



Guidelines for a successful Parent-Teacher Meeting

- Be on time! You'll only have 15-20 minutes to cover lots of ground.
- Think ahead of what you want to discuss and ask questions about, writing things down in advance always helps.
- Try to approach the teacher in the spirit of partnership, which includes you, the teacher, AND the student.
- If your student is old enough, consider having them participate in the meeting, to encourage and foster their recognition that they are responsible for their learning as well.
- If you have a particular concern about certain work, bring an example of the work with you to the meeting.
- Keep an open mind and allow the teacher to finish their thoughts.
- Try not to use language that is accusing – (...you always..., ...you never..., ...my child is bored...) Recognize that the teacher has a large classroom and a large load to carry. This does NOT mean, however, that your child doesn't deserve to be helped to make at least one year's worth of growth.
- Plan a timeline with follow-up steps for each stakeholder – teacher, parent, and student. The rubric (guide) on the back of this flyer is very helpful for planning things out.
- Be sure to thank the teacher for their time and attention.
- Don't assume that the end of the conference is the end of a problematic issues. Stay engaged and continue to communicate. Do your part of the item you may have discussed in your meeting. Don't forget to follow up as agreed.
- Remind your child regularly of their responsibilities as part of their education and the agreement with the teacher and you.

Parent Involvement Opportunities:

www.sandiegounified.org/online-resources-parent-involvement

Date: _____ Student: _____

Parent: _____ Teacher: _____

Purpose: This form is designed to assist the team document the details, customize goals, structures, environment, and activities to meet the educational needs of the student.

Discussion of Grades	
Have you seen changes/improvements since the beginning of the year? If so, what?	
What kinds of formative (on the spot) assessments are done? (Daily/weekly/monthly?)	
What are my child's area(s) of strengths?	
What are my child's area(s) of weaknesses?	
How do you use my child's strengths to improve upon his weaknesses?	
How are you addressing the needs of my child at the level he/she is?	
What kinds of triggers does he/she respond to (positive or negative)? Academic vs. Emotional	
What do you think motivates my child?	
How can I help you help my child?	
Next evaluation/follow-up steps:	

“C.A.L.M. D.O.W.N.” and Advocate for Your Child in School

Scenario: Your second grader goes to a “good” public school that places a lot of emphasis on reading and writing, organizes special guests, and has been focusing on getting children moving during recess; however, your child has been complaining all year about being bored and that everything has been “too easy” for them. When trying to use multiplication instead of addition, their work is marked as “incorrect”, and a teacher complains that your child “corrects” her in front of the class, when her slides have spelling mistakes.

Recommendation: Try using the “**CALM DOWN approach**” when advocating for your child.

CALM DOWN Approach

C – Craft your desired outcome

- Envision specific changes that could improve your child’s school life.
 - Do you want to “skip” your child?
 - Do you want testing and a pull out into an appropriate grade level?

A – Assemble your evidence

If your child is struggling in school but not at home:

- Record them doing their work or reading.
- Bring doctor's records if your child has a disability that requires accommodation.
- Bring samples of work done outside of school hours.

L – Learn your rights and consider your options

- Different countries and states have different rules on accommodating both struggling learners and gifted learners.
- Consider what you will do if your requests are not met.
 - Negotiate a partial solution.
 - Look at private schools or homeschooling.

M – Meet with your teacher first

- Teacher may not be aware of the situation.
 - He or she deals with many students of very different needs.
- Meeting with your child’s teacher doesn’t bring results?
 - Schedule a meeting with the principal.

D – Don’t get confrontational

- Your child’s teacher has your child’s best interests at heart.
- Teachers are also human and focused on his or her goals.
 - Challenging advanced learners is not one of the goals our teachers are asked to meet.

O – Offer help

- Volunteer in the classroom.
 - Time spent in the classroom will give you a new appreciation for your student's and her teacher's challenges.
 - It is understandable that a teacher needs to spend her energies getting struggling students to the level expected.

W – Write things down

- Put things in writing, especially if you are trying to put an IEP in place.
- Document conversations (i.e., keep a journal as a record).

N – Next steps

- Be clear about next steps and timelines.
- Reminders are needed to progress towards resolution.
- Progress can be slow.
- Consider alternative “next steps” if your school cannot accommodate your child.

Final Thoughts

- While you are going through these steps, it is important to do it in a way that doesn't directly involve your child or involves him or her as little as possible.
- You may not want your child to know that you are unhappy with their school unless you are prepared to take them out. You may want them to continue to put forward their best effort in their studies.
- Changing schools is a big step for any family.
- Parents have options and the rights and the responsibility to be an active partner and an active advocate for our children in school.

(Important note: If your child reports being bullied or you observe your child being bullied, then a more direct and immediate intervention is clearly necessary.)

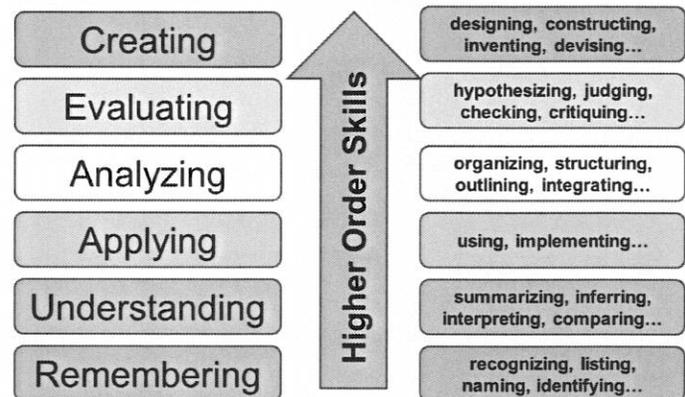
.....
Edited from a post written by Natalie, mom and blogger at Afterschool for Smarty Pants as seen on *Imagination Soup* (<http://imaginationsoup.net/2014/01/29/read-this-if-your-child-is-unhappy-at-school/>)

Ability Grouping

A classroom strategy for grouping students by need, interest, or ability. Groups can be formed and reformed to meet varied instructional purposes. Ability grouping is not synonymous with “tracking.” *CAG advocates the flexible ability grouping of gifted students. They need to be in groups with other gifted students for an integral part of their school day. Ability grouping may take many forms such as cluster grouping, part-time grouping, special day classes, and special schools. (See also Heterogeneous/Homogeneous Grouping, Flexible Grouping, and Tracking.)*

Bloom’s Taxonomy

A framework teachers use to focus on higher order thinking. By providing a hierarchy of 6 different levels, it can assist teachers in designing performance tasks, crafting questions for conferring with students, and providing feedback on student work. It can help teachers promote more complex thinking (instead of simply remembering facts) which is especially appropriate for gifted students. *CAG supports the use of Bloom’s Taxonomy as a tool to provide more effective and appropriate curricular planning for gifted students.*



Compacting

A system in which students are given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and concepts required in the regular curriculum rather than forcing them to repeat already learned material. By demonstrating the level of proficiency in the basic curriculum the student can then be allowed to use instructional time to engage in more appropriate and challenging learning experiences. *CAG supports the use of compacting as an important way to match the learning needs of gifted students with the content and skills offered in the classroom. Gifted learners must continue to be given stimulating educational experiences appropriate to their levels of ability if they are to realize their potential.*

Curriculum Compacting

A strategy used to give students validation for what they already know. It allows students who demonstrate mastery to omit portions of assigned curriculum, or to move more quickly through curriculum than would be typical. Students are thus able to “buy time” which can be used to accelerate content or to pursue enrichment activities while the unit is being taught to other students. *CAG supports the use of curriculum compacting as one means of providing appropriate learning experiences for advanced students. It is important, however, that the “time bought” be used by students to pursue their studies in greater depth and complexity, and to further their own educational goals. Students should not be expected to use the extra time to serve as teachers’ helpers, to tutor less advanced classmates, or to relearn work already mastered.*

Differentiation

The modification of the curriculum to meet the unique needs of learners. It may include modifications in complexity, depth, pacing, and selecting among, rather than covering all, of the curriculum areas. The modification is dependent on the individual needs of the students. *CAG advocates for differentiation for all students in need of curriculum modification. There should be multiple paths for success in all classrooms. The major purpose of differentiation in the gifted program is to challenge the gifted student. Educational practices such as authentic assessment, collaborative learning, ungraded curriculum, and thematic interdisciplinary curriculum are not differentiated within themselves, but they can facilitate differentiation for gifted students.*

Heterogeneous and Homogeneous Grouping

Two strategies for grouping students in the classroom to facilitate learning. Heterogeneous grouping refers to grouping students by age with no regard to demonstrated ability or level of knowledge.

Homogeneous grouping refers to grouping by the demonstrated need, ability, or interest of the students. *CAG advocates for flexible grouping of students for at least some part of the educational day in an appropriate setting, based on a commonality of the students' intellectual, academic, and/or affective (social-emotional) needs. There should be defined educational experiences related to the criteria used for grouping.*

Individualization

A strategy that provides a specific program to meet the particular needs, interests, and/or abilities of an individual student for some part of his or her educational experience. It does not mean, however, that every child is working in isolation on a different level or a different subject at all times. It does mean that students are working with appropriate materials on levels of learning commensurate with their assessed ability, needs, and/or interests. *CAG supports individualization that is differentiated and results in challenging activities or assignments that are interactive and open-ended in content, process, and/or product. Individualization can facilitate the education of gifted learners by utilizing mentorships, internships, independent research, and early college entrance programs among other learning strategies.*

Rubric

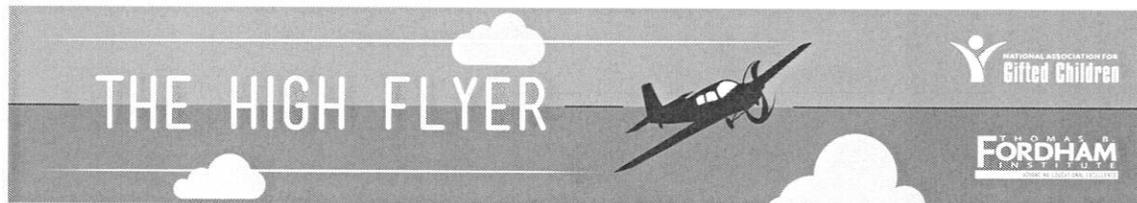
A guide or scale for scoring products or outcomes during the assessment process. Each interval along this assessment scale represents a specific level of learning from minimal to exemplary. The levels of learning are accompanied by specific descriptors of the type and quality of work expected in attaining the level of learning described. *CAG supports the use of rubrics to provide gifted students and their teachers with a clear understanding of what is considered outstanding work. The highest levels of a rubric or scoring guide can be used to set goals for and define the level of performance of gifted students in a given area.*

Scaffolding

An instructional strategy that provides carefully structured and sequenced support for learning new and increasingly more difficult tasks. This approach places the teacher in a collaborative, interactive role with students. Emphasis is on teacher modeling, extending, rephrasing, questioning, praising, and correcting, rather than on the teacher as the evaluator. *CAG supports scaffolding as an effective instructional model for classes with gifted students. It allows and encourages a shared exchange of ideas between teacher and students as students take on increasing responsibility for their own learning. This method encourages higher order reasoning as well as basic skills learning.*

Tiered Assignments

The practice of providing different assignments that reflect the individual level of the student's knowledge of the content or skill in the core curriculum. While all students within the classroom work toward a common goal, tiered assignments allow each student to work at a level of difficulty, complexity, or depth appropriate to his or her understanding. *CAG supports tiered assignments as a way of challenging and meeting the individual learning needs of gifted students. Tiered lessons allow students with varying levels of knowledge within a classroom to meet common goals.*



The Autonomous Learner Model: The Whole Gifted Child

By Dr. George Betts

I can still remember my first day of teaching at the middle school level. The students seemed very excited about the class. After the bell rang all but one student, who was dealing with a personal problem, walked out of class. The conversation and subsequent meeting with this student set me on a journey to discover all that I could about the social and emotional characteristics of students. A master of arts in counseling and a doctoral degree in psychology with a concentration in counseling guidance followed and it was soon after that I developed the *Autonomous Learner Model*^a where the focus was on the “whole gifted child.”

As I complete my 50th year as an educator, and reflect on the concepts and ideas that seek to strengthen the social and emotional development of our children, I believe there are six essential qualities that gifted educators can instill in their students that are necessary if we are to focus on the “whole gifted child.”

1. **Unconditional Positive Regard:** The ability to accept people as they are, not as you want them to be.
2. **Development of Self:** A strong Self is necessary for successful involvement with others, as well as the confidence that you are positive as a person.
3. **Emotional, Social, Cognitive, and Physical Development:** If one of these domains is missing, there will be a deficit model instead of a positive approach to life and learning.
4. **Passion Learning:** Learning what others want you to learn is important, but being able to pursue what you love is called “Passion Learning,” the highest level of learning, because then you become totally immersed in this pursuit. Time stands still, you miss meals, you feel sleep-deprived and you generate great new ideas and products.

5. **Working Together:** Major skills include communication, consultation, and collaboration.
6. **Seek to Better the World:** Our future is now in the hands of our children. They can visualize a better world, and they need our support as they develop new solutions for our world's problems.

Clearly, research on and interest in the affective needs of students has increased in recent years, and there are many more organizations and educators who see the "whole" child, although no one else has attended to gifted children specifically. During my presidency for NAGC, I have developed the "Whole Gifted Child Task Force" under the leadership of Dr. Angela Housand and 17 other practitioners, university professors, and researchers.

Our goal is to discover, synthesize, and disseminate the knowledge and research on the whole gifted child—his or her needs, development, and the importance of providing alternatives for his or her ongoing growth in the school, home, and community. To that end the following questions will be addressed by the task force: *Who is the gifted child? What are the comprehensive needs (Cognitive, Social, Emotional, and Physical) of the gifted child? What must parents, educators, and communities do to support the gifted child? What are the outcomes for the gifted child who receives the set of comprehensive supports?*

The fields of counseling and psychology have taught the basics that are fundamental for the growth of the whole child. In gifted education we are experts on gifted students' cognitive needs and have developed research and application that is extremely valuable, but a more concrete understanding of what practices are needed is at the forefront of our task force. The task force shared initial work^b at the NAGC 63rd Annual Convention in Florida, and it will release more results in the months to follow.

Dr. George Betts is the president of the NAGC Board of Directors.

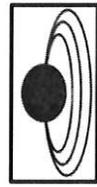
^a*The purpose of the ALM model is to shift the power to learn away from the teacher as a "dispenser of knowledge" and give that power to the students.*

^b*Find out more about the NAGC ALM task force here:
http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Misc_PDFs/The%20Whole%20Gifted%20Child%20Presidential%20Session.pdf*

Icon

Definition

Synonym(S)



Impact

Look at how events influence or affect other events

Effect



Process

Examine the steps or procedures involved in the creation of a product or idea

Method



Motive

Figure out what causes something to happen or how an idea is incited

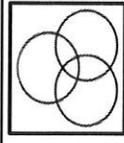
Reason; Cause; Purpose; Intent



Proof

Find ideas that verify or validate a statement or conclusion

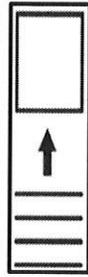
Evidence



Context

Determine the factors that create the outcome of an event, find the features, conditions or circumstances that describe a situation, examine how the surrounding environment shapes what is happening

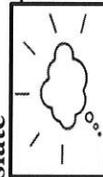
Setting; Situation; Circumstances



Translate

Look at the varied meanings of language and see how an idea is interpreted in different situations by different people

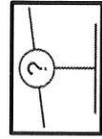
Interpret; Decode; Explain; Convert



Original

Evaluate what is new, what makes it new and how the changing of time and place makes an idea new

Produce; Generate; Design; Invent, Create

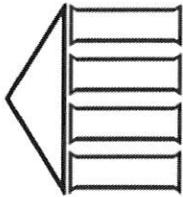


Judgment

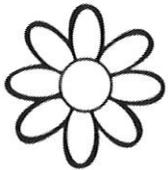
Figure out the factors that influence what is happening and then elicit how a decision is to be made

Decision; Conclusion

Depth and Complexity Icons



big ideas



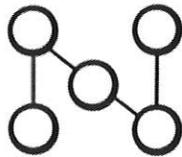
details



language of the discipline



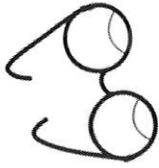
relate over time



patterns



trends



multiple perspectives



unanswered questions



rules

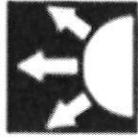


ethics

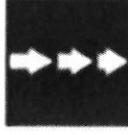


across disciplines

Content Imperatives



origin



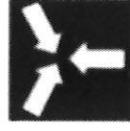
contribution



paradox



parallel



convergence

California Association for the Gifted 55th Annual Conference Registration is now open!

Sheraton Hotel and Marina
1380 Harbor Island Drive
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 291-2900



March 3rd -5th 2017

Pre Conference – Classroom on Wheels March 3rd 8:00am to 4:00pm

Regular conference begins Friday night with recognition of Distinguished Service and Exhibits Expo (4:00 pm to 8:00 pm)

Register online ([click here](#)) or by going to cagifted.org

Early Bird Registration _____ \$345 until December 27, 2016

Group registration _____ (5 or more) \$320

Member Rate _____ \$395 (after December 27, 2016)

Non Member Rate _____ \$495 (after December 27, 2016)

Need a Hotel?

Hotel reservations can be made directly by contacting the Sheraton hotel. Mention **California Association for the Gifted** to receive the conference rate of \$199 plus tax @ <http://sheraton.com/sandiegomarina/>

The Art Experience

Sign up for the Art Experience \$40 online or by contacting the CAG office – 909-522-7274

Parents' Day

Parents Day- Sunday March 5th 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
\$75 individual, \$50 per 2 registered at the same time

Questions?? email admin@cagifted.org or call 909-522-7274