

IAGC recent requests of Illinois State Board of Education – Fall 2019

IAGC advocates made requests of the ISBE at their most recent meetings. Those requests are listed below. They are provided as a reference but should not be viewed as a script for advocates who may focus on other requests.

Request #1: Restoring Grant Funding for Gifted Education

- Gifted funding in Illinois was eliminated in 2003
- There's currently an opportunity gap in elementary school gifted programming for students at the advanced levels of achievement based on income and race
- The diversity of Illinois students is increasing; it's important for the Illinois State Board of Ed to develop talents of diverse student populations
- Negative impact of absence of funding is disproportionately felt by disadvantaged and low-income students who are less likely to afford supplemental educational opportunities, more dependent on schools to meet their educational needs and develop their talents
- Schools without gifted programming are more likely to fail to identify and address academic and social-emotional needs of underserved gifted students, including twice-exceptional students

Request #2: Update the GES Materials and Provide Needed Professional Development

(At this time a gifted micro credential to provide this type of training is soon to be piloted. We will provide updates as they are available.)

- Gifted Education Seminar (GES) created in 2009, expires in 2020, has provided classroom teachers with an overview of affective and academic needs of advanced learners including differentiation strategies in heterogeneous classrooms
- Currently no replacement or updated GES, but the need remains
- Professional development supporting educators and administrators is crucial so that educators are properly trained to identify, provide appropriate instruction and challenge, understand and implement evidence-based, accelerative services in accordance with the Illinois Acceleration Act, and meet the social-emotional needs of diverse learners with gifts and talents.
- Updating GES in a way that incorporates current strategies specific to identifying and cultivating talent among students from lower income families is consistent with state responsibilities under ESSA.

Request #3: Designating a Full Time ISBE Staff Member to Oversee Gifted Education

In 2018, the following laws were passed that support equitable access to advanced and gifted programming throughout Illinois:

- *The Accelerated Placement Act* (effective July 2018) requires Illinois public school districts to establish policies that provide equitable access to grade acceleration, subject acceleration, and early entrance.
- *The Report Card Act* (effective 2018) requires the Illinois State Board of Education to collect data and report in the school report cards certain demographic information concerning gifted education and advanced academic programs, as well as information concerning the number of teachers in a school who hold a gifted education endorsement.

Accordingly, to provide accountability for compliance with recent legislation and to maintain and increase necessary professional development for teachers and administrators, IAGC is requesting a designated Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) professional staff member to cover the following responsibilities:

- Oversee monitoring and compliance with current legislation.
- Manage the data collection and reporting requirements of the Accelerated Placement Act and the Report Card Act.
- Provide support to schools and families related to acceleration, gifted services, and teacher training.
- Organize a review/revision of the Illinois Gifted Teacher and Specialist Endorsements.
- Revise content and location of relevant gifted education information on the ISBE website and school/district report cards, making it more accessible for parents and school staff.
- Monitor ESSA amendment factors related to gifted including the growth indicator. (measures student growth across achievement spectrum , not diminishing weight for those advancing beyond proficiency) and P-2 and 3-8 school quality indicators (include collecting and reporting data on student participation in acceleration and enrichment).