

# **GIFTED EDUCATION in ALABAMA**

## **Information and Insights**

**Addressing the Urgent Need for  
State Funding of Gifted Education**



**January 2013**

## OVERVIEW OF GIFTED EDUCATION

The Marland Report to Congress in 1972 marked the first official recognition of gifted students as being at risk, stating that, "Gifted and Talented children are, in fact, deprived and can suffer psychological damage and permanent impairment of their abilities to function well which is equal to or greater than the similar deprivation suffered by any other population with special needs served by the Office of Education" (pp. xi-xii). Prior to that time, recognition of gifted children and their need for special education were addressed only sporadically through individual scholars and through research funded either by individuals or a handful of private institutions. The report also resulted in the first federal definition of gifted and talented, from which many states have modeled their definitions. The federal government allows each state to define gifted and to decide whether to serve gifted students. The state of Alabama passed legislation that mandates gifted services, but has not historically funded gifted programs.

**Federal Definition:** "Gifted and talented children are those who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities. "  
*No Child Left Behind Act*, P.L. 107-110 (Title IX, Part A, Definitions (22) (2002); 20 U.S.C. Sec. 7802 (22) (2004))

**Alabama's Definition:** "Intellectually gifted children and youth are those who perform or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. These children and youth require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Children and youth possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor" (*Alabama Administrative Code (AAC)*, 29-8-9.12 (1)).




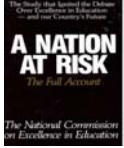


### How are gifted students identified in Alabama?

There are two paths to identification:

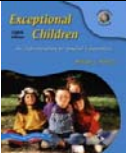









- Automatic eligibility with a total score of 130 or above on an individual aptitude test administered by a licensed professional or a score of 97% or above on the *Torrance Test of Creative Thinking*.
- Matrix eligibility with a score of 17 of 20 possible points on the State Eligibility Determination Form. Points are assigned on the matrix in the areas of aptitude, gifted behavior characteristics, and performance.

Neighboring states (e.g., GA, MS, TN, FL) have similar methods for identification using matrices, with scores assigned for aptitude, achievement, gifted behaviors, and in some cases creativity.

## Historical Timeline of Gifted Education National

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>1954</u></b></p> <p>National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) founded</p>	<p>The NAGC began advocating for gifted children and for appropriate educational programming and strategies to meet their needs.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>1957</u></b></p> <p>The launching of Sputnik</p>	<p>Brought attention to the quality of education offered to bright students in American public schools.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>1972</u></b></p> <p>Publication of the Marland Report</p>	<p>Resulted in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Official definition of gifted education at the national level.</li> <li>2. Official recognition of gifted students as special needs students who are at risk.</li> <li>3. <u>No</u> federal funding for gifted education.</li> </ol>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>1983</u></b></p> <p>Publication of "A Nation at Risk"</p>	<p>Brought attention to the failure of America's brightest students to compete globally in Math and Science.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>1988</u></b></p> <p>Jacob Javits Grant funded as part of the reauthorization of the ESEA</p>	<p>Provided minimal funding for research in gifted education &amp; for establishment of national gifted centers in various universities.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>2002</u></b></p> <p>No Child Left Behind Act</p>	<p><i>Reduced, then eliminated</i> Jacob Javits Grant funding for gifted education.</p>

## Historical Timeline of Gifted Education Alabama

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1971</b>          Passage of Act 106: The Alabama Exceptional Child Education Act</p>	<p>Recognized gifted children as having special needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandates special education for gifted children at public expense</li> <li>• <b>Did not</b> fund the mandate</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1972</b>          Parents and teachers allowed to refer children and youth for gifted services</p>	<p>Must be enrolled in public school, ages six through Grade 12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirements for eligibility and services loosely defined and left to individual school systems to finance and determine services</li> <li>• “Magic” IQ number derived from an individually administered test as sole source of eligibility determination.</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1994</b>          Alabama Association for Gifted Children (AAGC) founded</p>	<p>Established a state professional organization for teachers, parents, and administrators that deals specifically with the needs of gifted learners and provides an avenue to advocate for gifted children.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1998</b>          Lee v Macon Court Case</p>	<p>Recognized under-representation of African American and Hispanic children in gifted programs. Triggers annual monitoring by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) to ensure equity of access to gifted programs.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1999</b>          ALSDE entered into Title VI Resolution with US Department of Justice and OCR</p>	<p>Required procedures to guarantee equity in eligibility determination and quality and duration of gifted services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alabama adopted a research-based, broader definition of gifted</li> <li>• ALSDE required mandatory Second Grade Child Find and statewide gifted program monitoring based on compliance with the <i>Alabama Administrative Code</i>, Section 29-8-9.12 and National Association for Gifted Children Standards</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2000</b>          Alabama entered into Consent Decree to guarantee equity and equal access to gifted programs</p>	<p>This decree resulted in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of a new research-based, multiple-criteria <i>Gifted Education Eligibility Determination Form</i></li> <li>• Statewide standardization of Local Education Agency (LEA) Plans for Gifted</li> <li>• Statewide parameters for gifted service delivery options</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2005</b>          The annual monitoring by OCR ended</p>	<p>The ALSDE gifted monitors were commended by OCR for fully implementing all commitments consistent with the terms of the Title VI Agreement. However, the ALSDE must continue to uphold the provisions of the 2000 Consent Decree.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2007</b>          Gifted education received state funding</p>	<p>For the first time in the history of gifted education in Alabama, the State Legislature allocated \$2.3 million for gifted education programming.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2008-2011</b>          No state funding allotted for gifted education</p>	<p>Funding for gifted education was not renewed.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2012</b>          Gifted education again received state funding</p>	<p>Funding reinstated. Alabama State Legislature allocated \$1 million for gifted program funding.</p>

## Quality Control of Gifted Education Programs in Alabama

University Programs	Alabama State Department of Education	Alabama Association for Gifted Children
Provide programs to certify gifted specialists at the Master's and Education Specialist levels	Assigns two gifted education specialists to oversee and maintain compliance with the AAC in gifted programs statewide	Maintains a professional organization for gifted specialists, administrators, and parents of gifted children.
Collaborate with ALSDE in determining the direction of gifted education in Alabama	Requires all LEAs to submit LEA Plans for Gifted Education which are aligned to AAC standards	Establishes regional networks of gifted specialists within the state
Work with school systems through consultation and collaboration to improve gifted education in gifted and general education programs	Establishes statewide standards for LEA Plans for Gifted Education and Acceleration Procedures	Provides statewide annual conference with opportunities for teacher training and exposure to national leaders in gifted education
Engage in research to benefit curriculum and instructional practices in gifted education	Monitors gifted programs to ensure compliance with the AAC and individual LEA Plans	Supports parent advocacy organizations
Provide professional development at national, state, regional and local conferences	Sets standards for certification of gifted specialists in Alabama	Partners with community and state leaders to improve gifted education
	Oversees quality of gifted specialists by requiring certification in gifted education within 3 years of employment	
	Provides professional development specifically for teachers of gifted children and Special Education / Gifted Coordinators yearly	
	Monitors curriculum development for gifted classrooms	
	Provides in person and on-line technical assistance to LEAs	

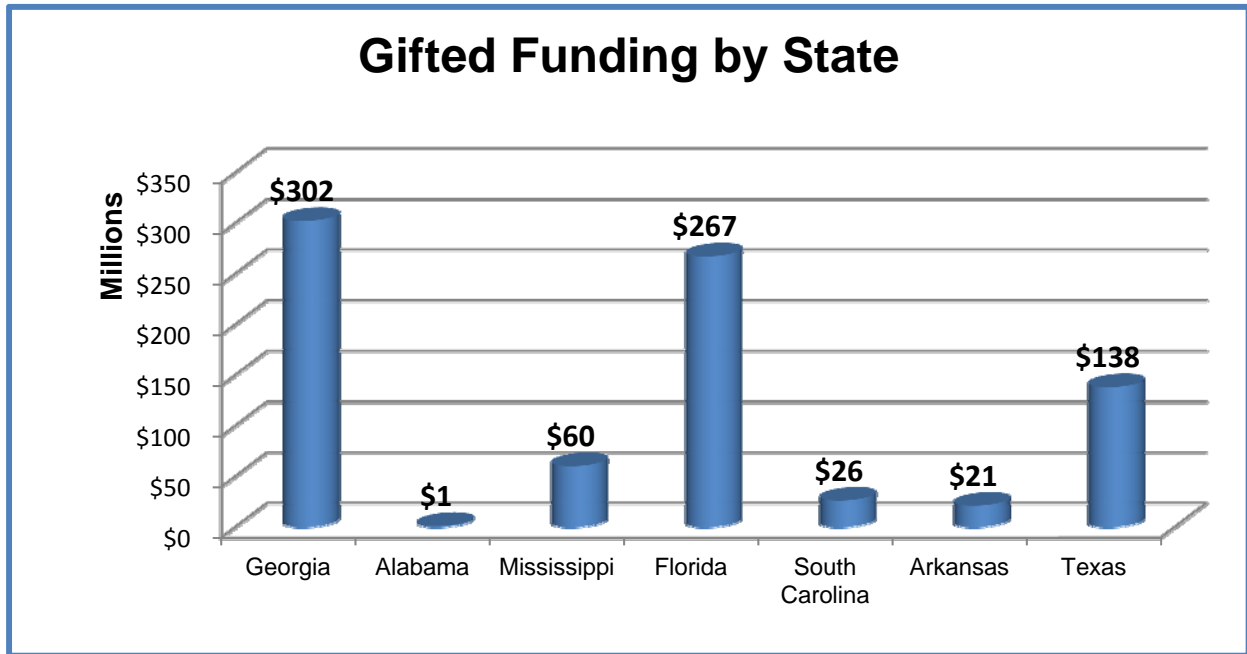
## THE STATE OF GIFTED EDUCATION IN ALABAMA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE WORLD

In the 1960s through the 1980s, the United States led the world in instructional strategies and special programs for educating America's most promising students, yielding an explosion of innovation in technology and economic growth. Ironically, emphasis on gifted education and the use of gifted instructional strategies has faded in the US, while interest in developing intellectual capital is growing in other countries around the world. Many of these countries are adopting practices developed by gifted educators and formerly used in the US to develop the potential of high-end learners. Consequently, students in countries such as China, Japan, South Korea, and New Zealand, are graduating and entering the global work force armed with increasing creative and critical thinking abilities, as well as skill in science, math, and technology. At the same time, US student performance in these areas continues to diminish.

How do some of our global competitors address gifted education?

- China focuses on individualized instruction for gifted students in strength areas.
- New Zealand fully funds gifted education at a national level. Their gifted programs are flexible and supportive of innovative and multifaceted thinking.
- Canada funds gifted services at the provincial level. Their gifted programs are designed to increase student intellectual horizons and differentiate curriculum and instruction to promote academic growth for gifted students.
- Japan purposefully instructs students to develop critical and creative thinking skills. Educators expect their brightest students to put forth the necessary effort to meet rigorous intellectual challenges.
- South Korean curriculum accommodates the needs of each student through independent learning and differentiated instructional strategies that address individual abilities, interests, aptitudes, and career directions.

In the United States, a lack of federal leadership in gifted education creates a disparity of policies and services among states and school districts. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted present the only national report on gifted education in the United States. This publication, entitled *State of the States in Gifted Education*, takes a biannual snapshot of how states support programs and services for gifted students. The following graph shows how Alabama compares to surrounding states in its funding of gifted education (NAGC, 2011).



\* Mississippi funds their gifted program through teacher units; therefore, the amount fluctuates based on the number of identified gifted students.

Most people would agree that educating all children is crucial to a successful future. However, our schools currently neglect the education of those who have the greatest potential to serve as community, state, and national leaders, stimulate economic growth, and provide innovative solutions to future problems. As the adage goes “one size does not fit all.” And, when our educational focus is on insuring that all children are educated to reach a set level of academic proficiency, our nation’s 3 million academically gifted and talented students become the children “left behind.” These future entrepreneurs, leaders, inventors, artists, writers, and problem solvers are among our state’s **most valuable natural resources** and are vital in maintaining Alabama’s ability to **compete in a global economy**. Their potential may never be realized unless their special learning needs are met. Gifted programs are essential in meeting these needs.

Alabama mandates gifted services but historically has not funded them. Providing equitable and high-quality services requires capital. During the 2012 fiscal year, the Alabama Legislature funded gifted education for the second time in its history through a line item of \$1 million. Moving toward full funding will ensure the continued existence of gifted services and allow our state to develop better and stronger programs that will benefit our gifted children.

By fully funding gifted education, our students will be better prepared to compete with those from surrounding states for college admission, scholarships, and later for jobs that will keep them in Alabama. High quality gifted education programs can also serve to draw businesses in search

of employees who can fill high-tech jobs requiring math and science expertise, creative thinking, and problem solving skills. Funding appropriate education for gifted students is not only beneficial to their wellbeing, but it also pays high dividends for our state.

### **Meeting the Challenge of Educating Gifted Learners in Alabama**

To meet the challenge of educating gifted learners in Alabama, the goals are clear!

- We must implement **gifted educational strategies** to make a meaningful difference for our gifted and talented students as well as for high-ability students.
- Students who are advanced in their academic knowledge and skills may require **acceleration** either by grade or subject area.
- Implementing **curriculum compacting** to streamline grade-level curriculum and avoid re-teaching of already mastered content to the gifted student will enhance motivation for continued learning.
- **Cluster grouping** of gifted learners with similar-ability peers within the general education classroom, which provides gifted students opportunities for learning with their academic/intellectual peers allows for creating a sense of belonging and academic progress commiserate with knowledge, skills, and interests.....and helps teachers better serve their gifted learners.
- **Pull-out programs** allow gifted students to share learning experiences with their intellectual peers. The social-emotional needs of the gifted can be best addressed within a pull-out resource classroom with the gifted specialist who is trained to recognize and meet their unique affective needs.
- **Differentiation** of instruction and curriculum allows gifted students who have already mastered certain areas of study to move forward gaining new knowledge and skills.



## **Gifted Education: Making a Difference in the Lives of Gifted Students in Alabama**

Jermaine, an African American boy from a rural Alabama community, was born into a family with a culture and history of poverty. He lived in a house with a dirt floor and no indoor toilet. His mother was declared mentally unstable, and his brothers were constantly in trouble at school. When he started school, teachers expected that Jermaine would be no different. As a kindergartner, he was considered a nuisance. Jermaine was quickly labeled a “bad” boy with little hope for a brighter future. His first grade teacher, who was studying to become a gifted specialist, was enchanted with his ability to tell and write elaborate and imaginative stories and recognized his gifted potential. When she shared his stories with her university professor, he immediately agreed to work with the boy and serve as his mentor. Over the years, the professor and the first grade teacher provided Jermaine with books to read and as well as opportunities to act as the consummate story teller. This, along with his athletic talent, gave him a celebrity status within the community. Years later, as a student and Army Reservist, he was deployed to Afghanistan. While there, he wrote an anthology of poems about his war experiences. Jermaine has returned home and resumed his aspirations of becoming a media writer and producer. Although his story is yet unfinished, his future is filled with promise! (Hébert, 2010)

Jalah is a female student who attended elementary school in an economically depressed community near Birmingham. Now a singer, dancer, actress starring in an Off-Broadway production in New York, she recently wrote a letter to her gifted education teacher that speaks for itself.

*Dear Mrs. Rust,*

*You don't know how much you have influenced my life. If it wasn't for you doing God's will, by revealing my talent, I wouldn't be where I am today. The Gifted Program at Midfield Elementary School changed my life completely! You taught me many of the things I use today from proper enunciation, to being as bold and confident as I can be.*

*Acting, singing, and dancing became a huge part of my life because of various experiences in the Midfield Elementary [Gifted] Program. The MES Program opened my eyes and enabled me to encounter new experiences. I still can't believe I had the 4<sup>th</sup> grade lead role in Annie! Because of you and the Gifted Program, I now know what my passion is. You inspired me by helping me realize that I am an actress, and I can accomplish anything with hard work and dedication.*

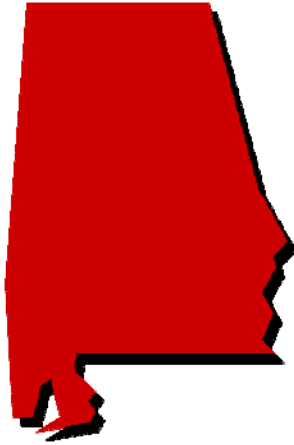
*You were like a second mom to me....always supportive, encouraging, but firm. I am now starring as a main character in an Off Broadway Production in New York...Who would've known how much of an impact a Gifted Program and a dedicated teacher could have on a person's life. I honor you for everything you have done for me. I am who I am, as an actress because of you.*

*Thank you and I love you...*

Bryan was a shy, sensitive boy who was underachieving in all academic areas, despite his very highly developed problem solving ability. His teachers had difficulty getting him to pay attention in class; and he often found that his homework assignments were as scattered as leaves in the autumn wind when it was time to turn them in. He cried easily when in trouble or if he witnessed someone else being disciplined. After entering the gifted program in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Bryan began to show great interest in topics of study in the pull-out class, especially those related to environmental topics. Over the course of a year, he became a distinct class leader. With the joint guidance of the gifted education teacher, his parents, his classroom teachers, and his own ideas, he learned how to organize his time and to concentrate for longer periods. With hard work, he began to excel in school and became ever more involved in various environmental problem solving ventures both in school and in the community. Today, he is a highly successful environmental landscape designer who owns his own company.

George, an 11<sup>th</sup> grade student in Houston County, Alabama, was optimistic about becoming a print journalist after graduation. To help him realize his dream, the gifted specialist at his school found him a mentorship with a local television station. By being close to his home, George was not only afforded the opportunity to participate in the mentorship program, but it also gave him the good fortune to co-op his last two years of high school. George eventually was offered a salary from the television station. This valuable experience led to a full journalism scholarship to Troy University. George graduated and was hired as broadcast journalist in Selma, Alabama.

Esmeralda, a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student in Birmingham City Schools, was quiet and shy. She dreamed of becoming a pediatrician one day after graduation from high school. Esmeralda voiced her love of children and her desire to rid babies of hurt and disease one day. Her parents worked hard to support Esmeralda and her newborn baby brother. Esmeralda worked hard to achieve good grades in school. She knew what it meant to keep trying when things got hard. Her dad worked hard to save what little money he could for Esmeralda's college fund. Esmeralda didn't let obstacles get in her way. She knew she would be rewarded for her hard work. And she was! She was rewarded with a full scholarship for her college tuition. Esmeralda graduated from high school and college to achieve her dream... to be a pediatrician!



## What is a Gifted Student Worth?

Alabama **NEEDS** to invest in our gifted and talented youth, not only because they deserve an appropriate education but because the state **NEEDS** their gifts and talents in order to remain competitive and prosperous.

- **The primary value of a gifted student is his/her brain power and creativity.** These are commodities we cannot manufacture. Investing in the education our most promising young people has a societal return on that investment.  
According to The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), \$1 invested in a college graduate in 1985 would yield an unadjusted \$15.06 in 2011 while \$1 invested in the S&P 500 in 1985 would only yield an unadjusted \$7.00. Education is the **best** investment! (OECD, 2011)
- **Higher levels of educational attainment lead to higher levels of income.** Gifted and high ability learners who complete college and post baccalaureate education have the capacity to earn significantly more than those with high school diplomas or less. This translates into more money funneled into the state and local economies.
- **Highly educated individuals are arrested less, are healthier, live in better equipped homes and provide better support for the education of their children.** (US Census Bureau, 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement)

## **Consequences of Failing to Meet the Needs of Gifted Students**

When gifted and high-ability students are not challenged, they begin to think that being smart means that they don't have to work hard. This may lead to poor learning skills and eventually underachievement and even failure in school. Some families concerned about the availability of challenging content and rigorous instruction seek alternate options, such as private schools or home schooling. Students from poverty, however, are dependent on Alabama's public schools to meet their educational needs, meaning they may not be able to reach their true potential without appropriate gifted services from their school (National Association for Gifted Children, 2012).

### **Factors to Consider:**

- The "Excellence Gap" is growing between groups of students achieving the advanced level on the NAEP exam. For example, in Grade 4 Math, the percentage of white students scoring at the advanced level increased by 5% between 1998 and 2007; the percentage of Black and Hispanic students increased by only 1%.
- Fewer than 1 in 4 teachers (23%) say that the needs of advanced students are a top priority at their school; 32% say that they are a low priority.
- Only 56% of children from low socio-economic backgrounds who are considered high achieving when they enter school remain high achieving by the end of 5<sup>th</sup> grade. (Plucker, Burroughs, & Song, 2010)

### **Gifted Students Need Trained Teachers**

Research yields an overwhelming amount of positive effects that come out of training teachers in gifted education. Davidson (1996) found that teachers with the proper training show more enthusiasm and support for gifted programs and work to provide a more differentiated curriculum rather than merely adding more content. She also found that they use more teaching techniques to ease boredom, give students time to pursue their personal interests, and encourage learning outside of the classroom. Along with the many positives that arise from gifted education training, it should be noted that giving teachers little to no gifted education training results in negative effects in the classroom. Untrained teachers commonly display more apathy and hostility toward gifted students and are prone to thinking giftedness only shows itself through high academic grades (Lichtenwalter, 2010).

## Alabama Gifted Program Needs

Funding for gifted education in Alabama is needed in order to provide appropriate program services. Currently, funding for gifted specialists is provided by local districts. According to ALSDE information (2012), there are approximately 491 gifted specialists serving 52,853 K-12 gifted students in Alabama schools. (This student count does not take into consideration districts which use an enrichment model/talent pool rather than following the state guidelines for gifted identification). An additional 500 gifted specialists are needed to meet the guidelines for teacher caseloads specified in the *Alabama Administrative Code*.\*

Full funding of K-12 gifted services is the ultimate goal, with specific program needs as follows:

- gifted specialist teacher units (estimated number of units K-12 = 931)
- professional development for general education teachers and gifted specialists
- substitute teachers needed when professional development activities are scheduled
- scholarships for educators to obtain gifted certification at state universities
- classroom supplies and materials
- technology-related equipment and maintenance and software/licenses
- testing materials and services for Child Find

### Past Funding

For Fiscal Year 2012, the state legislature allocated **\$1 million** for gifted education. This was the first time in five years that gifted education was funded as a line item in the state education budget. The first ever funding occurred in FY 2007 when gifted education was funded **\$2.3 million**. Prior to 2007 **NO** state funds were provided to districts. All funding for gifted was provided at the local level.

### Present Funding Request

The request for FY 2013 is for **\$6.2 million** to be made available to districts for program funding and aptitude testing (Grades 2 and 4). (Aptitude testing is a required component of identification and Child Find for gifted services.)

### Future Funding Requests

The table below details funding projections for gifted education in order to reach full funding of services in Alabama by Fiscal Year 2018.

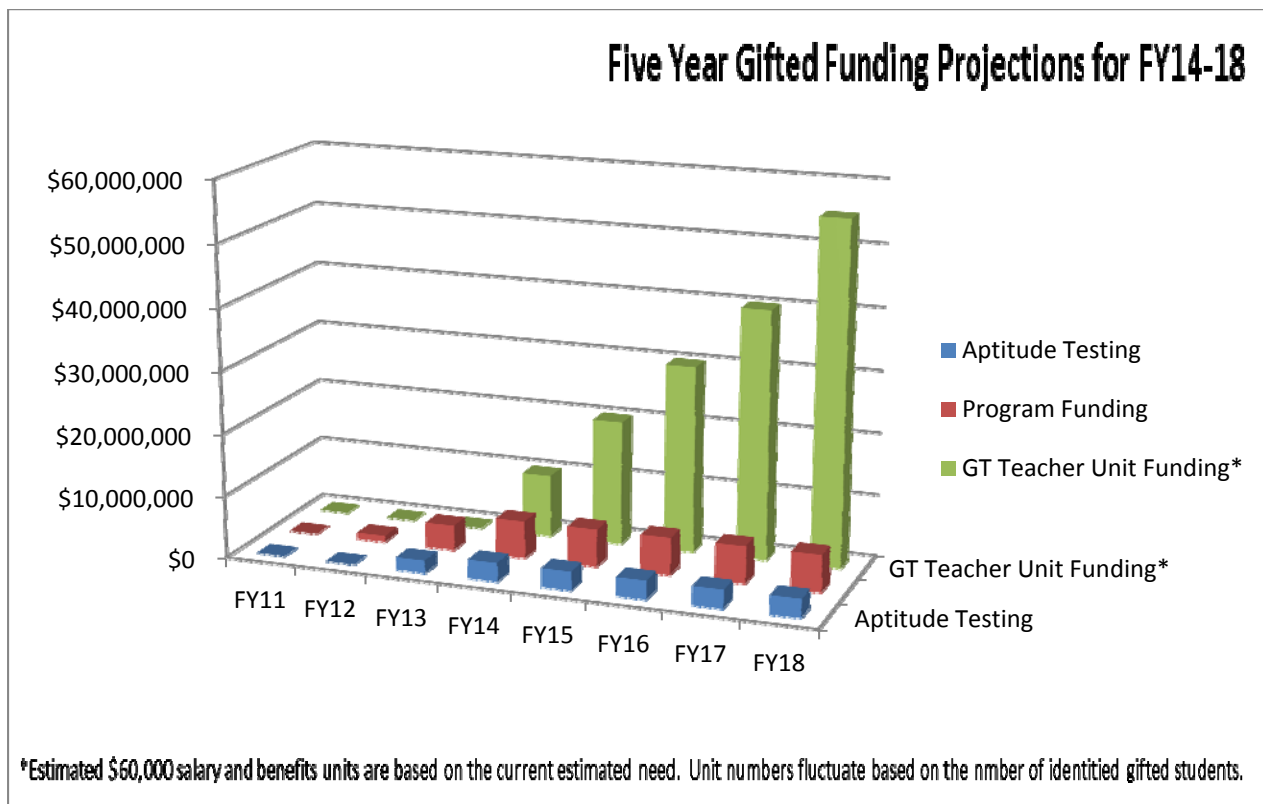
**Table 1**

**Projected Five-year Funding Plan for Gifted Education Beginning FY 14**

	Aptitude Testing	Program Funding	GT Teacher Unit Funding	Total
FY14	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$19,000,000
FY15	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$29,000,000
FY16	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$30,000,000	\$39,000,000
FY17	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$40,000,000	\$49,000,000
FY18	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$55,000,000	\$64,000,000

*Note:* These are estimates only, based on 2012 costs/teacher salaries. No state funds were allotted for FY 2008-2011. For FY 2012, \$1 million was allocated for gifted programs.

The following graph depicts the funding projections as presented in the table above. The full funding for teacher units is based on salary and benefits in 2012 for a teacher with a master’s degree with gifted certification.



**\* Teacher caseloads as per *Alabama Administrative Code (AAC) 290-8-9.12 (9)*:**

- Elementary: 45 students per Gifted Specialist
- Elem/Middle: 45 students per Gifted Specialist
- Middle/High: 75 students per Gifted Specialist

**Formula for determining gifted program funding:** district enrollment plus identified gifted students divided by 2 = total student number to be multiplied by state gifted allotment. For school districts using an approved Enrichment Model: If the district has no identified gifted students, their funding is based on the total school enrollment divided by 2.

**Total student enrollment is calculated in the formula to provide funding for:**

- Enrichment Model school systems which may not have any identified gifted students;
- Consultative services for Grades K-2 are indicated for any high-level student since mandated identification for gifted begins in Grade 2.
- Consultative services between classroom teachers, other school personnel, and gifted specialists in order to develop and provide differentiated curriculum and instruction for all high-ended learners;
- Second Grade Child Find and standard Child Find testing materials.

(Alabama State Department of Education, 2012)

## **Advocacy for Gifted Education**

Effective advocacy requires individuals to be knowledgeable, organized, have defined goals and objectives, be committed, and be persistent. As part of the Alabama Association for Gifted Children (AAGC) advocacy goal, we work with members of the Alabama State Legislature to increase support for gifted and talented learners. To be effective, AAGC depends on gifted education supporters across the state, including parents, educators, and other stakeholders who will contact their elected representatives on behalf of gifted students.

The Alabama Association for Gifted Children (AAGC) has increased advocacy efforts to heighten awareness and support for gifted programs, funding, and support groups through:

- Annual “Gifted Education Month” to highlight gifted learners and program services in Alabama (January)
- AAGC Advocacy Group Database
- AAGC Parent Advocacy Group Information Packet
- AAGC Annual Conference
- Email contacts
- Social media: Facebook, Twitter, and AAGC website
- Newsletters
- Phone blitz
- Letter writing campaigns to stakeholders, community leaders, state legislators
- Information presented at school faculty meetings
- Network with stakeholders, businesses, and community leaders
- Professional development training for educators
- Meetings with school officials and administrators
- Parent meetings
- Informational flyers to parents
- Meetings with state representatives and senators
- Meetings with university instructors



## **Benefits of Gifted Education**

The Alabama Association for Gifted Children recognizes the need for educational excellence. The Association's members believe that every gifted student has the right to learn something new every day. By supporting gifted students we increase the likelihood that Alabama will move to higher levels of productivity and economic growth.

### **Benefits to students who participate in gifted programs:**

- enhanced leadership opportunities
- development of informed opinions
- exposure to various perspectives and points of view
- establishment of goals leading to career options
- exploration of post-secondary education opportunities
- demonstration of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: creativity, imagination, collaboration, cooperation, service to others, and problem-solving strategies
- participation in field experiences and service learning
- growth in social-emotional domains
- development of autonomous life-long learners and responsible citizenship

### **Benefits of gifted education to the State of Alabama:**

- advancements in new technologies
- leadership in business, community, schools, and state leadership
- attraction of businesses that require innovative individuals
- increased pool of inventors and entrepreneurs
- productive citizens who will contribute to the state's economy and a global society

## **AAGC Partnering With State Leaders**

AAGC will continue to partner with state representatives, ALSDE administrators and Board of Education members, school administrators and staff, community leaders, parents, and gifted specialists to advocate for:

- implementation of Alabama's Gifted Education Month activities
- state funding for gifted education to support student needs and programs
- dissemination of information about gifted education

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## Resources

For additional information regarding gifted learners, visit these sites:

Alabama Association for Gifted Children	<a href="http://alabamagifted.org">alabamagifted.org</a>
National Association for Gifted Children	<a href="http://nagc.org">nagc.org</a>
Davidson Institute	<a href="http://davidsongifted.org">davidsongifted.org</a>
SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted)	<a href="http://sengifted.org">sengifted.org</a>
National Research Center on the Gifted/Talented (NRC/GT)	<a href="http://gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt">gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt</a>