compare to other students their own age who participated in MATS.
The achievement orientation places heavy emphasis on future accomplishments and productivity. From this position, the objective is to select children for gifted programs who have greater potential for adult success than other children, and to give them the kind of training that will enable them to maximize their potential for the good of society. In order to determine the characteristics that predict greatness, numerous researchers have spent their professional lives examining the dispositions and early childhoods of individuals of great reputation. All of this information has been translated into prescriptions for educators.

When adult models are used as a basis for judging who is gifted in childhood, those children who appear most adult-like are considered gifted. First-borns are more achievement-oriented, conscientious, and responsible than their siblings; therefore, they are perceived as gifted more often than younger children in families. Since more men have achieved distinction in society than women, masculine characteristics are more often associated with giftedness than feminine ones. Gifted boys grow up to be gifted men, and gifted girls grow up to be mommies. Has anybody ever heard of a "gifted mommy"?

In a study of 100 urban school districts Dr. Wilma Gillespie (1982) found that achievement scores, teacher recommendations and grades were the three most prevalent criteria used for selecting children for gifted programs. Giftedness as achievement means earning a place in the fast track of the gifted program through high grades, high achievement scores, hard work, and good adjustment. It also means being kicked out of the program if you don’t achieve. According to this philosophy, a gifted underachiever is a contradiction in terms.

Placement in the gifted program is usually based upon proving oneself successful in the regular classroom. However, many gifted children do not shine in the regular classroom. Some of the children who fail to perform in traditional instruction are: (1) the highly gifted student who is too bored to participate; (2) the creative thinker who sees the world differently from his or her peers and teachers; (3) the gifted/handicapped child whose disability depresses performance in certain areas; (4) the culturally diverse student whose cultural values are not represented in the curriculum; (5) the gifted girl who hides her abilities in order to keep her friends; (6) the introvert who does not perform in large groups; (7) the underachiever who learns material differently from the way it is traditionally taught. The achievement orientation overlooks many, if not most, of these students.

The developmental perspective of giftedness includes all of these children. I define giftedness as developmental advancement in one or more areas. The developmental perspective places most of its emphasis on childhood, rather than potential for adult attainments. Children are compared with other children, not with adult models. The developmental differences found between gifted children and their peers affect every aspect of their lives, including self-concept and social development. Placement decisions which grow out of the developmental view are based upon differences in children's learning styles, learning rates, and learning needs. Instruction is differentiated to meet those needs. Rarely are children exited from gifted programs on the grounds of “nonperformance”; instead, the instructional modes are adapted so that they are better matched to the child’s learning style.

Differences in ability are assessed early in life to prevent underachievement patterns and to provide appropriate nurturing and stimulation of special abilities. Early identification is essential from a developmental view, since interventions on the child's behalf are thought to be most effective in the early years. Early identification is not a priority in the achievement orientation because preschool and primary level IQ tests do not predict adult accomplishments. IQ tests, in general, are poor indices of adult attainments; however, they are excellent indicators of developmental advancement, particularly in early childhood, when differences in development are most apparent. As children get older, IQ tests reflect more and more what the child has learned (achieved) and are less direct measures of ability. When children are assessed in preschool and primary years, equal numbers of gifted girls and gifted boys are found. The longer we wait to identify gifted children, the less likely we are to find gifted girls and other children whose motivation to achieve has been damaged by unfavorable social or educational experiences.

Ironically, school districts tend to wait until third grade to identify gifted children, on the grounds that IQ scores for younger children are “unstable.” Research from the developers of the Cognitive Abilities Test contradicts this myth, indicating that scores on four- to six-year-olds correlate highly with scores attained later in life (Silverman, 1986). (Continued on page 5)
Then there is the unresolved mystery of what happens to a child’s potential if he or she tests in the gifted range in preschool and then shows less capability during the school years. One plausible explanation is that the child wasn’t really gifted in the first place, but it is unlikely that anyone can “fake” higher performance on a test than one is capable of doing. Lower performance than one’s capability level is far more easily explained. Many variables can depress scores: lack of motivation; fear of making a mistake; not understanding the directions; unclear questions; inappropriate test items; lack of rapport with the examiner; illness; inadequate light or heat in the environment; etc.

The gifted child is clearly identifiable in the preschool and primary years. The high achiever who is likely to set the world on fire in adult life is better identified in the middle or high school years, when his or her behavior more closely resembles the behavior of adults. So far, we have been serving the latter and missing many truly gifted children who would benefit greatly from special programming.

References


*Linda Silverman, Ph.D.*, is a licensed psychologist and Director of the Gifted Development Center, a service of *The Institute for the Study of Advanced Development*, 1452 Marion Street, Denver, Colorado 80218 (Phone: 303-837-8378; website: [www.gifteddevelopment.com](http://www.gifteddevelopment.com); email: gifted@gifteddevelopment.com). Her Ph.D. is in educational psychology and special education from the University of Southern California. For nine years, she served on the faculty of the University of Denver in counseling psychology and gifted education. Her new book, *Upside-Down Brilliance: The Visual-Spatial Learner*, was released November 1, 2002. She was one of the principal presenters at the Alliance’s April 2004 Annual Conference. Reprinted with permission. Originally published in October 1987 in *The Journal* (Denver Association for Gifted and Talented) and Northeast Colorado’s News and Notes, 1994, 1(4), 2-3, 5.

**EDITOR’S NOTES**

**Susan Grammer**

*Since I arrived in Michigan two years ago with my family I have watched a group of committed educators and parents, many of whom should be relaxing in retirement, scramble to provide resources for Michigan’s gifted and talented/advanced and accelerated children. How could I not volunteer to do my part, especially when my own children are still in elementary school and still at risk of joining those children being left furthest behind?*

*I am thrilled to be working on Images with Sue Belaski, our Executive Secretary, and also pleased that she had a big box of past issues of Images so that we could learn from the talented editors who brought news to educators and parents in the past. Thanks especially to Bob Koehs, the most recent Images editor.*

*Rather than summarizing the articles chosen for this issue of Images, I’d like to encourage everyone to read them all. Each addresses timely issues in gifted education. The take home message that connects them all is the same message I have heard over and over since being introduced to issues in gifted education when my twins entered kindergarten five years ago: understand giftedness; help others to understand giftedness; advocate, advocate, advocate; be flexible and perceptive in assessing and providing intervention for gifted children; and above all else, “First, Do No Harm.”*

**ODDS AND ENDS**

**NAGC-Nicholas Green High School Senior Award Program**

The National Association for Gifted Education is coordinating nominations for a new national award program for high school seniors. The award will be made by the Nicholas Green Scholarship Fund in May 2005. The national winner will receive a check for $1,500. Two runners up will receive $1,000 each.

The new award honors high school seniors who demonstrate excellence and distinguish themselves in academics, arts, leadership, or community service. Nominees must provide a personal statement, two letters of support, and other evidence of achievements such as video or audiotapes of artistic performances. Applications must be postmarked by February 13, 2005. To download the nomination procedures and application form please visit: [http://www.nagc.org/Awards/greenhighschool04.htm](http://www.nagc.org/Awards/greenhighschool04.htm)

**Complimentary Copies of Fall 2004 Gifted Education Press Quarterly Available**

Gifted Education Press is offering complimentary copies of their Fall 2004 issue of *Gifted Education Press Quarterly* to all educators and parents of gifted in Michigan. Contact the editor, Maurice Fisher, Ph.D. at mfisher345@comcast.net to receive your copy. Featured is “The Gifted Child Left Behind” by Mark M. Wood.
MEMBER SURVEY

The Alliance would like to know how we can best help our members to support gifted children in Michigan. Please take a minute to complete the survey below and send it to Sue Vogel.

How long have you been a member of the Alliance?
__ less than a year __ 1-5 years __ more than 5 years

Are you: (check all that currently apply)
__ parent __ grandparent __ teacher __ administrator __ other __________________________

How did you first become a member of the Alliance?
__ attended State Conference __ attended Parent Leadership Training __ visited web site
__ joined an Alliance affiliate group __ other __________________________

Please rate your level of satisfaction with Alliance services. Rate ONLY those services you have used by circling the number which best reflects your level of satisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>NOT SATISFIED</th>
<th>VERY SATISFIED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Conference</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Site</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter (Images)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email advocacy network</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local affiliate support</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliate grant</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative contacts</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Leadership Training</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the limited funding available, what other services could the Alliance offer that would be helpful to you?

Comments:

Thank you for your thoughtful response. Please return this survey to:

Sue Vogel
51590 38th Street
Paw Paw, MI 49079-8315
Standardizing Acceleration

Acceleration works for bright students. While it’s likely an ineffective option for most students, it can be an academic lifesaver for very capable students.

Decades of research documents that acceleration is the single most effective way for highly capable students to be challenged in school. Multiple major studies identify the benefits of acceleration both academically and emotionally; equally important, the benefits are effective both short and long term. When there is an attitude toward flexibility, acceleration is easy to implement within the school structure. It offers great cost-efficiency, since it can result in a year’s additional achievement simply by scheduling a student to attend a class in Room B rather than Room A.

Acceleration can be utilized in several different ways to meet student’s individualized needs. Typically, people think that acceleration means students must skip grades, but that is only one of the options. Acceleration can also be accomplished by moving to a higher level class in one (or more) content areas, compacting lessons into shorter time frames, or learning through courses that cover two years of content in one year’s worth of class time. Dual enrollment, the legislation that supports students’ simultaneous enrollment in both high school and college courses, is a wonderful example of an acceleration option for students who need the challenge of college level content. Acceleration could also occur at the beginning of school by allowing students younger than age five (by December 1) to start kindergarten, or by compacting kindergarten and first grade into one year.

Without opportunities to accelerate, bright students become bored when they must sit through the teaching of content they have already learned. Research documents that bright students already know 50% of the content at the start of the school year. Very capable students already know 80% of the year’s content in September. Requiring students to spend a full year in a classroom to learn the remaining 20% of grade level content is counterproductive. It encourages boredom, lowers a student’s motivation, prohibits development of adequate study skills, and results in underachievement. This practice is also counterproductive economically: why spend a full foundation allowance to purchase only 20% of a year’s grade level learning when it could—using research based acceleration recommendations—purchase 100% of learning beyond grade level expectations?

Despite the documented benefits of acceleration, including education’s goal of increased student achievement, few schools utilize this option. Economical intervention is underused, most likely because few school personnel are familiar with the research on acceleration, and many still hold the (unsupported) belief that learning in mixed-age classrooms will harm bright students, particularly socially. In addition, schools receive no incentives, particularly financial, to be accountable for appropriately advanced and/or accelerated learning by students who start the school year already knowing what they will be tested on at the end of the year. Think what could happen if Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) gathered data on the learning progress of all students, rather than only those still working to meet grade level expectations!

The Alliance advocates for standardizing acceleration as an educational option. K-12 students who have mastery of significant grade level content should have access to above-grade level content and instruction. Acceleration should be a standardized option in developing each year of a student’s individualized plan (required for all high school students). Or course, the compounding effects of early acceleration would result in significant increases in student achievement. This would not lead to students graduating early, but rather to increased completion of advanced high school, and college level, courses.

During the coming year this column will explore issues related to acceleration. The Alliance’s Advocacy Training workshops, offered in conjunction with our conferences, will give parents and educators the tools required to effectively advocate for our bright students’ needs with schools and legislators. Watch for conference and workshop announcements on our website. Together, we can improve the educational options for Michigan’s bright children.

Wanted, a Few Good People

As a small non-profit, primarily volunteer, organization with limited amounts of money, the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education could use some help!

- Auditor for Alliance Books, once a year.
- Tax preparation/submission for a small non-profit, once a year.
- Donated printing services — Images — 4 issues per year.

If you would be willing to help with the above items or know someone who can (or if you have some other expertise that you know would be helpful for a non-profit organization), please contact Sue Belaski, Executive Secretary, at 616-365-8230 or sbelaski@iserv.net.
COUNSELOR’S CORNER

Editor’s Note: In recent years, the counseling professions have made significant progress in providing training and specialization options to address the social, emotional and learning needs of diverse groups of children. Most counseling professionals, however, have little training in the needs of gifted children. Advocates for children with high creative and academic potential have an opportunity to help make sure this situation changes.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the independent accrediting arm of the American Counseling Association, is revising the standards of practice and curriculum for graduate programs for 2008. The Counseling and Guidance Division of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), led by Committee Chair, Andrew Mahoney, is preparing recommendations to the Standards Review Committee at CACREP regarding curriculum to address the needs of gifted children.

In a letter to all state gifted advocacy organizations this past summer, Mr. Mahoney requested that interested supporters, including counselors, their clients, and parents of gifted children, send letters of support to CACREP citing relevant research, anecdotal experience and/or data from schools or personal experience, that could help to document the special counseling needs of gifted children. In addition, any persons interested in helping NAGC to prepare the formal submission or to do follow up on this project should contact Mahoney via phone at 703-318-6621 or email at ASMahoney@aol.com.

Three areas already identified as critical areas to be addressed in the formal submission include:

- mental health services for gifted children that do not make pathological the behaviors characteristic of gifted children
- services to address academic underachievement in gifted students
- specialized career counseling services

The Alliance Board of Directors has voted to philosophically support this NAGC Counseling and Guidance Committee initiative on behalf of Michigan’s recognized and unrecognized gifted students. Watch for future updates in the Counselor’s Corner column.

Warren Consolidated Schools, a 15,000 student district, is implementing a program to actively involve counselors in identifying K-2 gifted children and working with Talent Pool students in K-8 multi-age Friendship Groups.

School Counselors Can Enhance The Educational Experience Of The Gifted
Cynthia Marie-Martinovich Lardner

Creative, talented and gifted children, defined by some researchers as the top 16% of the bell curve (Silverman, 2002a), often find few programs and little professional support. Gifted children are commonly said to develop asynchronously, or unevenly. For example, a child might soar in his ability and desire to intellectually comprehend matters far exceeding his chronological age, while his ability to process that understanding emotionally is impeded by his age. To complicate matters, some researchers and practitioners estimate that one out of six gifted children has a learning disability, attention deficit disorder or other neurological condition (Silverman, 2002a). These disabilities often go undiscovered and unaddressed because gifted children master compensatory skills at a very young age. Even when an actual disability or neurological condition does not exist, some gifted children’s greatest strengths lie in unique learning styles that may not be accommodated in most social and educational settings (Silverman, 2002b). In still other cases, the characteristic behaviors of asynchronously developing gifted children are seen as indicators of pathological conditions and disorders such as Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (OD), Depression and Bi-Polar Disorder, rather than as indicators of high creative or academic potential (Webb, 2000; Webb, 2001). Some counseling professionals have even encountered highly gifted children originally labeled severely mentally disabled due to inappropriate assessment situations (Funk-Werblo, Dorothy, personal communication to editor, 2001).

All of these situations render some subpopulations of children with the highest potential to excel in life substantially at risk for emotional problems, drug addiction and dropping out of school. The counseling profession can provide sorely needed support for all demographic segments of the gifted population by becoming more aware of research on gifted students and by becoming involved with the gifted within school systems and other educational settings. This area has been largely under-served by the counseling profession so far.

According to cutting-edge researcher Linda Silverman (2003), the optimal time to reach out to this diverse group of children, known collectively as gifted, is upon their entrance into formal education.
Many gifted children receive a good foundation for self-esteem within their families. Then something happens: they meet other children. By the age of five or six, openness and confidence are frequently replaced with self-doubt and layers of protective defenses. Being different is a problem in childhood. Young children—even gifted ones—do not have the capacity to comprehend differences. They have difficulty understanding why other children do not think the way that they do. They equate differentness with being "strange" or unacceptable, and this becomes the basis of their self-concept. (Silverman, 2000).

This is a terribly oppressive experience for children and may be accentuated by the fact that, in most school systems, identification of the gifted does not occur until second or third grade. By that time many gifted children have learned that socially it is best to hide their gifts. They may also have lost much of their drive to learn or to display their abilities, at least while in the school environment. Unfortunately, most teachers receive nominal formal education in giftedness and little, if any, related in-service training in addressing the academic, social and emotional needs of the gifted students in their classrooms. Even when gifted behavior is noted by trained teachers, most are already burdened with teaching a differentiated curriculum to classrooms in which a 100 point or more IQ spread usually exists.

A partial solution can be found in cross-training counselors to work with the gifted. The National Association for Gifted Children’s (NAGC) Counseling and Guidance Division (NAGC 2003) found that:

1. Identifying very young gifted children may preclude the need for later counseling services;
2. Counseling is effective with gifted middle childhood students; and
3. There are specific techniques that are known to benefit gifted students, including “…use of earliest recollections, music therapy, family systems therapy, Gestalt psychology, control theory applications, Bruner’s growth principles, Dabrowski’s theory applications, group dynamics, structured guidance intervention, biofeedback, and intermediate strategic intervention.”

Based on the above findings, NAGC recommends that school districts “…designate one full-time counselor per school dedicated to meeting the affective and counseling needs of gifted adolescents. This counselor is responsible for group and individual interventions for adjustment and motivational difficulties, career counseling, and college placement/guidance for all identified gifted and high talent students in the school.” Another full-time counselor should be designated to conduct regularly scheduled group affective sessions with both elementary and middle school children. Group sessions allow children to express themselves and find that other children have similar views, interests and feelings, thereby negating any perception of being "odd" or "different."

An important secondary effect of holding discussion groups would be to promote social affiliation among the gifted. Initial affiliations born in a discussion group setting have the potential to grow into genuine relationships that continue into the child’s everyday world. Andrew S. Mahoney (Mahoney 2003) noted:

In affiliation, secondary relationships (i.e., peers, siblings, colleagues, etc.) become highlighted. These relationships enhance the individuation of the self by encouraging separation from the family of origin and from the parent. In this way, affiliation supports individuation and the development of a healthy and whole self. Included in this process is recognition of the need for belonging and feeling that "who I am" has a place and meaning. Gifted affiliation provides a forum in which individuals are appreciated and accepted for their uniqueness. For example, with appropriate affiliations, a gifted child will not have to deny their giftedness in order to make friends.

By working with the gifted in the school setting, counselors can reach a large population that has, to date, been underserved. Such interaction seems likely to have a life-long effect on every gifted child touched by a caring counselor.

References


the lowest cost. At her November workshop Karen Rogers will discuss various options for meeting the needs of gifted and talented students; in April she will focus on the use of differentiation for gifted learners in our schools. These focused, one-day workshops are designed to be sequential or to stand alone.

Dr. Rogers will help us sort through the issues of parent expectations, ingrained attitudes (“gifted kids will make it anyway”), definitions of equal opportunity and the reality of limited district funds to determine which services for gifted and talented students will have the greatest impact at the lowest cost. The recently published report on A Nation Deceived (find a link on our website, www.migiftedchild.org) provides the research data to support services to gifted students as much, much more important than an expensive luxury. In fact, gifted education need not cost a lot of money. Instead it is really a mindset: deciding that ALL students deserve to be taught what they are ready to learn, and then finding a way to do it. Dr. Rogers’ presentations will help us find the way to do it.

To make a sequence of one-day workshops practical for parents and educators across the state, we will run the same workshops on both sides of the state, back to back. For most people, this will require only one day at a time away from school, workplace or home and no overnight accommodations. Please note that vendors (limited) will only be present at the April workshops.

While this will mean that Dr. Rogers will have to drive from one side of the state to the other, it will also mean that you won’t. If you live on the eastern side of the state, you can choose to attend her workshop(s) in Ann Arbor, or if you live on the western side of the state, you can choose to attend her workshop(s) in Grand Rapids. Although the two workshops are designed to complement each other, you may also choose to attend just one. We urge you to attend both workshops, Re-Forming Gifted Education and Differentiation, and to “do it on a shoestring.”

**Graduate Credit and SB-CEUs**

In fact, if you attend BOTH the November and April workshops you will be able to earn one graduate credit from Grand Valley State University or 3.0 SB-CEUs. For those attending only one workshop, 0.5 SB-CEUs are available for each workshop.

Why is this important to you? Administrators are required to earn 6 graduate credits or 18 SB-CEUs every five years as a condition of employment. Teachers need 6 graduate credits or 18 SB-CEUs every five years to renew a Professional Certificate. In addition, SB-CEUs provide an official record of your professional development as part of demonstrating that you are highly qualified under NCLB.

**Special Free Evening Parent Programs**

Dr. Rogers will be speaking on the topic, “Asking the Schools to Educate Your Gifted Child: What Should You Ask For?” at special FREE evening parent programs—once on each side of the state. This session will be relevant to all gifted education audiences, but it will be especially helpful for parents of gifted children. In Ann Arbor, Dr. Rogers will make this presentation on Tuesday, November 9, 2004 from 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. at Scarlett Middle School, 3300 Lorraine, Ann Arbor. In Grand Rapids, Dr. Rogers will make this presentation on Wednesday, April 20, 2005 from 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. at the Kent Intermediate School District Educational Service Center, 2930 Knapp, N.E., Grand Rapids.

**Parent Leadership Training**

After hearing Dr. Rogers speak at her evening parent programs, we think parents will want to sign up for one of the two Parent Leadership Training workshops that Carol McCarthy and Sue Vogel, both former school board members and experienced advocates, will be presenting on Saturday, November 20, 2004, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor and on Saturday, April 30, 2005, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at the Kent Intermediate School District Educational Service Center in Grand Rapids. These programs will be identical and are being offered on both sides of the state for the convenience of parents — please choose one. At the free evening parent programs being offered by Karen Rogers, parents will learn “What should you ask for?” At the Parent Leadership Training parents will learn “How do I ask for it?”

In short, the focus of the Parent Leadership Training will be learning the tools for effective advocacy with your school and your district. Attendance is limited to 30 participants per site and cost is $40 for Alliance members ($55 for non-members).

**Register Now**

This year’s programming is designed to be as flexible and inexpensive as we can make it. We find ourselves in a new world of gifted education budget cuts. It may take us a couple of years to find the best ways to serve both educators and parents. We hope that our 2004-2005 conference format with Karen Rogers provides quality professional development opportunities at an affordable price. We appreciate your comments and suggestions.

You’ll find a registration form for both the workshop series and the Parent Leadership Training in this issue of Images. We look forward to seeing you at this year’s programs. Watch the Alliance website, www.migiftedchild.org, for additional information as it becomes available. Please call Sue Belaski, Executive Secretary, at 616-365-8230 or email her at sbelaski@iserv.net if you have any questions.
additional funding sources will help us better meet the critical needs of these students, their families, and educators.

- A dialogue between our board and representative affiliates was initiated to discuss future needs. Many now recommend we continue this dialogue as an annual event. Four priorities emerged in this year’s discussion:

1. develop a statewide resource manual;
2. provide advocacy services;
3. increase membership and leadership statewide;
4. improve the organization’s website.

These four priorities have been incorporated by the Board into their plans for the coming year. As Sue Goering, our able incoming President, discusses in her President’s Column, work (by volunteers, of course!) has begun on each of these initiatives. I look forward to continuing to serve on the Board of The Alliance as the organization addresses these important issues.

BOOK REVIEW

The following is an excerpt of a book review by Michael Cannon originally published in TEMPO, the Journal of the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented (TAGT), Volume XXIV, Issue 3, Summer 2004. For the full review covering each volume in the series, contact the TEMPO editorial office at mwc502000@yahoo.com, or 915-778-3988.

Essential Readings in Gifted Education Series by Sally Reis (series editor), National Association for Gifted Children & Corwin Press. 2004. ISBN 0-761988-75-0

Imagine having a library of the best articles written on gifted issues in the past 25 years, edited and arranged by the leading theorists and practitioners in the field today. NAGC and Corwin Press have joined forces to create the most extensive collection of contributions in the field. The collection consists of a boxed set of twelve paperbound volumes ($289.95) that covers a range of topics. Volumes may also be purchased individually (from $29.95 - $32.95). Each volume is a collection of the most influential and frequently cited articles on the topic to appear in Gifted Child Quarterly in the past 25 years. The volume editor introduces the text with a short essay. The titles in the series are:


***

This collection would be extremely valuable to anyone in a gifted endorsement or master’s degree program, with so many articles easily accessible for research and study. Searching for articles on a particular topic is a simple process with this set of books. G/T coordinators, and specialists who need the best research for program development and defense will also find this set useful. Anyone interested in any aspect of gifted education will find this an invaluable resource.

- Michael Cannon
TEMPO Editor

Congratulations 2004 Davidson Institute Fellow from Michigan

The Alliance would like to congratulate 2004 Davidson Institute Fellow Laureate Miss Shuyu Wang, 17, an Okemos High School graduate. Miss Wang received an award of $50,000 for her project titled “Statistical Mechanics of DNA Bending.” Shuyu discovered how DNA “bends” under certain circumstances to form RNA. Shuyu’s findings have led scientists to further understand one of the biggest questions in biophysics: how simple molecules work to create a larger being. Her work provides a foundation for future research in nanotechnology and biocomputation. Davidson Fellows were recognized for their achievements at a special awards reception in Washington, D.C. on September 29, 2004. Sixteen outstanding young people were selected as Davidson Fellows in 2004. For more information on fellowships, visit http://ditd.org.
Through the assessment that MATS provides, students can be matched to appropriate kinds of educational programs including accelerated courses of study and enrichment opportunities.

MATS participants also receive a compendium of educational programs in the Midwest for which they might qualify. This guide lists over 100 programs.

Students receive information at their homes about opportunities such as fast-paced summer programs, Saturday programs, dual enrollment of high school students in college classes, correspondence courses, distance learning programs, special schools, and early entrance programs for college.

Once a student becomes a MATS participant, he or she continues to receive information about special opportunities until the completion of high school. Participation in MATS continues for years beyond the time that students first take above-grade level tests.

Besides helping students, parents and educators in academic planning, participation in MATS has ramifications for all learners, not just academically talented students. Curriculum changes, upgrades and reviews have occurred in middle schools as a result of the information gained through participation in MATS. High schools have also made available more advanced courses as they try to accommodate the educational needs of MATS participants. Schools whose students participate in MATS receive rosters of scores from the Center for Talent Development so that they can easily see the kinds and levels of talent among their students. In addition, educators receive helpful information on how to plan individual educational programs for each child and how to design and implement special fast-paced courses and other educational programs.

**Important Timelines**

The MATS application process occurs during September and October. The application deadline is October 30, 2004. Registration costs for MATS, which includes the fee for the test, is $52 for EXPLORE test takers, and $59 for ACT or SAT test takers. Fee waivers are available based on financial need. MATS encourages enrollment through their website; paper application forms have also been sent to school counseling offices and to gifted coordinators at your regional ISD.

For more information and enrollment procedures (specifics on dates, fees and easy online registration) for the Midwest Academic Talent Search visit the MATS web site at [www.ctd.northwestern.edu](http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu). Information and application forms were also sent to school counselors and/or principals in September for distribution to qualifying students. Gifted Coordinators at Intermediate School Districts have also received information. Michigan’s MATS Liaison is Carol McCarthy; she can be reached through email: carol.mccarthy@wmich.edu.

---

(Continued from MATS, page 3)

Contribute to *Images*

Parents, students, teachers, administrators, counselors, researchers:

Share your experience educating, parenting, advocating for or studying gifted children—or even being a gifted student yourself. Write an article for a future issue of *Images*!

**February 2005**

Articles due: December 15, 2004
Publication date: February 1, 2005

**May 2005**

Articles due: March 15, 2005
Publication date: May 1, 2005

**August 2005**

Articles due: June 15, 2005
Publication date: August 1, 2005

**November 2005**

Articles due: September 15, 2005
Publication date: November 1, 2005

Would you like your events and activities publicized in this newsletter or would you like to submit an article? Contact Susan Grammer, Editor of *Images* or Sue Belaski, Executive Secretary of the Alliance at the contacts listed below:

Susan Grammer
imageseditor@sbcglobal.net

Sue Belaski, Executive Secretary of the Alliance
sbelaski@iserv.net
5355 Northland Drive, NE, Ste C-188
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
616-365-8230
Website: www.migiftedchild.org


Cynthia M. Lardner sits on the Alliance’s Board of Directors, is an officer of the Macomb County-based Advocates for Developing Academic Potential (ADAP), and is a Master’s level counseling student at Wayne State University. Cindi has developed a program for teaching counselors how to identify and work with K-8 gifted students. In addition to coaching and advocating for gifted children, Cindi is the mother of four gifted children between the ages of 6 and 15. Cindi is also a former practicing attorney and twenty-year member of the State Bar of Michigan. She can be reached at cindilardner@hotmail.com.


Midwest Academic Talent Search: A testing opportunity for gifted 3rd-9th graders

What is your gifted child’s true ability level?

20 years of research have shown that traditional, grade-level achievement tests cannot provide a true picture of gifted students’ levels of ability. To really understand your gifted child and his or her potential, your child needs to take a more challenging test. Midwest Academic Talent Search uses the EXPLORE, ACT & SAT (tests intended for older students) to provide an accurate picture of your gifted child’s ability and potential in language, math and science.

Some benefits include:

* Practice taking tests used for high school and college admissions
* Academic counseling information
* A way to track your child’s growth
* Information on educational programs for gifted students across the US

To find out how to qualify & register:
Visit www.ctd.northwestern.edu or call 847-491-3782.
*Registration Deadline: October 30, 2004
Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education Affiliates

Each of these local affiliates provide parents opportunities to share information, to work with the schools, to hear speakers on various gifted and talented issues, and to generate and promote enrichment activities for gifted children. Note that some affiliates also have their own websites. If you have further questions or would like to start a new affiliate in your area, please contact our VP Affiliates, Marie Brucker, at 810-227-5379 or m.brucker@comcast.net. This list is being actively updated; we apologize for any errors or any exclusions. If you have any changes, please contact Marie Brucker.

REGION 1 - Upper Peninsula
Carla Strome, Regional Rep., Houghton
Email: cstrome@copperisd.org
Phone: 906-482-4250

REGION 2 - Upper Lower Peninsula
Ade Baumgardner, Regional Rep., Mt. Pleasant
Email: baumg1a@mail.cmich.edu
Phone: 989-774-3573

*Alpena Area Group
Contact: Megin Mitchell, 989-356-2112
Email: mmitchell@agh.org

*Big Rapids Area
Contact: Suzanne Hosking, 231-796-6627
Email: shosking6@charter.net

REGION 3 - Central West
Mary Molyneux, Regional Rep., Kentwood
Email: Mrspeaks@aol.com
Phone: 616-281-1400

**GT Resource Network (formerly Kent County Association for Gifted and Talented)
Contact: Kathy MacDonald, 616-281-3138
Email: k.macdonald@GTResourceNetwork.org
Website: www.GTResourceNetwork.org

**IMAGE (Image Advocates) - Grandville
Contact: Carol Austin or Sandy Bajema
Email: caustin@att.net or sbajema@gpsk12.net

*ATLAS - Muskegon Group
Contact: Jamie Page, 231-759-2316
Email: jamiepage2@verizon.net

*Newaygo County Group
Contact: Nancy Melcher, 231-652-7735
Email: melcher@ncats.net

**WO GATES (West Ottawa Gifted and Talented Education Support) - Holland area
Contact: Sheryl Crosby, 616-399-3145
Email: sterosby@chartermi.net

REGION 4 - Southwest
Susan Grammer, Regional Rep., Kalamazoo
Email: grammers@sbcglobal.net
Phone: 269-353-8813

**Cal TAG Team (Calhoun Area Talented and Gifted Team) - Battle Creek area
Contact: Larry Kaiser, 269-979-1019
Email: lkaiser@attbi.com

REGION 5 - Central Lower
Kathi Tobey, Regional Rep., Ann Arbor
Email: A36@mich.com
Phone: 734-434-0187

**HP4K (Hartland Parents for Kids)
Contact: Anne Sarin, 810-632-9670
Email: absarin@comcast.net

REGION 6 - Metro Detroit
Linda Schenburn, Regional Rep., Almont
Phone: 810-798-0103

**ABC’s (Academic Boosters of Clarkston)
Contact: Sherri Kerby, 248-969-3728
Email: skerby100@comcast.net

**ADAP (Advocates for Developing Academic Potential) - Warren Consolidated Schools area
Contact: Anne Norton-Krawcic, 586-939-8378
Website: http://groups.msn.com/ADAP

*E.D.G.E. (Encouraging the Development of Gifted Education) - Downriver Detroit Communities
Contact: Toni Szymanski, 734-284-5889
Email: toniski@wideopenwest.com

**GPAGE (Grosse Pointe Association for Gifted Education)
Contact: Chris Kaczanowski, 313-417-5695
Email: CKaczanowski123@aol.com

**L’CAGE (L’Anse Creuse Alliance for Gifted Education)
Contact: Debra Carlin
Email: debra_carlin2000@yahoo.com

**PLANs (Pursuing Learning Advancement for Novi Students)
Contact: Lee Linton, 248-305-9043
Email: LLinton@twmi.rr.com

**ROOTS (Royal Oak Opportunities for Talented Students) - Providing support for all surrounding districts
Contact: Mary Catherine O’Neall, 248-544-1493
Email: mconeall@comcast.net

REGION 7 - Midland to Thumb
Ron Helmer, Regional Rep., Freeland
Email: Rhelmer@stcs.org
Phone: 989-797-1832

**ACE (Advocates for Challenging Education) - East China Area
Contact: Pamela Stone, 810-326-4193
Website: www.east-china.k12.mi.us/ace/

*Groups forming; not affiliated at this time.
**Affiliates
2004-2005 Board of Directors

President
Sue Goering
Flint, MI
goeering322@comcast.net

President-Elect
Sharon Milberger
Farmington Hills, MI
smilberger@wayne.edu

VP Advocacy
Carol McCarthy
Kalamazoo, MI
carol.mccarthy@wmich.edu

VP Affiliates
Marie Brucker
Brighton, MI
m.brucker@comcast.net

VP Programs
Mary Nell Baldwin
Grand Rapids, MI
marynellbaldwin@kentisd.org

Secretary
Beth Brooks
Flint, MI
ebrooks27@yahoo.com

Treasurer
Suzanne Hosking
Big Rapids, MI
shosking6@charter.net

Region 1 Representative
Carla Strome
Houghton, MI
cestrome@ccisd.k12.mi.us

Region 2 Representative
Ade Baumgardner
Mt. Pleasant, MI
baumgl1@mail.emich.edu

Region 3 Representative
Mary Molyneux
Kentwood, MI
Mrspeaks@aol.com

Region 4 Representative
Susan Grammer
Kalamazoo, MI
grammars@ix.netcom.com

Region 5 Representative
Kathi Tobey
Ypsilanti, MI
A3t@mich.com

Region 6 Representative
Linda Schenburn
Almont, MI
810-798-0103

Regional 7 Representative
Ron Helmer
Freeland, MI
Rdhelmer@stcs.org

Parent Representative A
Cindi Lardner
Sterling Heights, MI
cindilardner@hotmail.com

Parent Representative B
Margaret Trimer-Hartley
MTrimer-Hartley@mea.org

Parent Representative C
Sandy Trosien
Northville, MI
krtsatdreamin@comcast.net

Public School Representative
Pat Forcier
Flushing, MI
syncquis@aol.com

Private School Representative
Suzanne Young
Redford, MI
suzannemyoung@aol.com

ISD Representative
Patricia Greene
Charlotte, MI
pgreene@eaton.k12.mi.us

Arts Representative
Chris Kitzman
Beulah, MI
ckitzman@benzie.k12.mi.us

Trustee
Jean Ellis
Eagle Harbor, MI
jellis@pasty.com

Trustee
Mary Bailey-Hengesh
Petoskey, MI
hengeshm@aol.com

Trustee
Dorothy Lawshe
East Lansing, MI
dlawshe@sbcglobal.net

Trustee
Gloria Downing
gkd41@hotmail.com

Michigan Department of Education
David Mills
Talent Dev. Consultant
Lansing, MI
millsd@michigan.gov

Images
October 2004

Susan Grammer, Editor
Sue Belaski, Production Editor

Mission
The Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education is dedicated to providing leadership, advocacy, and support of differentiated education and services for meeting the unique needs of gifted, talented, and creative students in Michigan.

Images is published quarterly by the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education, Grand Rapids, MI as a benefit of membership in the organization. Opinions expressed in Images are not necessarily those of the organization. Publication of information in Images about any particular school, program, product, or service does not constitute endorsement by the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education. The organization retains the right to refuse to accept submissions for any reason. Except for reprints from other newsletters or periodicals, material in Images may be reprinted if credit is given to the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED: Please notify the Alliance if you are moving or if your mailing address has changed. Images is sent via third class mail and is not forwarded by the post office. Be sure to renew your membership. You will not receive Images after your membership expires.

Advertising Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full page</td>
<td>$ 230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 page</td>
<td>$ 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 page</td>
<td>$  75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 page</td>
<td>$  45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Card</td>
<td>$  40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These rates apply to members of the Alliance. Non-members must include an additional $30, which will provide one year’s membership in the organization. Advertising is a feature that is meant to serve the members of the Alliance. Endorsement by this organization of services or items advertised is neither implied nor intended. Any ad may be refused at the discretion of the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education.

Ads should be submitted to Susan Grammer, editor, at imageseditor@sbcglobal.net or to the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education, 5355 Northland Drive, NE, Suite C-188, Grand Rapids, MI 49525.
Alliance Membership Form

I would like to join the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education as an:

- [ ] Individual member - open to any individual interested in furthering the goals of the Alliance. Yearly Dues: $30.00

- [ ] Institutional member - open to any organization or institution interested in furthering the goals of the Alliance. Institutional membership entitles the organization or institution to designate four individuals as members of the Alliance. Yearly Dues: $100.00
  4 Individuals: ____________________________________________________________

- [ ] Affiliate member - Name of my Affiliate: ________________________________
  Yearly Dues: $20.00

- [ ] New  □ Renewal  □ Student  □ Teacher  □ Parent  □ Administrator  □ Other

Name ____________________________________________________________
Referral by: _______________________  
Address _________________________________________________________________________________
City ___________________________________________ State _____________Zip Code _______________
County _________________________________  School __________________________________________
Phone __________________________  Email ___________________________________________________

Make checks payable to: Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education.
Mail to: Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education, 5355 Northland Drive, NE, Ste. C-188, Grand Rapids, MI 49525