

# A DIFFERENT Drummer

## IQ: WHAT DOES INTELLIGENCE REALLY MEAN FOR GIFTED, TALENTED AND BRIGHT STUDENTS?

Intelligence is a complex topic which does not lend itself to simple definitions. There are multiple definitions of intelligence in published literature. For example, Teele (2000) stated, "Throughout the 20th century, psychologists have studied the nature of human intelligence as a way of predicting school performance. They have examined different approaches to or interpretations of intelligence. Most psychologists agree that individuals are unique and differ in their ability to understand abstract ideas, to reason in critical and creative ways, to adapt effectively to environment situations, and to apply information from one experience to another. Intellectual performances may vary on different days and in different ways when measured by a variety of criteria," (p. 2).

According to Eysenck (1998), "for many people... intelligence is still a mentalistic kind of concept, miles away

by David Lemire, Ph.D.  
OATAG Board Member

from the reassuring solidity of height and weight, mass and temperature" (p. 4).

In addition, Jensen (1998) has stated, "Human mental ability has both general and specific components; the general component is the larger source of individual difference; it is predominantly a product of biological evolution, and is more strongly hereditary than are specific abilities, or special talents. Mental ability, which ranges widely in every large population, is normally distributed; various human races differ in mental ability because human beings differ in human ability. General ability is best measure by a variety of fairly simple tests of sensory discrimination and reaction time" (p. 2).

*Continued on page 14*

## OATAG Young Scholars Award Deadline Looms

The Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted (OATAG) will award one outstanding Oregon student the OATAG Young Scholars Award. The OATAG Young Scholars Award is designed to recognize excellence in young children. The award, which includes a certificate and a \$500 scholarship to a summer program, is awarded each school year. Potential award recipients are students in grades 4 through 8 who have achieved excellence in one of the following areas of endeavor: leadership, visual/performing arts, or academic achievement. A student may be recommended by a teacher, parent, or civic/religious leader. Nominations are due to OATAG no later than January 31, 2014. To learn more about the Award and see the application, visit [http://oatag.org/Resources/Documents/Youths/OATAG\\_Young\\_Scholars\\_Award.pdf](http://oatag.org/Resources/Documents/Youths/OATAG_Young_Scholars_Award.pdf)



Presented annually, the Young Scholars Award represents OATAG's dedication to supporting *Continued on page 10*

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# CONFERENCE REVIEW

The 2013 OATAG conference was held October 11-12 at Woodburn High School. Keynote speaker **Dr. Jaime Castellano** provided remarks about bi-lingual and dual language education. Oregon Assistant Superintendent of Education Equity, **David Bautista**, was also in attendance and provided additional comments. **Rebecca Blocher**, ODE TAG specialist, provided an annual report on the state of gifted education in Oregon.

OATAG expresses gratitude to **Woodburn School District** and to **Superintendent Chuck Ransom**, **Director Sonia Kool** and **Director Laurie Cooper**, who provided substantial support in bringing the conference to Woodburn. We also thank **Lourdes Villeda de Toralba**, for her superior work in providing excellent food and coffee service at the conference. Furthermore, OATAG thanks the administrative, custodial and instructional staff at Woodburn High School for their flexibility and assistance in bringing this conference to fruition.

Thanks also to **Karen Armstrong** and the Woodburn 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant Program for their support with childcare at the conference. Special thanks also to our Woodburn High School student volunteers, including **Joselyn Serrano Jimenez** our two technology support students, **Gavril and Daniel Maksimov**. Also thanks to **Denise Jenova** for her help at the registrar's table.

This two day conference became a reality as a result OATAG's partnership with the Woodburn School District and the **Oregon Department of Education's** financial support of the costs associated with the keynote speaker. OATAG would like to thank the ODE and especially Rebecca Blocher who was instrumental in coordinating this effort.

Finally, thank you to all the volunteers, board members, spouses, and others who helped at the conference. We couldn't have done it without you! ☀



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**A Different Drummer**

Stephan Price, Editor

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**The Oregon Association for Talented & Gifted**

P O Box 1703  
Beaverton, OR 97075  
www.OATAG.org  
206-309-7265

*“OATAG advocates for the needs of talented and gifted children; serves as a resource for families, educators, and communities; and provides direction for excellence in education.”*

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# We Don't Want To Know You

by Will Fitzhugh

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The Concord Review*



Three times a year, *The Boston Globe* (in the Athens of America) has a 14-16-page Special Supplement celebrating local "scholar-athletes" with pictures and brief write-ups. These are high school students who have taken part in soccer, tennis, golf, football, swimming, baseball, basketball, softball, wrestling, and what-have-you, and done well by various measures. Their coaches, too, get their pictures in the paper and sometimes a paragraph of praise. In addition to these supplements, hardly a day goes by during the school year when some high school athlete, team, coach or event doesn't get "covered" by *The Boston Globe*. A local philanthropic group has recently raised several million dollars to promote sports in our public high schools.

As we all know, sports involve students, parents, boosters and the like, and they build teamwork, discipline, character, equality (of a sort), ambition, competition, and attendance. Parents do not need to be dragged to games the way they do to school meetings or Parents' Night to talk to teachers. In many cases, they pay fees to allow their youngsters to participate in sports, and some even raise money as boosters for trips to games, tournaments, etc. Community involvement is fairly easy to get in sports, and there are very few edupundits who find work advising schools and communities on how to get parents and other community members involved when it comes to school sports. I know of no new initiatives or workshops to teach parents how to get involved in their children's sports programs. Athletes also enjoy rallies, cheerleaders, and coverage in their high school newspaper as well.

Recently a young student basketball player in Massachusetts, 6'10" and very good at his sport, "reclassified" himself (changed from a Junior to a Senior?), so that he could choose among the many colleges whose coaches want him to come play at their institutions. His picture not only appeared several times in his local school newspaper, but also showed up several times with stories in *The Boston Globe* (the Sports Section is one of only four main sections in the paper each day). Apparently we want to know who our good high school athletes are, and what they are achieving, and what they look like, etc.

There is another group in our high schools, which might be called not "scholar-athletes," but perhaps "scholar-scholars," as their achievements are in the academic work for which, some believe, we build our schools with our taxes in the first place. But we tell those "scholar scholars" that we really don't want to know them. Their work does not appear in *The Boston Globe*. Their pictures and stories do not appear in the three-a-year Special Supplements or in the daily paper (there is no "academics" section in the paper of course), or even in their local high school newspaper.

Whenever the subject of students who do exemplary academic work in our schools comes up, our cliché

response tends to be that "they can take care of themselves." But if we don't seem to feel that good high school athletes should have to get along in anonymity, why do we think that anonymity for our best high school students will serve them (and us) well enough, in our education system, and in the country, which is in a serious fight to stay up with other countries who take their best students and their academic achievement very seriously indeed.

Sometimes when I mention that it might serve us well if we gave some recognition to our best high school "scholar scholars" people say that I must be "against sports." I am not. I am just critical of the huge imbalance between our attention to athletes and what we give to scholars at the high school level. 100 to zero doesn't make the best balance we can achieve in recognizing them, in my view.

Of course, I am biased, because for 25 years I have been publishing exemplary history research papers by high school students (so far 1,022 papers from 46 states and 38 other countries) in a unique quarterly journal, and none of them ever gets mentioned for their history scholarship in *The Boston Globe*. Folks tell me this practice is not limited to the Athens of America, of course.

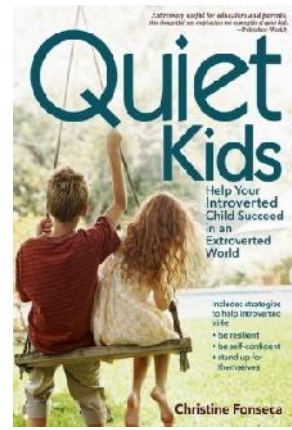
If we are worried about the performance of our student athletes, then the relentless coverage of their efforts might seem justified. I know we are worried about the academic achievements of our public high schools, yet when scholar scholars in the high schools get published in *The Concord Review* (and then go on to Stanford, Yale, Harvard, and Princeton (as about 30% of our authors do), or get to be Rhodes Scholars (as several have), they don't get mentioned in *The Boston Globe*. Actually one author, Jessica Leight, from Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, did get her picture in the paper when she got her Rhodes Scholarship, after being named Junior Eight Phi Beta Kappa and graduating summa cum laude at Yale, but no mention was made of her Emerson Prize-winning paper on Anne Hutchinson, which was published in that unique international journal when she was still in a local public high school.

So let's do continue to praise our local high school athletes and their coaches. But isn't it time at long last now to think about the message such publicity sends to our diligent and successful scholar scholars and their coaches (I mean their teachers—who are also ignored) about what we value as a society? Why has it been so important all these years to send them, when they are doing not only what we ask them to do in school, but well above and beyond what we have expected, the message that, sorry, but "We Don't Want to Know About You"? ☀

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Book Review: by Ann Matschiner  
OATAG Board Member

# Got a "Quiet Kid?" Help them Succeed!



*Quiet Kids: Help Your Introverted Child Succeed in an Extroverted World*, by Christine Fonseca, is an outstanding new resource for parents and gifted children. In an extroverted and noisy world it is very challenging to thrive as an introverted gifted child. Linda Silverman (2009) from the Gifted Development Center in Denver studied over 600 gifted children and noted several insights. Sixty percent of gifted children are introverted, while only 30% of the general population is introverted. Approximately 75% of highly gifted children are introverted. Introversion correlates with introspection, reflection, the ability to inhibit aggression, deep sensitivity, moral development, high academic achievement, scholarly contributions, leadership in academic and aesthetic fields in adult life, and smoother passage through midlife. However, introversion is very likely to be misunderstood and "corrected" in children by well-meaning adults. With introversion prevalent among gifted students, *Quiet Kids* is an important new addition to the gifted field.

Fonseca offers very specific information to help parents understand introversion, as well as tips to help students experience a new world that oftentimes views them as shy, aloof, conceited, apathetic or uninterested. *Quiet Kids* addresses introverted children at home, school and play with over 28 proven tip sheets. Topics include nurturing resiliency, soaring with strengths, the science of temperament, how introverts learn, coping with failure, surviving the social scene and creativity. The user-friendly format, specific tips, and questionnaires and worksheets for parents and children provide a quick and easy read. The useful and proven strategies help introverted children develop resilience, self-confidence, overcome social anxiety and stand up for themselves. The information Fonseca provides is concise, specific and may be put into action immediately. In addition, each chapter includes a question and answer section with common questions, as well as In Their Own Words essays, with real-world examples from kids and compilations of kid's experiences with powerful messages for anyone desiring to understand and support introverts in healthy and productive ways.

*Quiet Kids* is the book Fonseca wishes she had as a resource when she was a child. If you have an introverted gifted child in your life, this book is the place to start. ☀

## References

Silverman, L. K. (2009). *What We Have Learned About Gifted Children*. Denver: Gifted Development Center. [http://www.gifteddevelopment.com/What is Gifted/learned.htm](http://www.gifteddevelopment.com/What%20is%20Gifted/learned.htm)

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## OATAG PILOTS NEW INVOLVEMENT MODEL TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATION IN GIFTED EDUCATION IN OREGON.

The Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted is piloting a new model of member involvement. Previously, getting involved meant joining the board, a rather large commitment of time. In these era of busy schedules, this may not be the most realistic expectation for many people.

In our new involvement model, board meetings are held quarterly as usual. New, however, are committees that are formed *ad hoc* at meetings specifically scheduled for different topics or events. For example, the Conference committee is composed of whoever shows up to the conference committee meetings. Under this new model of involvement, you do not need to commit a huge amount of time to OATAG to get involved. All you need to do is show up!

To find out when OATAG is meeting and about what, visit our online calendar at <http://www.oatag.org/Calendar> and you can see a listing of all meetings and events scheduled for OATAG. Also, our Twitter/Facebook feed usually carries information about these opportunities.

There are two caveats to this policy: only board members may vote on expenditures or policy changes, and non-board members may not be privy to all communications about all events. Even with these two exceptions, however, we believe that this opens up whole new areas of involvement in OATAG!

Please consider getting involved this year in OATAG. We need passionate people to help drive our cause!



by Celia Baculi  
OATAG Board Member

# How to Prepare for the SAT

# Cómo prepararse para los exámenes pre-universitarios.

## Is it possible to study for the SAT?

Absolutely!

## How will studying help my student score better?

- At the very least, they will know what to expect.
- In addition, it can help their vocabulary.
- Also, they will gain experience solving these types of problems, which may be different from the type of homework they had in high school.
- It is very helpful to review the mathematics that will appear on the test.

## When is the best time to begin to study for the SAT?

- It is best to start preparing to take the test in middle school.
- However, any practice can help your child.

## How can I study for the SAT?

1. Read
2. Study vocabulary
3. Write
4. Look for online study guides or a study book to help get ready.
5. Study different strategies for taking the test.
6. Try out some practice problems.
7. Take the PSAT.

## Es posible estudiar para el SAT?

¡Absolutamente!

## ¿Cómo es que estudios extras van a aumentar la calificación de mi niño?

- Por lo menos, saber que le va a tocar.
- Además, en aumentar su vocabulario
- También, ganar experiencia resolviendo estos problemas, que muchas veces son distintos a las tareas de la prepa.
- Finalmente, es sumamente útil repasar todas las matemáticas que van a aparecer en el examen.

## ¿Cuándo es el mejor tiempo para empezar a estudiar para el SAT?

- Lo mejor del mejor es empezar a pensar en estos exámenes durante la secundaria. (!!)
- Pero, cualesquiera estudios y prácticas extras que hace su niño le va a ayudar.

## ¿Cómo se estudia para el SAT?

1. Leer
2. Estudiar vocabulario
3. Escribir
4. Buscar recursos en línea y un buen libro de preparación
5. Estudiar las estrategias que se puede usar en el examen
6. Practicar problemas
7. Tomar el PSAT

Finish reading this article online at [OATAG.org](http://OATAG.org)

Puede leer la conclusion de este artículo en [OATAG.org](http://OATAG.org)



by Judy Smith

OATAG Board Member,

OATAG Parent Meet-up Coordinator

# What do I do with a child in Middle School?

**Q: I was very involved with my child's elementary school, but now that she is in middle school I am not sure how to keep track of her progress. The teachers don't seem to want parent volunteers, and my daughter acts like I'm an embarrassment if I even mention talking with the teacher.**

A: Middle school is a touchy transition for many children and parents. Add in the typical intensity, sensitivity and asynchrony of a gifted child and it can make the situation even more confusing.

Maintaining a good relationship with the school and teachers is always desirable. Many schools provide ways for parents to communicate electronically and view progress reports, homework assignments, and email the teacher. This can be one way to keep track and stay in touch without being intrusive.

There may be ways other than volunteering in the classroom to support the teachers or the school. The library, media center, or music program may need help with support tasks that would give you an opportunity to observe typical students. This could provide a better sense of what school is like for your child. Volunteering with the PTA or on a school committee can also be an effective way to get to know staff and better understand the school climate.

Middle school is a time when students need to take on more responsibility for their own learning and self-advocate if they haven't already learned to do this. The NAGC has an article for parents on how to help develop the ability to self-advocate: <http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=381>. This article includes "Ten Tips for Talking to Teachers" from *The Gifted Kids Survival Guide*, by Judy Galbraith, M.A. and Jim Delisle, Ph.D. The recently updated 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the book has been retitled as *The Gifted Teen Survival Guide: Smart, Sharp, and Ready for (Almost) Anything*. Reading *The Survival Guide* with your child—or even just leaving it where they can find it on their own—may be a way to start a

conversation about how they can more effectively participate in their education.

The opinions of peers often become much more important during the middle school years. In some cases, gifted children hide their abilities in order to fit-in with peers, which can lead to underachievement. On the other hand, the lack of intellectual peers who share their interests can lead to social isolation and unhappiness. Social relationships can be more complicated when asynchronous development makes gifted kids seem more mature than their actual level of emotional development. Maintaining communication with your child remains fundamental in getting through what can be a difficult transition. An article from SENG has some insight into what your child might want you to know about and talk about with them: <http://www.sengifted.org/archives/articles/what-your-kids-want-you-to-know>.

The world has changed in dramatic ways, not just since parents were in school, but since your child was born. Dr. Sylvia Rimm has written about some of the challenges families face during the middle and high school years. One of the articles from her website is on growing up too fast in middle school is located here: [http://www.sylviarimm.com/article\\_gutf.html](http://www.sylviarimm.com/article_gutf.html).

Rimm also has an article with tips for parents of tweens on how to maintain strong family ties during these crucial years: [http://www.sylviarimm.com/article\\_tweens.html](http://www.sylviarimm.com/article_tweens.html). Strong family relationships can help tweens and teens avoid some of the risks that are common in today's world. Parents are often reassured by finding support from other parents. *A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children* by Webb, Gore, Amend, & DeVries is one source of support, as are local TAG parent groups or online discussion forums, such as the OATAG listserv. Instructions for joining the OATAG Yahoo Listserv are on the OATAG home webpage in the bottom right hand corner. ☀



This has been a quiet season in the Oregon Legislature, but there's plenty of activity elsewhere of interest to the TAG community.

On a national level, the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has released its biennial report on the condition of gifted education in the U.S. According to the "State of the Nation" summary that accompanies the data, gifted education is in poor shape. Only four US states are fully funding their talented and gifted programs. As the NAGC commented, the data show that the U.S. lacks a coherent strategy for serving gifted students. You can find the summary report at the following website:

[http://www.nagc.org/uploadedFiles/Gifted\\_by\\_State/state\\_of\\_states\\_2012-13/4082%20NAGC%20State%20of%20the%20Nation%202013-5.pdf](http://www.nagc.org/uploadedFiles/Gifted_by_State/state_of_states_2012-13/4082%20NAGC%20State%20of%20the%20Nation%202013-5.pdf)

The press and national foundations have begun to notice the problem and there has been a flurry of comments recently. Some of them have been tied to the poor showing of American students on the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests which are administered every three years by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The latest data were released in early December. The mediocre performance of American students on the assessment—especially in the area of advanced math—provoked many comments in the news media, though few articles noted the lack of appropriate instruction for gifted American students. A typical article can be found in on *The Atlantic Magazine* website, dated December 3 at

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/12/american-schools-vs-the-world-expensive-unequal-bad-at-math/281983/>.

The *New York Times* published an editorial on December 14<sup>th</sup> entitled "Even Gifted Students Can't Keep Up: In Math and Science, the Best Fend for Themselves" which also referred to the PISA results and generated a huge volume of comments. These provoked a follow-up article in the "Taking Note" section on the *Times* blog.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/15/opinion/sunday/in-math-and-science-the-best-fend-for-themselves.html?adxnml=1&adxnmlx=1387587916-3xk25h/bSOcYqK+l/uKNLA>

and  
<http://takingnote.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/12/16/should-gifted-students-get-more-resources/?src=recg>

The Philanthropy Roundtable has published a more detailed discussion of the inadequacies of gifted education in the form of a book by Andy Smarick entitled *Closing America's High-achievement Gap: A Wise Giver's Guide to Helping Our Most Talented Students Reach Their Full*

*Potential*. A shorter version of this book appeared as an article in the fall, 2013 issue of *Philanthropy Magazine*. It was entitled: "Closing America's Other Achievement Gap: Why donors should help our most talented students reach their full potential."

[http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/topic/excellence\\_in\\_philanthropy/closing\\_americas\\_other\\_achievement\\_gap](http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/topic/excellence_in_philanthropy/closing_americas_other_achievement_gap)

The Fordham Institute has taken a special interest in gifted education and has been publishing a regular stream of articles and books on the topic. You can find an archive in the "Talented Tenth" section of the EdExcellence website at

<http://www.edexcellence.net/search/talented%20tenth>

None of these well-intentioned articles seems to have generated much interest among members of the Obama Administration or in Congress in passing the TALENT ACT, nor has the government taken any other steps to provide concrete and realistic support for gifted and high-achieving children in the U.S.

Here in Oregon many legislators and policy makers are also wringing their hands about the mediocre (at best) performance of our students, but they still have not made the connection between low student performance and inadequate or non-existent programs and services for highly capable students. OATAG is concerned that the current student learning targets, which are being used by the state to determine whether schools are performing at a satisfactory level, are at present so low that they discourage schools from ensuring that high achieving students continue to learn. We will continue to monitor the situation as it evolves with the introduction of the Common Core State Standards and the implementation of new Smarter Balanced Assessments.

The business community has expressed concern about the dramatic erosion of middle-class wages and the middle class in general in Oregon, but as yet no policy maker has pointed out that many jobs paying good middle class wages require a level of educational attainment that is not supported by many of our schools. The myth that gifted students will succeed on their own still prevails. The more pressure the political establishment puts on schools to support minimal levels of achievement, the faster these schools divert resources from older students to younger ones and from students who have already met very low standards to students who are still struggling to meet them. Moreover, many of our policy makers are unaware of the distinction between Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education for students at all ability



levels and targeted education for gifted and high-potential students in all subject areas. In other words, Oregon is investing in STEM education while neglecting gifted education. We need to improve both. Focusing on either one to the exclusion of the other is a losing strategy.

You can find the Oregon Business Plan for 2014 at <http://www.oregonbusinessplan.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=cV2POCYGsMw%3D&tabid=39>

The Oregon Education Investment Board has created a bewildering array of committees, subcommittees, and councils, several of which have been meeting regularly.

You can find the subcommittee pages on the OEIB page at:

[http://www.oregon.gov/Gov/Pages/oeib/OregonEducationInvestmentBoard.aspx#Oregon\\_Education\\_Investment\\_Board\\_Subcommittees](http://www.oregon.gov/Gov/Pages/oeib/OregonEducationInvestmentBoard.aspx#Oregon_Education_Investment_Board_Subcommittees)

Of special interest to OATAG have been the Accelerated Learning Subcommittee and the Outcomes and Investments Committee.

The Accelerated Learning Committee, chaired by Dr. Nancy Golden, Oregon's Chief Education Officer, has been considering ways to remove barriers to smooth transitions from high school to post-secondary institutions. For example, the committee has reviewed procedures for enabling high school teachers to be qualified and approved to teach college-level dual-credit classes so their high school students can receive college credit for taking them..

The Outcomes and Investments Committee, chaired by Mr. Dick Withnell, a Salem businessman, has been discussing the development of a unified state student database that will be able to follow individual students as they move from one public education institution to another, for example, from pre-k to kindergarten and from high schools to community colleges. This will enable policy makers to track the effectiveness of various intervention strategies over longer periods of time.

The Oregon State Legislature will convene for a short session from February 3 to March 9, 2014. OATAG will not be sponsoring any bills in this session, but we will be following activities in Salem. There is a new Legislative website that you can use to locate your own legislators and follow bills as they progress through the Statehouse. You will find it at

<http://www.oregonlegislature.gov/>

There is really only one factor that determines whether or not better services will be provided to gifted children in Oregon. That factor is you. Education is a political issue and education decisions are made in response to political activism. Our legislators and policy makers do respond to public participation. Please resolve to become more active this year. Encourage a friend to join OATAG. Create a TAG parent group or attend a parent meeting. Send an e-mail to your legislators and ask for their help. Attend a town hall in your community and bring the subject up. Even small actions do ripple out. Many legislators do want to help, but they won't do so without your support and encouragement. They need to hear from you so that they know that action is necessary for this population of Oregon.

Oregon may fly with her own wings, as the state motto claims, but if you want to see gifted children soar, it is up to you to make it happen. ☀

## References

NAGC State of the Nation:

[http://www.nagc.org/uploadedFiles/Gifted\\_by\\_State/state\\_of\\_states\\_2012-13/4082%20NAGC%20State%20of%20the%20Nation%202013-5.pdf](http://www.nagc.org/uploadedFiles/Gifted_by_State/state_of_states_2012-13/4082%20NAGC%20State%20of%20the%20Nation%202013-5.pdf)

Atlantic Magazine article on PISA results:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/12/american-schools-vs-the-world-expensive-unequal-bad-at-math/281983/>.

New York Times editorial "Even Gifted Students Can't Keep Up: In Math and Science

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/15/opinion/sunday/in-math-and-science-the-best-fend-for-themselves.html?adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1387587916-3xk25h/bSOcYqK+I/uKNLA>

New York Times "Taking Note" summary of the replies:

<http://takingnote.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/12/16/should-gifted-students-get-more-resources/?src=recg>

Andy Smarick: Closing America's High-achievement Gap: A Wise Giver's Guide to Helping Our Most Talented Students Reach Their Full Potential.

[http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/topic/excellence\\_in\\_philanthropy/closing\\_americas\\_other\\_achievement\\_gap](http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/topic/excellence_in_philanthropy/closing_americas_other_achievement_gap)

"Talented Tenth" section of the EdExcellence:

<http://www.edexcellence.net/search/talented%20tenth>

The Oregon Business Plan for 2014:

<http://www.oregonbusinessplan.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=cV2POCYGsMw%3D&tabid=39>

The Oregon Education Investment Board, subcommittee links:

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# Career Choices with Talented, Gifted and Bright Students



by David Lemire, Ph.D.  
OATAG Board Member

Selecting jobs, occupations and careers can be a challenge for young people. For bright, talented and gifted students there can be even more of a challenge. Bright young people are often interested in many things, have high abilities and skills in several areas.

Career decision-making, which may be difficult for many young people, can be even more challenging for bright students. The purpose of this article is to describe the career decision making process. High schools and colleges often have well-supported career centers that are tied into state or national data bases on occupations. One of the best sources of general information on careers is the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>) through which students can find out about the most current information on specific careers. There is quite a bit of information available now on career decision making. This article will summarize the career decision making process in simple terms and give students the names of resources that can be easily accessed.

In a resource called *The Student's Career Choice Handbook* (Lemire, 1998) this author describes several elements of career choice. Briefly, there are three basic steps to career choice: awareness, exploration and articulation. In the **awareness** phase students learn general information about jobs, occupations and careers. The awareness phase should begin in elementary school, but usually does not. The **exploration** phase is when students reality test their career interests and find out what type of work jobs really involve. Do the students understand what it really means to be a doctor, lawyer or business person? The exploration phase should take place in middle and high school, but is usually postponed until college and is limited to college-bound students. Other students just have to get by on their own. The **articulation** phase of career decision making usually happens after high school, in college or at the graduate level. In the articulation phase students actually make career or life decisions that may lead to a career, such as medicine, law, education, auto technology or building trades, for example.

## Understanding Work Values.

There appear to be nine work values which have been identified in the literature (Krumboltz, Sherba, Hamel, 1977): . These are:

- helping others
- income

- independence
- leadership
- leisure
- prestige
- security
- training time
- variety

Which jobs and occupations we select will depend greatly on the work values the individual student holds. For example, training time: going into medicine may take ten years; finishing a culinary program takes a year.

## Understanding Life Values.

There are a number of important factors which shape career interests. These include: family values, family atmosphere, family constellation, biological factors, private logic and compensation factors. Family values are the values that both parents hold, for example ambition or success in a legal or medical field. Family atmosphere is the emotional climate in the family. Two typical examples are a competitive family or a cooperative, loving family. Family constellation refers to the birth order of the children. For example, firstborn children tend to be more achieving and responsible, while youngest or only children more socially oriented, and the middle children take what ever values are left. Biological factors are things like innate intelligence, skin color, body type, height and weight. Private logic is the sense the individual makes of all these other factors. Compensation factors include efforts to overcome perceived weaknesses (even if those things are not actually weaknesses), such as a man who feels too short, a woman with "inappropriate" levels of ambition, or even physical disabilities or learning disorders, which may drive the person to over achieve, as with President Teddy Roosevelt and General George Patton.

## The Self Directed Search.

The Self Directed Search was developed by John Holland and identifies six areas of career interest. These include:

- realistic occupational style (hands on)
- investigative occupational styles (like a scientist)
- artistic styles (creative)
- social style (needs people)

- enterprising style (business)
- conventional (secretarial and managing).

Parents and teachers working with gifted students who are exploring their career options should start with the instrument itself, then get six scores, then go to the Occupations Finder at (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/occupation-finder.htm>) for more information. Once this process is finished the student has specific occupations identified. Then go to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>) and look up the occupations by name and find out basic information like length of training time, potential salary, number of vacancies anticipated.

### Three Tools

Students should also consider other important variables as they consider future career options. There are three tools, created by myself, which can assist in this. Individuals interested in receiving copies of these tools should contact me at [dlemire@oatag.org](mailto:dlemire@oatag.org) or visit the [oatag.org](http://oatag.org) website.

The **Creative SELF** is an approach to personality that identifies four basic orientations, which might be beneficial when considering future career choices: the **Self-sufficient**, the **Enthusiastic**, the **Loyal** and the **Factual**. The types of occupations which may appeal to the self-sufficient are school principal, director of services, business executive or program manager. The enthusiastic might be drawn to a job as a sales person, speech or drama teacher, radio or TV talk show host, entertainer or artist. The loyal might seek successful employment as a counselor, psychologists or school teacher. The factual might look for a job as a math teacher, accountant, attorney or secretary.

Another is the **Judgmental Ability Narrative (JAN)**. The JAN is an instrument that identifies five decision making styles. The five styles are dependent (pays too much attention to what others think), rational (analytical and thoughtful), impulsive (acts before thinking things out), intuitive (uses creative processes to make decisions) and fatalistic (believes things are beyond control and management).

Yet another tool, the **Ego Inventory**, is an instrument that identifies four personal styles that may impact career choice. The Ego Inventory is based on the thinking of Carl Jung in the early 20th century. The four factors are sensors (hands on and activity based), intuitors (creative and spontaneous), thinkers (analytical and cognitive) and Feelers (strong emotions, directed much by feelings).

### Outlook and Future Considerations

Students in their teen years in America generally start making career decisions in late high school or even after high school graduation. Students may gain work experience during high school, but these are usually jobs, not careers. At about the age of eighteen or so, American students will graduate from high school (about 50 to 70%) then go to work or go in to a college-level training program. While some jobs that you can begin right out of high school may allow for growth and advancement, this is becoming the exception to the rule. Some advanced studies are critical. At the college level, a student can choose an academic major or a technical or career major (auto technology, diesel technology, building trades, cosmetology,

etc). Technical training can often be found outside of traditional community colleges and schools, and often pay very well, such as HVAC repair, plumbing, and electrical work. Students who do not finish high school have additional, but not insurmountable, obstacles to careers and occupations.

I have had students in college classes who told me they dropped out of high school because it was “boring”. However, after working in entry-level jobs for a decade they decided to go back and get college-level training because their attitude had changed and they were ready for something new. The key is that it is never too late to get more education.

For adults or students interested in learning more about these career factors almost all of this information is available online. Career exploration is now in much better shape than it used to be. Most colleges and even some high schools have career centers which are usually well-organized and connected to internet resources. For example, the Oregon Technical Institute, a smaller college located in Klamath Falls, has a career exploration program which students can get college credit for completing. Early career experiences deal with job awareness and exploration, and later decisions deal with reality-testing and occupational selection through experiences like job shadowing. An example is a senior student at OIT who spent a term talking to staff and shadowing them around our school district as she looked into what it takes to be a school psychologist.

The career advice I give students is relatively simple: find an area you enjoy and get some training and experience in that area. If you find it is a match, continue with whatever training you need and move forward, and someone will pay you money to do something you might do anyway just because you like it.

Career choice is the result of a combination of factors which have been described in this article. Parents and teachers can do good things for bright, gifted or talented students by helping them identify possible career choices, reality-test those choices, find the steps to accomplishment of those choices and help them find ways to pay for their training and/or experience, as needed.

So what is a “good” career for a young person? What a good career is depends on the work and life values of the student. The “good old days” of working at one job for a life time appear to be gone forever. Most people will change careers several times over their life time, and this change is normal and to be expected. It is possible for parents and educators to assist students with preparation for work in the 21st century. Bright, gifted and talented students often have many possible work choices that are realistic to pick from, so let us help them make the choices that will be best for them over a lifetime. ☀

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# Join OATAG

**What is OATAG?** OATAG is the Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted, a non-profit, non-discriminatory, state-wide **education and advocacy** organization, promoting opportunities for talented and gifted children throughout Oregon. OATAG is the state affiliate of the **National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)**. OATAG membership is open to anyone with an interest in promoting opportunities for talented and gifted children. **OATAG seeks your support** as we work to create new opportunities and improve education for all TAG and high-potential students in Oregon. We need you to **join us and become involved** as we work to advance education in Oregon.

**JOIN TODAY!**

## Why Join OATAG?

### Education

OATAG sponsors events, training sessions, and meetings each year for parents and educators. OATAG publishes a newsletter and website with helpful information about gifted education. Your membership allows us to continue and expand these efforts.

### Advocacy

OATAG advocates for services for all of Oregon's academically talented and/or intellectually gifted students. OATAG builds bridges between educators, parents, policymakers and students. Your support helps ensure TAG education in Oregon continues to move forward, which is critical when speaking with policymakers as we advocate for TAG students and advanced education in Oregon.

### Opportunities

OATAG provides networking opportunities within the gifted community. OATAG sponsors various opportunities for talented and gifted youth. We cannot continue to provide these services without your tax-deductible membership contribution.

Free and paid memberships are available. Paid memberships start at just **\$19.99** per year for adults. Parents may also join NAGC for a reduced rate (as parent associate members for one year) when they pay for an OATAG parent membership.

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Visit [OATAG.org](http://OATAG.org) to sign-up online or download an application. Or, you may call us for an application at 206-309-7265 or write to us at P. O. Box 1703, Beaverton, OR 97075.

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### **Award, Continued from page 1**

talented and gifted students and their families. Parameters about who may apply and how the award will be awarded are as follows:

- Only one Young Scholar Award will be awarded.
- Applicants must be enrolled in either grades 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 during the 2013-2014 school year.
- Applicants may demonstrate excellence in one or more of the following areas: visual or performing arts, academic achievement, or leadership.

OATAG will accept self-nominations and nominations from parents, teachers, students, and community and civic groups. The following procedure is to be followed in nominating students for the award. All nomination packets must include the following components to be complete:

- A composition written by the student nominee, preferably typed, not to exceed 750 words. Compositions should describe:
  - the activity or interest area for which the student is being nominated;
  - how the student became interested/involved in the activity;
  - what impact the activity has had on the student and on others; and
  - how the student's future plans and goals have been affected by this activity or interest area.
- A completed application form
- A letter of recommendation, from someone other than a nominee's family member, explaining why the student nominee is deserving of the award, what sets him or her apart from other students, and how the nominee is impacting others.
- A signed release form completed by a parent or guardian.
- Current photo of the student (no photocopies – school photo preferred).

OATAG suggests you keep a copy of the submitted paperwork for proof of submission. OATAG cannot be responsible for mail that fails to reach our reviewer. Materials submitted in the nomination packet cannot be returned.

Nomination must be postmarked before January 31, 2014 and should be sent to:

OATAG Young Scholars Award

P. O. Box 1703  
Beaverton, OR 97075

Or email the entire packet before January 31, 2014 to [president@oatag.org](mailto:president@oatag.org)

Please note that incomplete nomination packets, or those postmarked after January 31, 2014, will not be considered.

OATAG will adhere to the following procedure in processing, vetting nominations, and selecting a Young Scholar:

1. Upon receipt of nomination packet, OATAG will provide e-mail confirmation to the adult contact indicated on the application form.
2. OATAG reserves the right to not make an award.
3. Selection of award winners will be completed by February 28, 2014.
4. OATAG will send a letter by March 10, 2014 to the award recipient announcing their selection as an OATAG Young Scholar.
5. Upon selecting an award recipient, OATAG will provide a voucher which must be returned with information on the organization to which payment should be sent.
6. OATAG will send a letter by March 10, 2014 to all applicants who were not selected as an OATAG Young Scholar.

The Young Scholar Award winner will be recognized in the following ways:

The award winner will receive a \$500 scholarship to a summer program. OATAG will provide payment directly to that program once the student has returned a voucher along with a registration form.

OATAG asks that the Young Scholar provide evidence of successful completion and a 500 word essay describing the lessons and benefits of the program experience for the scholarship winner.

Failure to complete the program for reasons other than death or serious illness/injury will result in award revocation, in which case the Young Scholar and his/her parent/guardian will be required to return the award in part or in full, according to the determination by OATAG.

In addition, OATAG will provide to the awardee complimentary admission to the OATAG 2014 Annual Conference, and a one-year Gold OATAG membership, which includes a one-year subscription to *A Different Drummer*. ☀

# Mark your Calendar Today!



The 2014 annual conference of the Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted will be held on **October 18** at **Pacific University** in Forest Grove. Mark your calendar today and plan to attend this exciting event!

## ***IQ: Continued from page 1***

Gardner (1983, 1997), a man famous for what are called “multiple intelligences” defined IQ as, “the human ability to solve problems or to make something values in one or more cultures. As long as we can find a culture that values an ability to solve a problem or create a product in a particular way, then I would strongly consider whether that ability should be considered intelligence,” (p. 8).

Upon reflection, it seems that intelligence has both learned and genetic components, and that heredity is influenced by culture. To consider intelligence only as “problem solving” is too narrow a focus. We can all think of individuals who are intelligent and who possess much knowledge. But knowledge is not intelligence, and many of these kinds of individuals cannot solve real problems or lack the kind of common sense needed to do well in day-to-day living. So what is IQ? and how does intelligence impact bright, talented and gifted students?

Sternberg, et.al. (1985, 1988) suggests various components of IQ. However the three components I suggest we consider are (1) the ability to remember things, (2) the ability to see relationships and (3) the rate at which we learn. I think intelligence is the average of these three elements, and not any of the elements by themselves. Any accurate test of IQ needs to measure general and specific abilities in these three areas. High IQ, for example, is the strong ability to remember things, to see relationships and to learn things rapidly. If you learn quickly, but you don't learn a lot, you may be a little intelligent but not highly intelligent. Bright, talented and gifted students are usually thought of as having high ability in all three areas.

So the triarchic principle of intelligence suggested here includes three elements: remembering things, seeing relationships and doing so quickly. It may help to think of the first component as “crystallized” intelligence, (Cattell in Johansson and Grabowski. 1993), the second component as fluid intelligence and the third component as the rate of learning. So “intelligence” is the average of the measures of all three of these elements. The higher the average of these three elements the more likely it is that the person has a high IQ, and thus, is considered intelligent.

Other popular ideas about intelligence include Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences,” in which Gardner lists things such as kinesthetic intelligence or musical intelligence. If talent is defined as an unusual ability to do something well, like draw, paint or play sports, these skills do not strike me as intelligence as much as special talents or skills. The whole idea of “talent” is the topic of a different article than this one. For the purposes of discussion here, there seem to be three groups of “talents,” Alpha, Beta and Theta skills. Talent seems like a specific skill (talent in painting, music or athletics).

At its simplest, IQ is the natural ability to understand the world, an understanding that is somewhat influenced by learning and culture. That being said, there is much variability in the individual human ability to understand the world. I see IQ as a much more global concept, highly influenced by genetics and encompassing both general and specific abilities.

If we accept as fact that bright, gifted and talented students are people of higher ability with possibly magnified special interests these students are going to take more effort to tap into their natural potential. Just talk to the parents and teachers of really bright students and ask them how much work it takes just to keep up with these students. Highly intelligent

gifted and talented students are like dry sponges. These students are constantly soaking up all kinds of fluids in all colors and kinds. Think of intelligence in two forms: academic intelligence (the ability to do well in schooling situations) and practical intelligence or common sense (the ability to read people and social situations, to adjust to real challenges, to develop new solutions to real problems).

Academic intelligence seems to be more of a base line out of which practical intelligence can be developed. The challenge for parents and teachers of bright students is to have the energy to keep up with them, to provide the varied learning experiences that help students achieve high goals and personal satisfaction and to contribute meaningfully to society. Think of the influence of Steve Jobs and Bill Gates on the world and the impact yet to be determined. Think of the impact of Thomas Edison or Nikola Tesla on the 20th century. Addressing the learning needs and preferences of highly-able students may be a lot of work but the future rests upon our efforts.

***The Lava Lamp vs Computer Analogy.*** Lava lamps came into popularity in the sixties, and remain a fun type of light. A Lava Lamp has wax in it that when the light turned on would heat up and then clump up and interact (float around). In my opinion, IQ is less like a computer (a popular analogy now) and more like a Lava Lamp. The main problem with the computer analogy is that this model of IQ is a linear model and most people are not linear in their brain functioning. Other factors that influence our functioning are emotions, intuition, social factors, personal perception and family issues. If you consider intelligence as a Lava Lamp there will be some parts that are dense and some that are clear, some floating and some that are not moving. The overall interaction of these factors produces intelligence.

So how much of IQ is learned and how much can be attributed to culture? I see biology as the major force impacting intelligence. In my estimation, IQ is about 75% biology and 25% learning and culture. As such, learning and culture are a big chunk, but not as important as biology. If indeed 25% of IQ is learning, this suggests that IQ can be shaped and changed, but probably not as much as people would like to believe.

The idea that races differ in inherited intelligence is quite controversial, as it should be. The most popular proponents of this hypothesis are probably Herrnstein and Murray (1994) in the book, *The Bell Curve*. I am not going to get into possible racial differences in natural ability in this article, but there are many problems with the racial differences hypothesis. For one, the alleged differences in IQ attributed to racial factors can be explained by learning and culture. Nature has given different people different abilities. Bright, gifted and talented students have all kinds of interests and abilities so parents and teachers need to adjust learning experiences to reflect these realities. Culture and learning are the rudder of life, biology is the sail.

Can IQ be modified? If learning and culture are 25% of intelligence, than that can impact IQ to some degree. Bright students can get even brighter and more able. For many bright, gifted and talented students it is not so much how smart they are that is the issue, but what these individuals *do* with their abilities.

So what might high IQ mean for educators and parents? There are many things can be done to support gifted learners:

- provide enrichment to students
- provide more choices in and out of class

- be patient, be encouraging, be flexible
- help students learn to use their IQ in positive ways
- develop executive cognitive functions
- coordinate with school personnel on choices and programming
- support student development of planning and self-regulation abilities
- work on realistic goal setting
- help students understand the difference between assertiveness and aggressiveness
- help students understand basic principles of human behavior
- work with other students to become well-rounded socially.

Responsive, adaptable people who have high IQ and know how to use their brightness are able to become successful people and build a better world, one decision at a time. In contrast, Nikola Tesla was a genius who helped invent the 20th century but he died alone in a small hotel room with a bunch of pigeons (Wikipedia, 2013). That is not the way most of us want to end our lives.

I have prepared some alternative intelligence tests in two volumes of resources (Lemire, 2000 and Lemire, 2002). To receive a single copy of the test to try out contact me via email at [dlemire@oatag.org](mailto:dlemire@oatag.org) or visit the [oatag.org](http://oatag.org) website. I have calculated a mean and standard deviation for this test and, interestingly, with this one-page alternative instrument I get the same statistics as the Wechsler tests, individually administered, standardized tests used all over the world. This test is available for your consideration and use, if you find it of value. ✨

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## Board Bios

# Jodi Dodd



Jodi Dodd is a certified Language Arts teacher and Gifted Specialist. She has taught grades K-12 in Oregon, Kentucky, and the Philippines. In addition, she lectured at Jeju National Teacher's University in South Korea and was a multi-year camp director in Seoul. In Kentucky, she was a coordinator for one of the district's gifted services programs, in which she tested and identified students, mentored teachers, and coordinated a pull-out program for gifted students. Jodi has recently moved from Hong Kong to West Linn, Oregon, where she is completing a doctorate in Educational Leadership at Bethel University. She immensely enjoys camping and biking with her two sons and husband of 17 years. ✨

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