Being Inclusive: Identifying & Retaining Diverse Students in Gifted Programming

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LABEL WHOM?
WHY LABEL?

Frazz by Jef Mallett

QUESTIONS?

IS A BARREL OF MONKEYS ALWAYS FUN?

OR JUST UNTIL YOU GET BIT BY A MONKEY?

PRINCIPAL’S OFFICE?

I HAD FUN FOR A WHILE.

February 25, 2014
## AIG HEADCOUNT

### Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race or Ethnicity</th>
<th>NC Total 2010</th>
<th>NC AIG 2010</th>
<th>Percentage AIG 2010</th>
<th>NC Total 2011</th>
<th>NC AIG 2011</th>
<th>Percentage AIG 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>34,292</td>
<td>7,844</td>
<td>22.87</td>
<td>33,137</td>
<td>7,892</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>373,922</td>
<td>18,412</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>371,020</td>
<td>18,716</td>
<td>5.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>153,695</td>
<td>6,659</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>178,709</td>
<td>9,468</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>20,226</td>
<td>1,362</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>20,674</td>
<td>1,418</td>
<td>6.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>55,401</td>
<td>5,525</td>
<td>9.97</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>752,394</td>
<td>129,285</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>746,373</td>
<td>129,586</td>
<td>17.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,389,930</td>
<td>169,087</td>
<td>12.18</td>
<td>1,349,913</td>
<td>167,080</td>
<td>12.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students: In 2011, there were **172,947** identified AIG students in NC. This comprises **12.35%** of the state’s total student population.
GIFTED REPRESENTATION IN FLORIDA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Percentage of White students district-wide and in Gifted Programs

Percentage of Blacks Districtwide and in GT Programs

Percentage of LEP Students Districtwide and in GT Programs

Percentage of Free/Reduced Lunch Students Districtwide and in GT Programs

Percentage of Hispanics Districtwide and in GT Programs
More data from Florida…

Multiracial Students: Reported Home Language

- Spanish
- English
- Japanese
- Vietnamese
- French
- Portuguese
- Korean
- Catalan
- Malayalam
- Welsh
- Tagalog
ISSUES RELATED TO ID?

1. What are the needs, desires, and challenges facing schools regarding identification and retention of students from traditionally underrepresented populations?

*Jot down your ideas on a post-it.*

2. What current practices inhibit the identification of traditionally underrepresented students?

*On a different color post-it, put down responses.*
So, What’s the Problem?

- What are some challenges (first set of notes)?
- What current practices may be getting in the way?
- What current practices inhibit the identification of traditionally underrepresented students? (second notes)
- What past or current practices interfere with retention of diverse students?
- How should our programming respond, once we have identified a more diverse set of students as gifted?
IDENTIFICATION AND DIVERSITY

- Should students enrolled in gifted programming be representative of the overall student population? Why or why not?
  - Equity
  - Defensibility of program

- What assumptions underlie the goal of equity? Are they warranted?

- Ford: a “reasonable goal” rather than perfect equity?

- The emphasis should be on continuous progress, not on instant achievement of diversity goals
Identification is not, or should not be used . . .

To find only the truly gifted students — whatever that means;
For selection, in the absence of programming;
For gate-keeping purposes alone;
To rank children by their score;
To justify who is in or out
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF GRADES?

- Grades can indicate high achievement when they evaluate a process or product.

- Advantages include:
  - Grades are widely available.
  - They provide a lens into students’ developmental history.
  - Grades allow observation of different kinds of tasks.

- Disadvantages include:
  - Grades may include irrelevant characteristics such as doing extra work, cooperativeness, or behavior.
  - Grading standards vary across teachers.
What do we know about the identification of giftedness?

- It’s far from a perfect process (see McBee, Peters, & Waterman paper in GCQ), but often we treat it as if it were free from errors
- Under- and over-representation persist
- Economic disparities are particularly salient
- Identification should be closely matched with programming, but in practice often is not
- Despite these concerns, research supports both cognitive and affective benefits of homogeneous ability grouping in its many forms, both for high-ability students and for average and below-average learners
NEW DIRECTIONS FOR IDENTIFICATION (Treffinger, 1987)

Identification is . . .

**Diagnostic** – prepares for improved or enhanced instructional planning;

**Inclusive** – seeks to nurture students' best potential;

**Deliberate, positive** – finds strengths;

**Development** or growth oriented
Multiple criteria assessment is currently recommended as best practice for identifying students for gifted education programming.

Decades of theoretical work have argued that giftedness goes beyond high IQ alone (c.f., Renzulli, Sternberg, Gardner, Torrance).

If giftedness is multifaceted, then systems of identification should be multifaceted too.
Today researchers know that... (National Excellence Report - Ross, 1993)

Educators must identify outstanding talent by observing students in settings that enable them to display their abilities, rather than relying solely on test scores.
Intelligence takes many forms and therefore requires that many criteria be used to measure it.
• When considering the needs of gifted children from diverse backgrounds . . .

• Diverse groups = diverse expressions = diverse procedures.

• When considering the needs of gifted children from diverse backgrounds . . .

• They may manifest school related achievement behaviors differently.
When considering the needs of gifted children from diverse backgrounds . . .

“The focus should be on their behaviors.”
There are gifted behaviors and situations in which students need differential treatment due to their advanced abilities, talents, and interests.  

- B. N. Parker, p. 19
WHAT IS THE F-TAP?

• A system developed by Dr. Mary M. Frasier at the University of Georgia, designed to facilitate the collection, display, and interpretation of data from a variety of sources when assessing children’s need for gifted programs services.
WHAT IS THE OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE F-TAP?

To display a sufficient knowledge base – using information collected from multiple sources, including information generated by students – so that appropriate placement and programming decisions can be made.
To help educators avoid relying on a test score [or a single piece of data] as the primary criterion to document a student’s need for gifted program services.
• Trait - A relatively persistent and consistent behavior pattern.

• Aptitude - The capacity to perform in the future or some future ability.

• Behavior - Any response made by an organism
THE TABS: BASIC PRINCIPLES

- Motivation
- Interest
- Communication Skills
- Problem Solving Ability
- Memory
- Inquiry
- Insight
- Reasoning
- Imagination/Creativity
- Humor
### TABS: Frasier's Traits, Attributes and Behaviors

**Guide:** This is a guide for observing students in your classroom. As they show evidence of extraordinary potential, jot down the student's name and brief notes about the incident on the Observation Sheet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERESTS</th>
<th>MOTIVATION</th>
<th>INQUIRY</th>
<th>INSIGHT</th>
<th>HUMOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intense interests (sometimes unusual)</td>
<td>Evidence of desire to learn</td>
<td>Questions, experiments, explores</td>
<td>Quickly grasps new concepts and makes connections; senses deeper meanings</td>
<td>Conveys and picks up on humor well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Activities, avocations, objects, etc., that have special worth or significance and are given special attention</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Forces that initiate, direct and sustain individual or group behavior in order to satisfy a need or attain a goal</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Method of process of seeking knowledge, understanding or information</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Sudden discovery of the correct solution following incorrect attempts based primarily on trial and error</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Ability to synthesize key ideas or problems in complex situations in a humorous way; exceptional sense of timing in words and gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Unusual or advanced interests in a topic or activity; self-starter; pursues an activity unceasingly; beyond the group</td>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Persistent in pursuing/completing self-elected tasks (may be culturally influenced evident in school or non-school activities); enthusiastic learner; has aspirations to be somebody, do something</td>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Asks unusual questions for age; plays around with ideas; extensive exploratory behaviors directed toward eliciting information about materials, devices or situations</td>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Exceptional ability to draw inferences; appears to be a good guesser; is keenly observant; heightened capacity for seeing unusual and diverse relationships, integration of ideas and disciplines</td>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Keen sense of humor that may be gentle or hostile; large accumulation of information about emotions; capacity for seeing unusual relationships; unusual emotional depth; openness to experience; sensory awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION SKILLS</strong> Highly expressive with words, numbers and symbols</td>
<td><strong>MEMORY</strong> Large storehouse of information (on school or non-school topics)</td>
<td><strong>REASONING</strong> Logical approaches to figuring out solutions</td>
<td><strong>PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY</strong> Effective (often inventive) strategies for recognizing and solving problems</td>
<td><strong>IMAGINATIVE CREATIVITY</strong> Produces many ideas; highly original</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Transmission and reception of signals or meanings through a system of symbols, codes, gestures, language and numbers</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Exceptional ability to retain and retrieve information</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Highly conscious, directed, controlled, active, intentional, forward-looking and goal-oriented thought</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Process of determining a correct sequence of alternatives leading to a desired goal or to successful completion or performance of a task</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</strong> Process of forming mental images of objects, qualities. Situations, or relationships which aren't immediately apparent to the sense; problem solving through non-traditional patterns of thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Unusual ability to communicate (verbally, non-verbally, physically, artistically, symbolically); uses particularly apt examples, illustrations or elaborations</td>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Already knows; 1-2 repetitions for mastery; has a wealth of information about school or non-school topics; pays attention to details; manipulates information</td>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Ability to make generalizations and use metaphors and analogies; can think things through in a logical manner; critical thinker; ability to think things through and come up with a plausible answer</td>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Unusual ability to devise or adopt a systematic strategy for solving problems and to change the strategy if it's not working; creates new designs; inventor</td>
<td><strong>HOW IT MAY LOOK</strong> Shows exceptional ingenuity in using everyday materials; is keenly observant; has wild, seemingly silly ideas; fluent and flexible producer of ideas; elaborate; highly curious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multiple criteria have clear intuitive appeal.

Little work has been done to understand the consequences of multiple criteria assessment—what are some potential consequences?
THREE WAYS TO COMBINE SCORES:

1. “And” rule. Students need to have at least two scores above their respective cutoffs to be identified.

2. “Or” rule. Students need to have only one of several scores above a cutoff to be identified.

3. “Mean” rule. An average score across several assessments must be above a cutoff in order for a student to be identified.
Discussion: The “And” Rule

(After McBee, Peters, & Waterman, 2014)

• If the consequences of incorrect identification (i.e., false positives) are severe (e.g., an accelerated program), the “and” rule might be appropriate because there will be fewer identified students who do not really need the provided programming.

• The “and” rule will miss many qualified students, but there will be very few incorrect identifications; nearly all of the identified students will be qualified for the program.

• If the measures to be combined do not have strong correlations, such as creativity and intellectual ability (Kim, 2008), the rule may prove overly restrictive.

• The “and” rule will lead to the highest degree of homogeneity in the ability characteristics of the identified students, which will help facilitate the design of curriculum and programming.

• The “and” rule is the most affected by measurement error.

• Even with high quality assessments, the AND rule will miss many students who should receive services.
Discussion: Using the “Or” Rule

- For programming with little or no consequences of failure due to misidentification (e.g., enrichment programming), the “or” rule may be the best choice.

- The “or” rule “casts a wide net” and identifies students with a wide range of skills and abilities.

- The population of identified students will become large…
  - as the number of assessments increases
  - as the correlation between assessments decreases.

- The identified population will be diverse with respect to the assessed abilities. This may make programming a challenge.

- McBee, Peters, & Waterman (2014) speculate that the “or” rule will result in the identification of the largest number of low-income or minority students.
McBee and colleagues have shown that assessment systems are more sensitive to measurement error than commonly thought.

Even reliabilities as high as .95 result in missing more than 15% of qualified students in a single-assessment system, with

- worse performance under an “and” rule
- slightly better performance under an “or” rule.

Only the highest quality assessments should be used in any assessment system.

It may be wise always to use the “mean” rule to reduce the influence of measurement error.
McBee and colleagues found...

- Despite multiple pathways to identification, many students were missed and many who should not have been identified were identified.

- Even under the best conditions, with highly reliable and correlated measures...
  - 24% of the “truly gifted” children were missed
  - an additional 17% of the identified-gifted population was not actually gifted.

- Even the “ideal” scenario of high reliability and high intercorrelation among measures resulted in identifying only about 4% of the total student population as gifted
  - 20% of this total were wrongly identified.

- Keep in mind that one of the Georgia pathways modeled involved scoring in the top 10% on three different measures.

- Each pathway into the program requires at least two assessments to be simultaneously above their respective cutoffs (i.e., the “and” rule), so the identified population size is smaller.
There is something that is much more scarce, something rarer than ability. It is the ability to recognize ability.
A LAST WORD, BUT NOT THE LAST WORD

When considering the needs of gifted children from diverse backgrounds . . .

Assessment and instructional methods can be varied without losing quality.
• How might we change our teaching practices to be more inclusive of diverse learners & provoke behaviors indicative of high potential?

• What predicts giftedness?

Since prior behavior in a domain is the best predictor of future performance, we want to elicit student behaviors that show what students are capable of doing. So,

• What behaviors do we need to provoke so as to improve identification?
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