

Gifted + Multilingual Learners: How can we effectively identify & serve?

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Presentation Outline

- Case Study of Collaboration
- University & District Partnership
- Learning from Each Other
- Shared Results



Why Gifted + Multilingual Learners?

- In Tennessee, USA, only **17** EL K-12 students were identified as gifted in the 2018 state data.

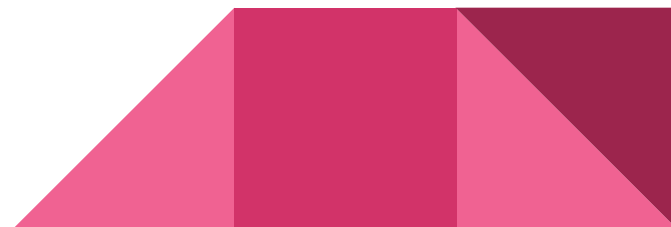


Collaboration

- Our university sits in large metropolitan area. We regularly work with the school district through various partnerships.
- Opportunity to support unidentified gifted students and their educators
- I first contacted EL faculty at Lipscomb (Fain). She was as astounded as I was about the dearth of identified students

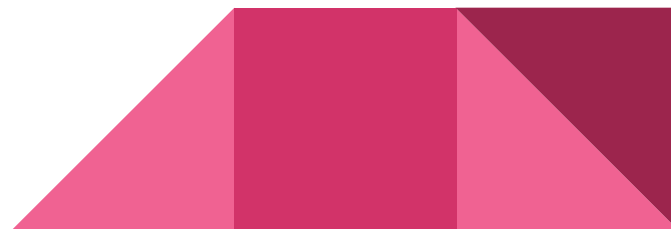
Collaboration

- Next, we reached out to our contacts in the local district. I contacted my gifted education partners. Dr. Fain contacted EL leaders.
- We formed a PLC (professional learning community) and began meeting monthly.



Collaboration

- Discussion topics: local identification and service issues, lack of teacher training
- Challenges: even if identified, gifted teachers in district did not know how to manage language differences within a gifted education classroom (lack of training)



Planning for Improvement

- Needed cross-training to better serve Gifted-EL learners
- EL teachers received gifted identification training, learned to use specific tools (to be shared)
- Gifted education teachers learned about EL methods and how to use strategies to support gifted EL learners' unique needs

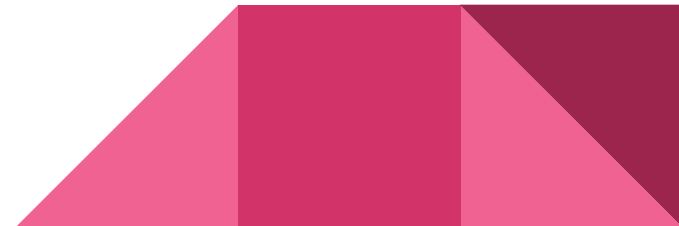


Example from training for gifted teachers

Intro to EL: Strength-based thinking, Strategies, Critical Literacy

Strengths-based thinking: English Language Learners/Bilingual/Multilingual Learners

- Linguistic Contributions: Knowledge of different languages
- Developed multiple strategies for learning a new language
- Cognitive flexibility-ability to move between languages and knowledge of the linguistic structures to be able to code-switch
- Cultural Contributions: Navigate a range of sociocultural contexts
- Develop Relationships with others of different backgrounds and foster different ways of thinking
- Recognize & celebrate differences



Strategies for English Learners

(Levine, Smallwood, & Haynes, 2012a, 2012b).

Principle 1. Focus on **academic** language, literacy, and vocabulary: Teach the language and language skills required for content learning.

Principle 2. Link background knowledge and culture to learning: Explicitly plan and incorporate ways to engage students in thinking about and drawing from their life experiences and prior knowledge.

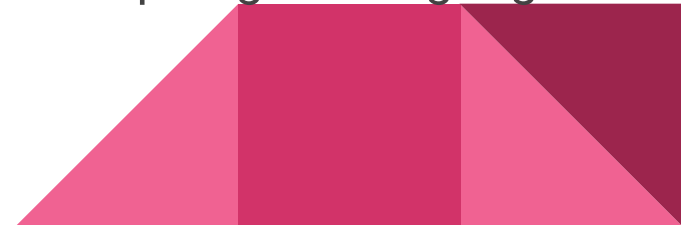


Strategies for English Learners

Principle 3. Increase comprehensible input and language output: **Make meaning clear through visuals, demonstrations, and other means** and give students **multiple opportunities** to produce language.

Principle 4. Promote classroom interaction: Engage students in using English to accomplish academic tasks.

Principle 5. Stimulate **higher order thinking** and the use of learning strategies: Explicitly teach thinking skills and learning strategies to develop English language learners as effective, independent learners



Go To Strategies

<http://ez.cal.org/what-we-do/projects/project-excell/the-go-to-strategies>

Resource for Strategies

Description of Strategy & Purpose

Provides Range of Language Levels



Combing EL + Gifted: Dimensions of Critical Literacy

(Van Sluys, Lewison, & Seely Flint, 2006)

Disrupting the commonplace:

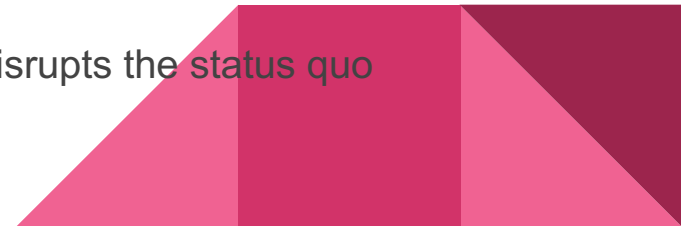
**Considering “new frames from which to understand experience” through varied texts, analysis of language, and critique

**Seeing the everyday through new lenses

**How is this text trying to position me? (Luke & Freebody, 1997)

**Developing the language of critique and hope (Shannon, 1995)

**Studying language to analyze how it shapes identity, and supports or disrupts the status quo (Fairclough, 1989)



Critical Literacy

Considering multiple viewpoints:

**Considering our own viewpoints and viewpoints of others

**Ask us to imagine standing in the shoes of others

**To understand experience and text from our own perspectives and the viewpoints of others

**Reflecting on multiple and contradictory perspectives (Lewison, Leland & Harste, 2000)

**Whose voices are heard and whose are missing? (Luke & Freebody, 1997)

**Paying attention to and seeking out the voices of those who have been silenced or marginalized (Harste et. Al, 2000)

**Examining competing narratives and writing counter-narratives

to dominant discourses (Farrell, 1998)



Critical Literacy

Focusing on the sociopolitical:

**Interrogating how “sociopolitical systems and power relationships shape perceptions, responses, and actions

**Going beyond the personal and attempting to understand the sociopolitical systems to which we belong (Boozer, Maras, & Brummett, 1999)

**Challenging the unquestioned legitimacy of unequal power relationships by studying the relationship between language and power (Gee, 1990)

**Using literacy to engage in the politics of daily life (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993)



Critical Literacy

Taking action

**Taking informed action in service of social justice

**Engaging in praxis-reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it (Freire, 1972)

**Using language to exercise power to enhance everyday life and to question practices of privilege and injustice (Comber, 2001)

**Analyzing how language is used to maintain domination, how nondominant groups can gain access to dominant forms of language without devaluing their own language and culture, how social action can change existing discourses (Janks, 2000)



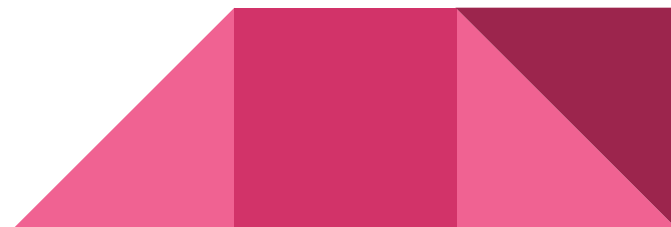
From EL teacher training:

What about gifted EL students? Get away from deficit thinking!!

- Rapidly acquire English language skills once exposed to the language and given an opportunity to use it expressively
- Exhibit leadership ability, although often in an open or unobtrusive manner, with strong interpersonal skills
- Tend to have **older** playmates and easily engage adults in lively conversation
- Enjoy intelligent and effective **risk-taking** behavior often accompanied by a sense of drama
- Are busied and entertained by imaginative games and ingenious applications, such as getting the most out of **simple** games and toys

More Characteristics: Gifted EL

- shows high ability in mathematics
- displays a mature sense of diverse cultures and languages
- code switches easily (think in both languages)
- demonstrates an advanced awareness of American expressions
- translates at an advanced level (oral)
- navigates appropriate behaviors successfully within both cultures
 - Iowa Dept. of Education



Common Mistakes: Identifying Gifted EL


1. Using advanced academic achievement as an entry into gifted programs
2. Using the same test or battery of tests for all students
3. Limiting assessments to nonverbal assessments
4. Teacher nominations without training
5. Not matching identification and service



Multiple Measures

- English language proficiency tests
- Acculturation scales
- Input from the student's cultural group
- Prior academic performance in the child's home school
- Parent interviews
- Teacher or parent nominations
- Behavioral rating scales
- Assessment data
- Student observations
- Portfolio assessments

Iowa Dept. of Education



Local Norms (TN Gifted Handbook p. 11)

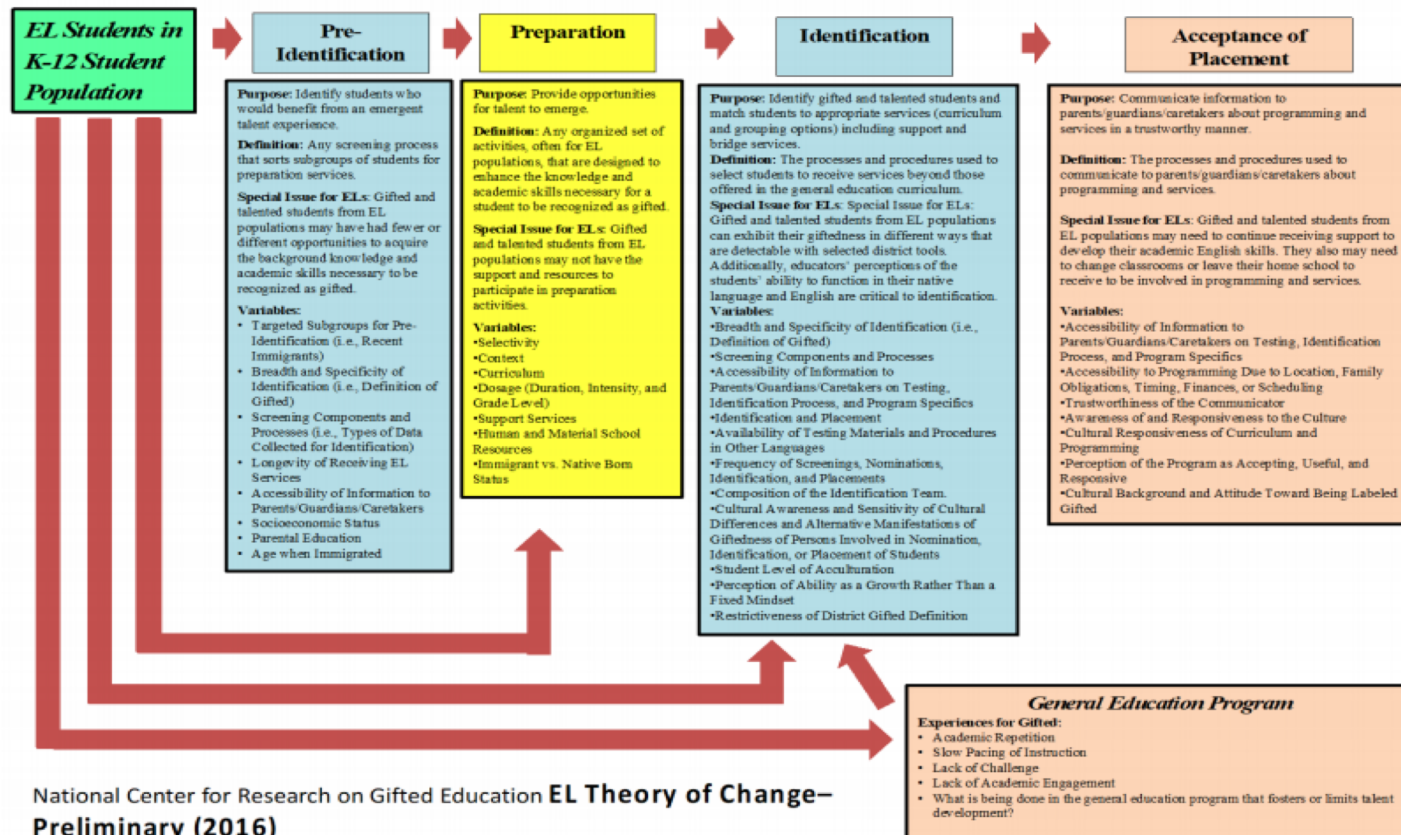
Potential student performance should be considered in light of school or classroom norms. This is especially important in schools or classrooms in which there are few students identified as gifted. There may be limited opportunities for potentially gifted students to demonstrate advanced abilities if the majority student group is performing at a lower level. Potentially gifted students should be permitted exposure to high-quality, high-level curriculum to allow opportunities and access to gauge and ensure student success with gifted services.

Compare students to others with **similar learning opportunities**

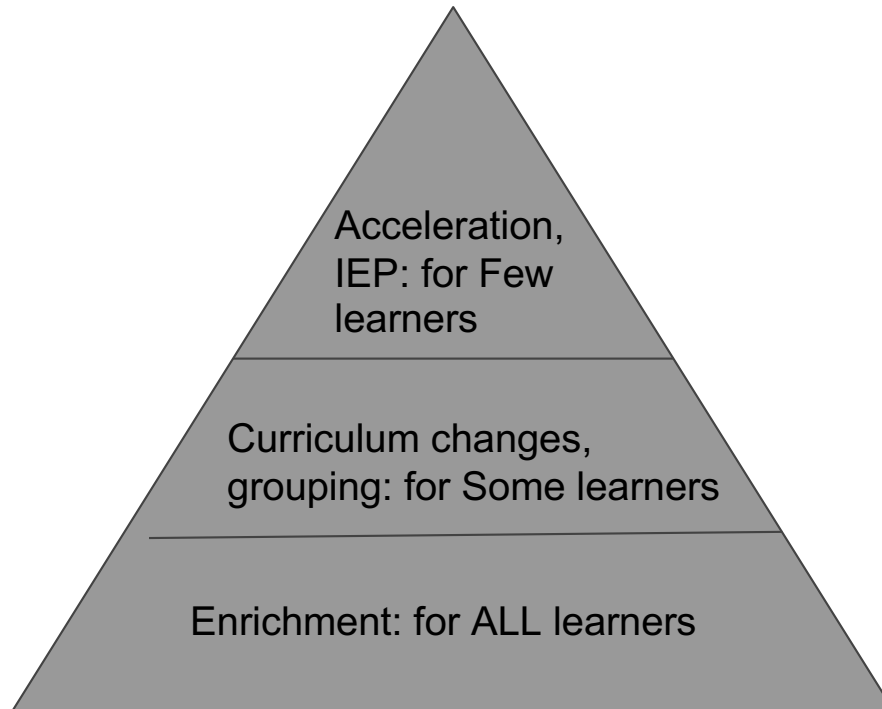


Models of Excellence

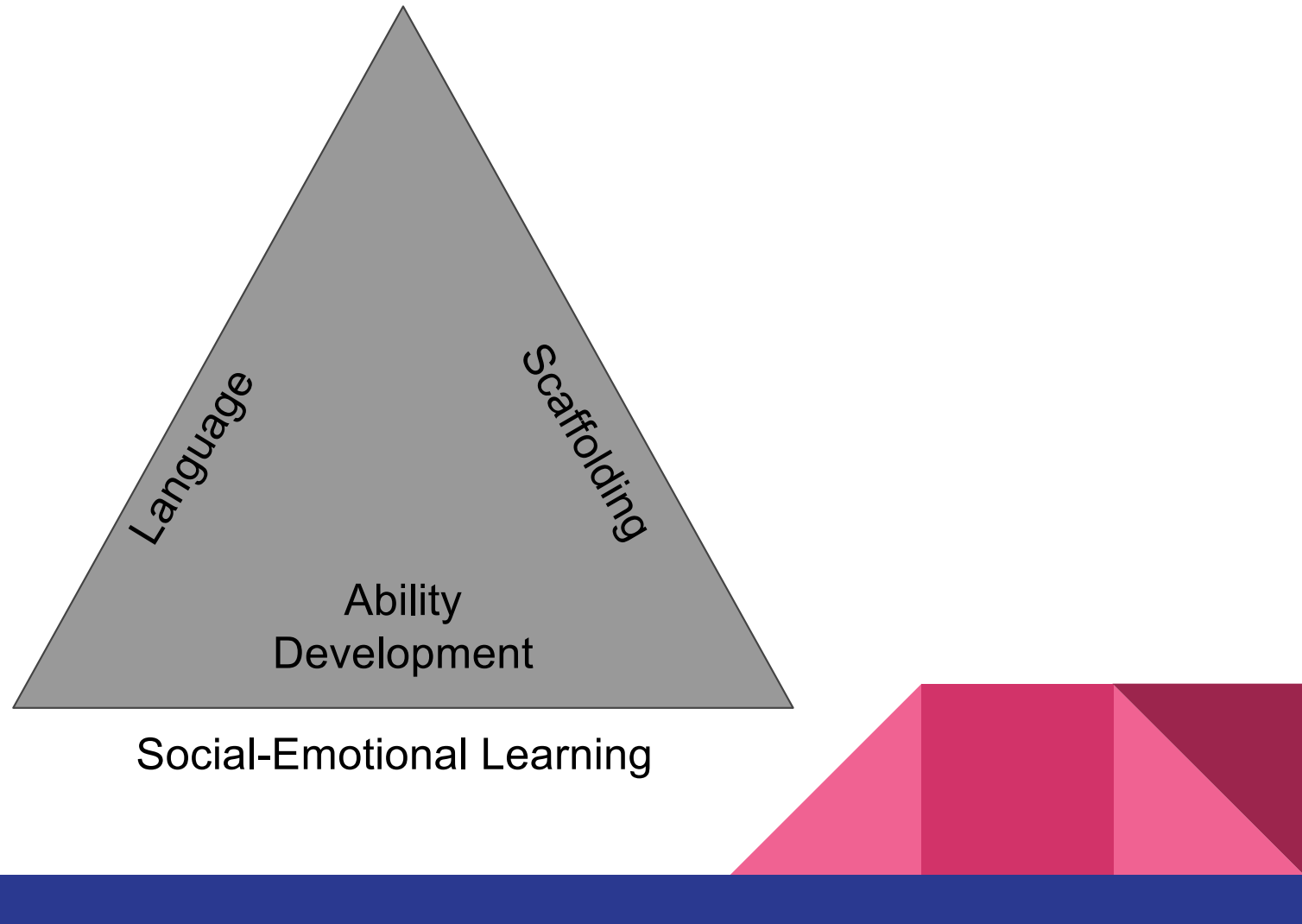
NCRGE Gifted English Learner Theory of Change (2016)



Tiered Models



Our Model



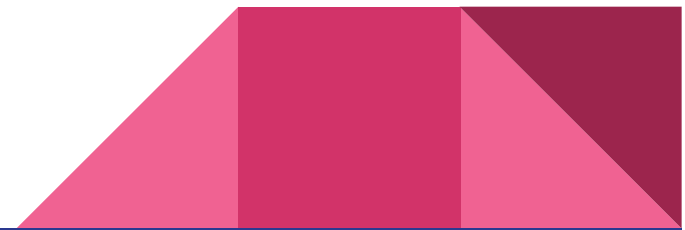
Tools: HOPE Scale

Having Opportunities Promotes Excellence

Measures 2 broad components: Social & Academic Potential

Helps teachers focus nominations and perceptions into observable behaviors

Should be used in conjunction with other measures



Tools: HOPE Scale

Local norms: compare student to those of similar background, culture, experience (NOT total population)

Rate each item 1-6 (1- never, 6- always); 11 total items

Item 12: indicate which areas student demonstrates talent (checkboxes and explain)

Score Academic and Social Items separately and use appropriate norms

School or district may set threshold for consideration towards identification



TABs: Panning for Gold

“There are certain fundamental and identifiable traits, aptitudes, and behaviors (**TABs**) that underlie the giftedness construct.”

The TABs that underlie the giftedness construct should provide the basis for methods used to seek referrals from educators, parents, and others who are involved in recommending children for participation in programs designed for the gifted.

The TABs that underlie the giftedness construct should provide the basis for selecting the measures to be used in determining needs for children referred for gifted program services.



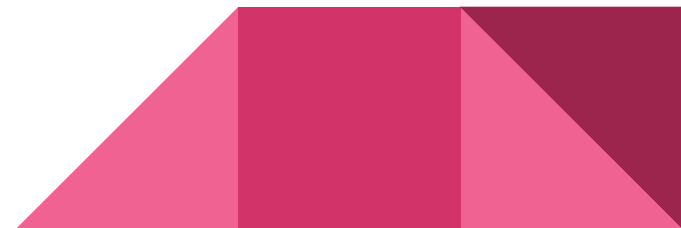
TABs: Panning for Gold

10 Basic attributes of giftedness

Provide rating on each of 10 attributes; provide specific examples (when present)

Consider threshold for school or district

Recommended as part of the Referral process- use TABs to identify potential and take to next step of identification process



Project GOTCHA: Galaxies of Thinking and Creative Heights of Achievement

School Based

1. Is able to read in their native language two grade levels above their current grade.
2. Shows high ability in mathematics.
3. Is advanced in creative domains (fluency, elaboration, originality, and flexibility).
4. Is a leader in multiple settings (playground, home, clubs, etc.).

Language Based

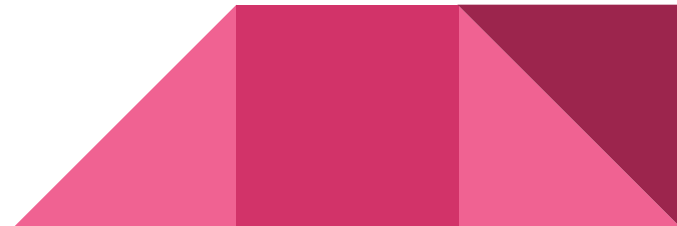
1. Demonstrates language proficiency levels that are above nongifted students who are also English Language Learners.
2. Learns multiple languages at an accelerated pace.
3. Shows the ability to code switch.
4. Wants to teach others words from their heritage language.
5. Is willing to translate for others.
6. Has superior knowledge of phrases and heritage dialects along with the ability to translate meanings in English.
7. Has a grasp on jokes related to cultural differences.

Project GOTCHA: Galaxies of Thinking and Creative Heights of Achievement

Culture Based

1. Balances behaviors expected in both the heritage and the new culture.
2. Is willing to share his/her heritage culture.
3. Shows pride in his/her culture and ethnic background.
4. Demonstrates a global sense of community and respect for cultural differences.

What do you like about this scale? What do you not like?



Alternative Screening Tools

TN TOC: TN Teacher Observation Checklist

TNSup: TN Supplementary Performance Checklist

TNPIF: TN Parent Information Form

TNCreat: TN Creative Thinking Rating Scale



What do you like about these scales? What do you not like?

Case Study Activity

Use the provided vignettes and think about which measure would or would not identify these students as potentially gifted.

What strengths are identified with each measure? What strengths or characteristics are missed when using that measure?



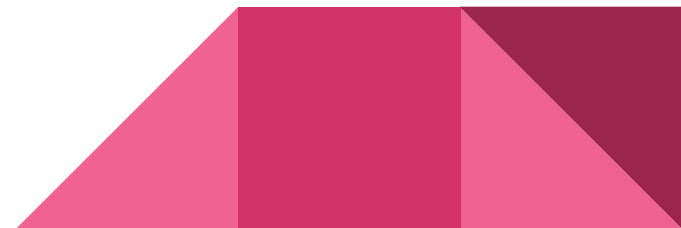
Case Study Wrap Up

What did you learn?

What tools should be used? What should not be used?

How can we be sensitive to the diversity of strengths present in our schools?

What are your big take-aways?

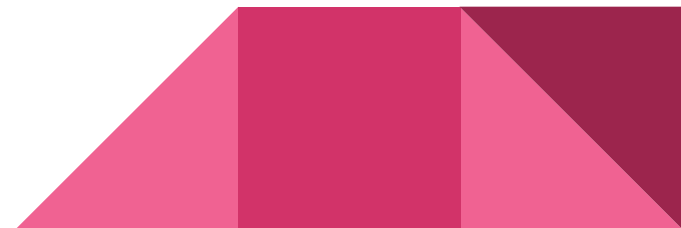


Our Results

Our PLC group grew over the year

We jointly planned a local conference to discuss the needs of gifted EL students

Over 200 educators from across the state attended though we did not advertise the conference!

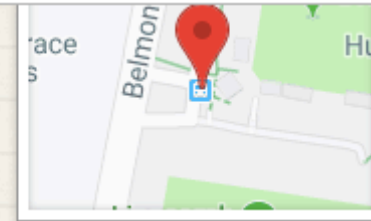


WHEN

Saturday, April 13th, 8:30am-12pm

WHERE

**Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN,
USA Ezell 363
Nashville, TN**



[Get Directions](#)



8:30-8:40 Registration & Light Breakfast

8:40-8:45 Welcome

8:45-9:15 Panel Discussion: Gifted Education and Multilingual Learners

9:20-10:10 Sessions on Gifted & Multilingual Learners & Culturally Responsive Instruction

10:15-11:00 Sessions on Current Children's and Adolescents' Literature in Our World


**11:05-12:00 Sessions Writing & Multilingual Learners (K-12)
Book Raffle & Certificate for Professional Development**



Connect with Jeanne Fain

Jeanne is using Smore newsletters to spread the word online.

Moving Forward

- District is using HOPE scale this year
 - PLC continues to meet
 - Waiting to see if training & new screening method make difference in identification rate
 - **April 4: Global Voices Conference at Lipscomb – FREE!**
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Resources & References

Exploratory Study on the Identification of English Learners for Gifted and Talented Programs. (2018). National Center for Research on Gifted Education. Retrieved from: <https://ncrge.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/982/2018/06/NCRGE-EL-Report-1.pdf>

Identifying Gifted and Talented English Language Learners: Grades K-12. (2008). Iowa Department of Education The Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development. Retrieved from: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/IdentifyGiftedTalentedELL.pdf>

Intellectually Gifted Evaluation Guidance. (2017). Tennessee Department of Education. Retrieved from: https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/eligibility/se_intellectually_gifted_evaluation_guidance.pdf

The Frances Karnes Center for Gifted Studies: University of Southern Mississippi. *Expanding appropriate assessment and differentiated instruction for culturally diverse gifted students.*

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