

## Using Stimulus Funds To Support Gifted

Ask for federal stimulus funds to support gifted learners. Write a Letter to the Editor.

## Federal Stimulus Funds Available For Gifted & Talented Services And Programs

Gifted education supporters should be advocating with their local school district leaders to spend a portion of the federal stimulus money to support gifted and talented programs and services.

The U.S. Department of Education has begun to distribute funds for K-12 and higher education, and at least two of the funding streams -- the State Stabilization Fund and Title I funds -- could be used to support gifted education students.

**Stabilization funds** can be used to restore budget cuts and teacher positions, or the funds could be used to expand or create new services.

**Title I funds** can be used to support gifted students from low-income families.

Additionally, gifted education advocates should know that \$100 million in stimulus funds will support Teacher Quality Partnership grants in Title II of the Higher Education Act, which will require university teacher preparation programs to increase new teachers' exposure to the needs of gifted and talented students.

Below is a link to a memo with more details to help you with your advocacy. Also see below for samples of letters to send to your local newspapers. **We urge you to modify the samples to make them your own by personalizing them with your own stories.**

Memo: [http://www.nagc.org/uploadedFiles/Advocacy/Stimulus%20memo%20for%20NAGC%20web%20\(April%202009\).pdf](http://www.nagc.org/uploadedFiles/Advocacy/Stimulus%20memo%20for%20NAGC%20web%20(April%202009).pdf)

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### Using Federal Stimulus Funds to Support Gifted Education

#### Letter to the Editor

#### Sample Letter 1

Dear Editor,

As our STATE/SCHOOL DISTRICT work to determine how vital education stimulus dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are spent, I urge decision-makers to not overlook the needs of our gifted students.

Gifted students are often the first to have their programs cut under the mistaken belief that these students can educate themselves. However, when schools fail to provide the resources to meet these students' unique learning needs, they often tune out, shut down and too often even drop out.

Gifted and talented programming can – and does – make the difference between life-long success and failure. Like students who need help learning academic material and who are eligible for special education services, gifted and talented students need additional support to achieve their full potential. This is especially true among our underserved and underprivileged students.

If we care about reversing this trend, state and local education officials must make sure the appropriate amount of stimulus funding is reinvested in gifted and talented education and services. And don't we all deserve the chance to learn to our full potential?

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## **Using Federal Stimulus Funds to Support Gifted Education**

### **Letter to the Editor**

#### **Sample Letter 2**

Dear Editor,

As a PARENT/TEACHER/ADVOCATE, I am most hopeful that the federal funding heading to our state and local school districts will help us avert proposed cuts that could be detrimental to the well-being of our students. President Obama was absolutely correct when he said in his State of the Union address earlier this year that America must ensure "every child has access to a complete and competitive education."

There is an important caveat to the President's statement that must be addressed, and that is *all* children are entitled to a *complete* education. As STATE and TOWN choose how to distribute the ample funds that have been allotted to them to maintain existing programs and grow new ones, our leaders absolutely cannot forget or ignore gifted and talented education.

Far too often, services for gifted students are among the first programs to be reduced or chopped completely because policy-makers incorrectly assume gifted students can achieve on their own. But as a long time PARENT/TEACHER/ADVOCATE, I know first hand that this assumption is a fallacy.

When students - even gifted ones - are not given the services they deserve, they will often fall short from achieving their full potential. In too many cases these students fail by under performing and even dropping out. As STATE/LOCAL officials consider how to specifically allocate federal stimulus funding, I urge them to take this unprecedented opportunity to receive additional funding and ensure that gifted students - especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds - maintain access to the services they now receive and the educational rights that they deserve.

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Thanks to NAGC'Ss Legislative Action Network for this information.