



IU13 Gifted Network

2019-2020 Year in Review

The Gifted Network was created as a professional learning community for teachers and supervisors of gifted students. IU13 formed this network specifically for the 22 school districts and other nonpublic institutions in Lancaster and Lebanon counties. School districts outside IU13 are also welcome to participate as members.

Each year, IU13 organizes at least four network meetings. Each meeting addresses topics relevant to gifted education and also provides a forum for discussion about current issues in gifted education at the classroom, building and district levels. Networking with others in the field of gifted education is an integral part of each meeting and allows for collaboration between participants. Online learning platforms developed for the network also foster communication and resource sharing across districts.

Gifted Network membership and meetings support Chapter 16 requirements for professional development in the area of gifted education. Regular education teachers are always welcome. PDE emphasizes the importance of collaboration between gifted support and regular education teachers in meeting the individual needs of gifted students.

§ 16.5. Personnel

(c) A school district and intermediate unit shall provide, under section 1205.1 of the School Code (24 P. S. § 12-1205.1), in-service training for gifted and regular teachers, principals, administrators and support staff persons responsible for gifted education.

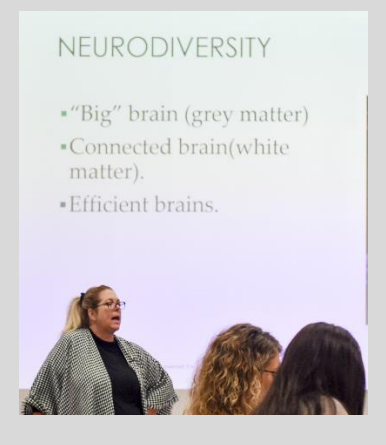
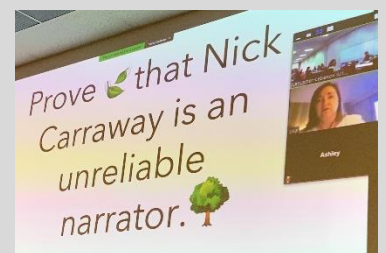
If selected for a compliance monitoring by PDE, the district will be asked for evidence that professional development in gifted education has been provided. Information will be gathered from the past two years prior to an audit. IU13 can provide documentation, as needed, that staff attended professional development through the IU13 Gifted Network.

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Gifted Network Meetings & Collaborative Sessions 2019-2020

Gifted iGen: Educational Strategies for Understanding and Supporting Today's Gifted Children

Trained and licensed as an educational psychologist, our guest presenter, Christine Fonseca, is dedicated to helping children and adults connect with their personal truth. This engaging and interactive meeting focused on understanding the unique nature of gifted children, as well as specific strategies to support their needs. Topics included understanding needs of iGen generations; the impact of temperament on educational performance; strategies to develop emotional intelligence (EQ) and resilience; and using a strengths-based approach to nurture the upside of emotional intensity.

Developing Enrichment Options through Depth & Complexity (1/2-day Session)

Chapter 16 requires that gifted learners receive specially designed instruction, as needed, that provides enrichment, acceleration, or a combination of both. Many gifted support teachers are working closely with general education teachers to build enrichment options that challenge and individualize lessons for gifted students. Well-respected and always dynamic, author and presenter, Lisa Van Gemert, joined us virtually to offer follow-up training on the Depth & Complexity Framework. Whether teachers already loved the richness of Depth & Complexity, but wanted to increase their understanding of how to use it more effectively OR they needed a practical overview, this meeting was valuable and interactive.

Using Depth & Complexity for Academic Enrichment – Working Session (1/2-day Session)

This afternoon meeting allowed teachers time to study and update lesson plans incorporating what they learned about the Depth & Complexity Framework. Looking at a current lesson or unit, participants were able to collaborate as they planned for students with a need for academic enrichment. Time was spent on looking at resources shared by Lisa Van Gemert such as a video on the Library of Congress and a tiered lesson plan that starts the planning process with the highest level learner in mind. Susan Heydt, gifted support teacher from Donegal SD, highlighted the value of National History Day. Three Donegal students shared their projects with teachers in attendance, noting how this type of in-depth enrichment benefits them now and in the future.

Understanding and Supporting Twice Exceptional (2e) Learners

This meeting focused on the Twice Exceptional (2e) learner - a gifted child who also has a learning disability. A variety of experts shared insights and strategies for working effectively with this population. **Dr. Carolyn Bruey** of IU13 reviewed common behavioral characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and shared information and resources. **Dr. Charlton Wolfgang** and **Dr. Richard Mehrenberg** from Millersville University led a discussion on teacher preparation in meeting the needs of 2e learners. **Dr. Nanda Mitra-Iffe** of IU13 shared her expertise on underrepresented gifted populations, Due Process, and other issues related to Twice Exceptional Learners.

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Conflict: The Gift that Keeps on Giving (1/2-day Session)

As an educator of gifted and twice exceptional students, gifted support teachers are regularly called upon to communicate clearly and effectively with parents and other teachers. The goal of this communication is to positively impact student learning in the classroom. When differences occur, how are they successfully handled in order to avoid escalation and disagreement? The PA Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) offers families and educators alternatives to due process hearings with less formal process options like facilitated IEPs/GIEPs, mediation, and settlement conferences. This meeting, led by Dr. Nancy Giacomini, featured an overview of dispute resolution services, provided a snapshot of facilitated GIEP and mediation processes. Teachers learned why conflict, managed well, really is the gift that keeps on giving in terms of building sustainable results and enjoying stronger partnerships.

Chapter 16 Updates, Discussions, and Networking (1/2-day Session)

This session offered teachers an opportunity to talk with Shirley Moyer from the Bureau of Special Education at PDE. Questions were fielded and updates offered regarding Chapter 16. A clear distinction was drawn between compliance and best practice in the area of gifted education.

Using 4-Color Analysis to Develop Nature Journals for STEM Enrichment (canceled due to COVID-19)

As has been requested the last two years, this meeting was designed to give teachers an opportunity to explore the use of nature journals as a creative source of academic challenge and enrichment for all students. Dr. Carol Welsh's 4-Color Analysis and the work of John Muir Laws can enrich student observations and research through the art of journaling. Working with Park Naturalist, Lisa Sanchez, at the Lancaster Environmental Center, this training would have incorporated both nature journaling and STEM enrichment development. Due to COVID-19, it has been postponed until next May. However, due to past trainings, many teachers are sharing nature journaling with their students as enrichment during this spring's school closure. Resources are available on the Gifted Network Schoology site.

What makes Gifted Network meetings valuable to you?

"Lisa Van Gemert is a great resource for all things "gifted"! In this session, she had me thinking about how I might relate the strategies in Depth and Complexity to help general classroom teachers raise the level of thinking in their classrooms."

"I found myself thinking about how to better support my students under Christine's leadership today. I appreciate how she embraces the power of science in brain research and infuses it with humor and practicality as she talks to the group!"



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MEETING PLANS FOR 2020-2021

Thanks to requests and feedback from Gifted Network members, plans are already underway for next year. As always, offering meetings with relevant topics is key!

(Topics will be shared soon!)



Gifted Network Feedback from Members:

Gifted iGen: Educational Strategies for Understanding and Supporting Today's Gifted Children

- Ms. Fonseca shared in-depth information about the very special needs of our gifted children. I can apply it to the cognitive, emotional, and social needs of my learners.
- As a school psychologist, my role is to provide information and recommendations for specific students at the evaluation meetings. Reframing the way school personnel and parents think about a GT student's social-emotional functioning based on a more strengths-based approach, and suggesting the interventions provided today will be helpful.
- As the gifted support teacher, attending to the social-emotional needs of my students is a critical part of my role. Christine Fonseca's presentations are always full of research-backed knowledge and practices that I can immediately put into place.

Developing Enrichment Options through Depth & Complexity

- Lisa Van Gemert is a great resource for all things "gifted"! In this session, she had me thinking about how I might relate the strategies in Depth and Complexity to help general classroom teachers raise the level of thinking in their classrooms
- Lisa commented that differentiation is not about what students have to DO but should be how students are encouraged to THINK.
- I found it interesting to gain the perspective of the students who shared about their National History Day projects. I will share some of the resources they referenced along with the Library of Congress information with my students.

Understanding and Supporting Twice Exceptional (2e) Learners

- This session helped me to learn about how to better meet the needs of my 2e students and how to advocate for them more effectively, using research based information.
- As I have 2e students on my caseload, it is helpful to better understand the diagnosis/labels and manifestations for those students so that I can advocate for them and inform others so that students have the best possible experience in school.

Conflict: The Gift That Keeps on Giving

- The facilitators from ODR are neutral and offer guidance to all involved to restore communication and trust so that the student benefits.
- This session allowed me to look at sample cases and relate them to similar situations in our district. It caused me to reflect on how I have/would handle(d) conflict when it occurs in relation to the needs/strengths of my gifted students.

Chapter 16 Updates, Discussion, and Networking with Shirley Moyer, PDE

- As gifted support teachers, this workshop helped us better understand the gifted law (Chapter 16) and how important best practices are in writing an effective GIEP.
- Everything presented by Shirley has a direct impact on my daily activities as I make sure my district is in compliance with state regulations.
- I loved having Shirley Moyer here! It was fantastic to get to hear directly from her! I learned quite a few things that I can take back to my district.

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Membership Benefits

- Four Gifted Network Meetings per year - no additional cost (\$75 per person for nonmembers)
- Optional collaborative work sessions on meeting days
- IU13 Schoology site for Gifted Education: This online site allows members to easily access gifted resources and collaborate with other teachers in the network
- Personal support for new Gifted Support Teachers
- Inclusion on the IU13 Gifted Network distribution list which provides notifications of the following:
 - Local, statewide, and national opportunities for gifted students
 - Chapter 16 updates and training information from PDE
 - New PDE and ODR forms and documents
 - Updates on national, state, and local issues, resources, and research in the area of gifted education

2019-20 Participating Members (93):

Annville-Cleona, Central Fulton, Cocalico, Columbia Borough, Conestoga Valley, Cornwall-Lebanon, Donegal, Eastern Lancaster County (ELANCO), Eastern Lebanon County (ELCO), Eastern York, Elizabethtown Area, Ephrata Area, Hempfield, Lampeter-Strasburg, LC PAGE, Lebanon, Manheim Central, Manheim Township, Millersville University, Northern Lebanon, Palmyra Area, Penn Manor, Pequea Valley, Red Lion Area, St. Leo the Great School, School District of Lancaster, Solanco, Warwick

Summer 2020...

Gifted Education in Pennsylvania: An Overview for NEW Gifted Support Teachers

Are you new to Chapter 16 and Gifted Education in Pennsylvania or would you like a "refresher"? If so, join us for discussion, information, and helpful resources to get off to a great start in 2020-21. Together, we will look at what it means to be a gifted learner and the legal protections available in Pennsylvania to ensure meaningful educational benefit. Participants will review the components of the Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) and best practices for developing individualized specially designed instruction (SDI) for gifted students. Discussions will include the determination of instructional levels, the types of data that are available to teachers of the gifted, and how this data is included in a GIEP. Goal planning tactics, including the need for enrichment, acceleration, or a combination of both, will be examined as well as social/emotional needs of gifted students that can impact learning.

Date: August 3, 2020

Registration: <https://www.mylearningplan.com/WebReg/ActivityProfile.asp?D=10019&I=3429377>

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