



Frequently Asked Questions about the 2010 Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards

HOW MAY THE STANDARDS BE USED?

There are a variety of ways in which the 2010 Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards may be used in schools and districts across the country. The uses fall into six categories:

- Assess, evaluate, and improve local plans and programming
- Plan curriculum
- Provide professional development
- Advocate
- Develop, improve, and evaluate state standards
- Approve gifted plans and programs and monitor for compliance with state regulations

HOW WERE THESE STANDARDS DEVELOPED?

In 2007, the NAGC Board created the Professional Standards Committee to align the 1998 Gifted Program Standards with the NAGC-CEC Teacher Preparation Standards. After an initial alignment, a Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Program Standards Revision Workgroup was formed to undertake the revision. In revising the standards, the workgroup was guided by these principles:

1. Giftedness is dynamic and is constantly developing; therefore, students are defined as those with gifts and talents rather than those with stable traits.
2. Giftedness is found among students from a variety of backgrounds; therefore, a deliberate effort was made to ensure that diversity was included across all standards. Diversity was defined as differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area.
3. Standards should focus on student outcomes rather than practices. The number of practices used or how they are used is not as important as whether or not the practice is effective with students. Consequently, the workgroup decided not to identify acceptable vs. exemplary standards. Moreover, such a distinction would be difficult to support with the research.
4. Because all educators are responsible for the education of students with gifts and talents, educators were broadly defined as administrators, teachers, counselors, and other instructional support staff from a variety of professional backgrounds (e.g., general education, special education, and gifted education).
5. Students with gifts and talents should receive services throughout the day and in all environments based on their abilities, needs, and interests. Therefore, the Workgroup decided to use the word "programming" rather than the word "program," which might connote a one-dimensional approach (e.g., a once-a-week type of program option).

HOW ARE THESE STANDARDS DIFFERENT FROM THE 1998 PROGRAM STANDARDS?

The major differences between the 1998 Gifted Program Standards and the 2010 Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards center on the following areas:

1. The revised programming standards focus on student outcomes.
2. The revised programming standards reflect a stronger emphasis on diversity.
3. The revised programming standards emphasize stronger relationships between gifted education, general education, and special education and integrate cognitive science research.
4. The revised programming standards emphasize evidence-based practices that are based on research.

HOW DO THE PROGRAMMING STANDARDS RELATE TO OTHER PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS?

The 2010 programming standards adhere very closely to the language in the NAGC-CEC/TAG Teacher Preparation Standards and the 1998 Gifted Program Standards and integrate the two sets of standards within evidence-based practices. The 2010 programming standards include areas from the NAGC-CEC/TAG teacher preparation standards that were minimally addressed or omitted in the 1998 Gifted Program Standards such as language and communication, learning environments and social interaction, diversity, collaboration between gifted education and special education, and ongoing assessment. Moreover, the 2010 programming standards retain criteria that were not addressed in the NAGC-CEC/TAG teacher preparation standards such as program evaluation and professional development.

(NOTE: NAGC has posted tables illustrating the relationship and alignment among the 2010 Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards, the 1998 Gifted Program Standards, and the NAGC-CEC/TAG Teacher Preparation Standards.)

HOW ARE THE STANDARDS SUPPORTED BY RESEARCH AND CURRENT EFFECTIVE PRACTICES?

The field of gifted education has evolved since the original gifted program standards were developed in 1998. The 2010 standards include only evidence-based practices that support the corresponding student outcomes. This support falls into three categories: (a) research-based, (b) practice-based, and (c) literature-based.

Research-based studies provide the most compelling evidence and are peer-reviewed, use qualitative or quantitative methodologies to address questions of cause and effect, and have been independently replicated and found to be effective. Practice-based strategies are practices that have been widely used with success, so there is a professional assumption that the practice is effective. Practice-based studies also include strategies that classroom teachers use and validate through some degree of action research. Literature-based studies are those that are based on theories or philosophical reasoning.

(NOTE: NAGC has posted the research citations and references for the recommended practices.)

MY SCHOOL/DISTRICT DOESN'T HAVE A FORMAL GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM, ALTHOUGH WE DO OFFER SERVICES IN SEVERAL GRADES TO ADVANCED STUDENTS.

HOW CAN WE USE THESE STANDARDS? MY SCHOOL/DISTRICT'S GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM IS JUST BEING LAUNCHED. HOW DO YOU RECOMMEND WE GET STARTED WITH THESE STANDARDS?

The early stages of program planning and development are ideal times to study and use the 2010 programming standards. Before you get too far along in a journey that, without careful planning, may not serve gifted and talented students well or, in the worst-case scenario, may actually diminish support for gifted education in your school or district, use the 2010 NAGC programming standards to conduct an internal analysis of the comprehensiveness and defensibility of your plans/program at this point in time. If a school doesn't have a gifted education program or is just getting started, the standards will help document the need for the program and/or justify the case for a particular programming approach. As the program grows, the standards will help identify program strengths and weaknesses, focus on potential trouble spots, determine new directions or new components, or provide support to maintain current programs and services. Schools may continue to use the standards as a roadmap for evaluation or to set goals and plan strategically for meeting those goals.

MY SCHOOL DISTRICT USES THE 1998 PROGRAM STANDARDS. HOW MIGHT WE TRANSITION TO THE NEW STANDARDS?

The 1998 Gifted Program Standards have been aligned with the 2010 NAGC Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards, and this alignment demonstrates that all of the 1998 standards are represented in the 2010 document. The revised standards, however, are framed as student outcomes instead of best

practices. So all the work school districts have done with the 1998 standards is not wasted; rather it will serve as the foundation for continuous improvement. The revised standards will elucidate the next steps toward excellence in gifted programming by helping school districts move beyond the focus on practices alone to the relationship between certain practices and desired student outcomes. The 2010 standards invite educators to address these important questions related to student outcomes in each area:

- What is it that individuals with gifts and talents need other than the excellent core curriculum we want all students to have in school?
- If these unique needs are met, how is school and life better for students with gifts and talents?
- What do those changes look like in terms of student behavior and achievement?

In other words, what difference does gifted education programming make in the lives of participating students?

To summarize the progress districts have already made using the 1998 standards and chart a course for continued program improvement, program personnel might elect to use a gap analysis chart and the related action planning chart below. These two tools will help planners acknowledge specific strategies/activities already used for each evidence-based practice, identify gaps, and develop an action plan to address those gaps.

Gap Analysis Chart

Standard	Evidence-Based Practices	What We Do To Support This Practice	Desired Student Outcomes	What Evidence do We Have that Current Practices are Leading to Desired Student Outcomes?	What Additional Evidence do We Need? (Gaps)

Action Plan Chart

Standard	Evidence-Based Practices	Desired Student Outcomes	Identified Gaps	Information To Be Collected	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline

The decision to focus on student growth mirrors current practice in most schools, so the 2010 standards should connect without difficulty to state and local initiatives. This approach is the key to using the 2010 Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards.

HOW CAN MY SCHOOL/DISTRICT USE THESE STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION PURPOSES?

The student outcomes and evidence-based practices in the programming standards serve as criteria on which to collect data to make informed judgments about the quality and effectiveness of their programming for learners with gifts and talents. Once the data is in hand, school leaders may establish benchmarks or set goals and timelines to ensure that they are on track to achieving the desired student outcomes.

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THE STUDENT OUTCOMES ARE BEING MET?

The task of assessing the standards' student outcomes becomes a major part of program design and development annually through the use of appropriate and varied measures. In general, use off-level measures to assess the achievement level of gifted students. To assess deeper and more complex learning behaviors, more tailored performance-based or product-based instruments should be employed. To assess critical and creative thinking, the use of tests that focus on these higher skills would be recommended. Finally, if one wants to assess affective behavioral change, the use of products (i.e. journals, written essays, talent development plans), examined over time in a pre-post or portfolio model may be most desirable. Assessing gifted student learning also requires matching the desired outcome to the student's knowledge and skills and level of interest. Exams like AP and IB are carefully crafted performance-based assessments that tap into advanced learning in traditional and free-response modes. They may be used as models for thinking about appropriate approaches at earlier stages of development in a gifted program as would other examples of Performance-Based Assessments (e. g., see The College of William and Mary Units of study).

WHAT RESOURCES DOES NAGC HAVE AND WILL DEVELOP TO ASSIST IN IMPLEMENTING THE 2010 STANDARDS?

A new publication to accompany the 2010 programming standards is underway. However, NAGC has resources available now to assist school leaders in implementing the new standards.

- The NAGC website contains the full glossary of terms used with the 2010 programming standards as well as tables that show the relationship and alignment among the 2010 programming standards, the previous gifted program standards, and the NAGC-CEC/TAG Teacher Preparation Standards. See the "Standards in Gifted Education" section of the website at www.nagc.org.
- The NAGC website also contains information and links to references for many of the strategies recommended in the 2010 programming standards. The online bookstore includes publications that address special populations of gifted students, best practices in gifted education, designing services in P-12, and assessments for gifted learners, among other key topics.
- A guidebook for P-12 educators that was developed to implement the teacher education standards is available in the online bookstore. See Kitano, M., Montgomery, D., VanTassel-Baska, J., & Johnsen, S. (2008). *Using the national gifted education standards for PreK-12 professional development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- A publication on CD is available in the online store that addresses critical state policies in gifted education, such as identification, personnel preparation, and programs and curriculum, and includes links to actual state policies in each key area. See Clinkenbeard, P. R., Kolloff, P. B., & Lord, E. W. (2007). *A guide to state policies in gifted education*. Washington, DC: National Association for Gifted Children.
- NAGC plans a series of webinars in 2011 that will focus on each of the standards to provide additional support for implementation.

Visit NAGC's bookstore at <https://www.nagc.org/nagc2/ngcShopper/> and the Live Learning Center at <http://www.softconference.com/nagc/default.asp> for print and online content.