



# 2018-2019 STATE OF THE STATES IN GIFTED EDUCATION

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# 2018-2019 State of the States in Gifted Education

Without a federal mandate to identify or serve gifted students, state education agencies and local education agencies are responsible for determining programs and services for gifted students. Although decentralization allows for states to respond to the specific needs of their population, it results in a wide disparity in services across and within states.

The *2018-2019 State of the States in Gifted Education* report represents a snapshot of gifted education across the nation during the academic year 2018-2019. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted (CSDPG) conducted this survey to explore if and how states provide and support programs for gifted and talented students. The previous *State of the States* report was based on the 2014-2015 academic year.

For the 2018-2019 report, findings from *all 50 states and the District of Columbia* are presented.

## States that Provide Gifted Services

Gifted services are provided in 49 states and the District of Columbia. While South Dakota reported that they have no state requirements or full-time equivalents for gifted education, there are some districts in the state that provide gifted services. Although nearly all respondents indicate gifted services are provided in their state, only about half of the respondents report having state program standards/guidelines for gifted education in their state. Further, about half of respondents indicated their state provides one full-time equivalent dedicated to gifted education, and about half of respondents indicated their state provides dedicated funding to the local education agencies for gifted education.

State-level oversight regarding the training and credentials of those professionals who work with gifted students is minimal. Most respondents report their state does not have a law or rule requiring each local education agency to have a gifted education administrator/coordinator and few of those that do mandate credentials in gifted education. Training requirements in gifted education for teachers of the gifted vary from state to state. Thirty-five out of 46 states indicate an endorsement or certification is required; however, only 3 respondents indicated their state requires pre-service teachers take university coursework related to gifted students.

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## Definition of Gifted & Identification

Of the 51 respondents, 44 report a state definition of giftedness; 42 of those states require the state definition be used to identify gifted students. The most frequently mentioned aspects of giftedness were advanced intellectual ability, creativity or creative thinking, and specific academic ability. The majority of the 51 respondents had legal mandates to identify gifted and talented students (38), but most did not require a universal screening process or noted universal screening is determined by the local education agencies. Of the 30 respondents with data, identified gifted students range from about 2% to 19% of the student population in their respective states. Some states report specific efforts at reducing the equity gap in gifted education such as the use of universal screening, professional development on identification and services for traditionally underrepresented students, and state mandates or funding to target and address equity in gifted education.

## Standards & Programming Options

About half of the respondents reported a law or rule mandating gifted programming options/services in their state, with some others indicating it is determined by the local education agency. The majority of gifted services are offered at district or school building levels. Indeed, the most common factor impacting gifted education was reported as “site-based decision making or local control.” From pre-kindergarten to eighth grade, the most common service delivery model reported is “differentiation in the general education classroom.” “Advanced Placement” is the most common service delivery model in high school.

States that specify standards or requirements regarding gifted programs and services differ in their ability to monitor and report on the quality of those gifted programs and services. About half of respondents reported local education agencies in their state were required to report on gifted education programs and services and about half of respondents indicated their state monitors/audits local education agency gifted education programs. About half of respondents indicated their local education agencies are required to submit gifted education program implementation plans to their state education agency. Fewer than half indicated the plans must be approved by their state education agency.

## Future Directions

Finally, some states provided additional thoughts about initiatives that impact and future directions for gifted education in the U.S. Themes that emerged included the importance of federal funding, integration into and collaboration with other district/state departments, and initiatives to improve gifted services/programs with a focus on equitable access.

The *2018-2019 State of the States in Gifted Education* report provides a glimpse of common themes as well as the wide range of state-level support and direction presently in gifted education across the states. NAGC and the CSDPG hope this report will assist stakeholders to better understand the state of gifted education in the nation.