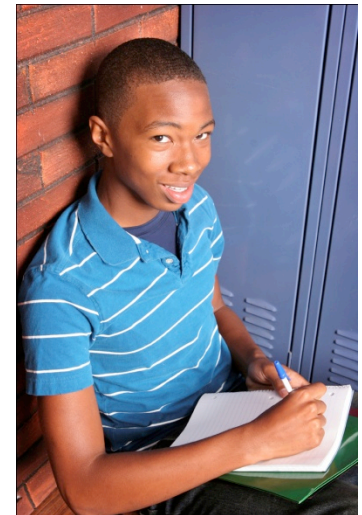




Funding Gifted Education

Dr. Laura Mackay
Educational Consultant



Short History

- 2006 – In an effort to lower property taxes and stay out of court, our legislators voted to create a state business tax to take the place of property taxes. The money the state has generated from this new tax is not equal to the money the state took in from property taxes.

Gifted Program Funding - STATE

- Gifted program funding comes from both local and state revenue.
- The state give a certain amount of money, per pupil, to each school district. This is called the BASIC ALLOTMENT and it is around \$4,746.00
- WEIGHTED include gifted and talented, special education, vocational, bilingual, and compensatory education.

Gifted Program Funding - STATE

- Lowering the basic allotment OR the weighted funding will hurt gifted programs.
- Gifted Programs will receive less money to spend.

Clear Creek ISD

- CCISD has more than 5,000 employees. Teachers make up 54% of our staff. Central Administration makes up 1% of our staff while campus administration makes up 2.8%.
- CCISD spends:
68.7% of the total budget on teaching students and other related expenses.
7.6% or goes towards grounds and maintenance... this pays for the electricity, insurance, lawn and cleaning of our schools.
6.4% of the budget pays for campus administration and campus based budgets.
3.5% is used for student transportation and fuel.
3.2% Guidance and Counseling
2.2% Central Administration
2.2% Extracurricular and Cocurricular
1.8% Data Services
1.0% Instructional Administration
1.0% Health Services
0.9% Security
1.5% Other
- CCISD has worked over the past two years to reduce operation costs by \$11.9 million. Superintendent Greg Smith has outlined an additional \$9.4 million in future savings. That still won't be enough to make up for the amount of money we will lose if the proposed budget is approved in Austin.

What to look for...

- Any cut to the basic allotment or gifted and talented weighted funding.
- HB 2485 by Rep. Scott Hochberg eliminated the gifted funding weight. TAGT has been in discussions with him and it is supposed to be added back into the bill in committee. The legislator will then have to vote whether or not to continue this funding.

Other GT Concerns

In the House's proposed budget, school funding is reduced significantly, and school districts would not receive funds for expected growth. Specifically related to gifted, highlights are:

- **Specific line item funding for the Texas Performance Standards and Mathcounts is continued.**
- **Funding for academic competitions (under which Texas Future Problem Solving receives funds) may (not shall) be continued.**
- **AP and IB incentives are eliminated.**
- **Funding for the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science (TAMS) and Texas Academy for Leadership in the Humanities is retained, but at a significantly reduced level.**
- **Funding for the Reading, Math, and Science initiatives is eliminated.**
- **Funding for the Education Services Centers is eliminated.**
- **Funding for Early College Graduation Scholarship is deleted.**
- **Funding for the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) is eliminated.**

- **The Senate released its version a few days later. It was pretty similar to the House budget's treatment of the items above, with the exception that Funding for the Education Services Centers was not eliminated, but rather reduced by approximately 5%.**

What you can do...

- Write your local legislator. Call or email. Be prepared to talk to a real person, not an answering machine.
- Ask them to fully fund public education at current levels.
- Ask them to support weighted funding for gifted programs and support the education of high ability student.

What you can do....

- Email or write your local Board of Trustee member. Remember they are elected volunteers and they are not compensated for their services.
- Thank them for their support of high ability students in CCISD.
- Ask for their continued support of gifted programming for students during this budget crisis.

A Checklist When Advocating with Public Policy Makers

- **ALWAYS: prepare** yourself for an appointment; be clear and specific about the purpose of your meeting, introduce yourself and/or your group, and leave materials relevant to the issue.
- be **punctual**, and be willing to wait for a person who runs behind schedule.
- keep letters and visits **short and to the point**.
- be **accurate** and authentic with supporting facts - **document resources**.
- be **pleasant** and **polite**.
- be **aware** that **issues have two sides**—yours and that of the opposition. Be the first to acknowledge an opposing viewpoint.
- support officials with **positive visibility** on behalf of the special needs of gifted children.
- ask for a response to **keep communication going**.
- **follow-up** with a thank-you note, phone call, e-mail, an appointment, a letter, etc.

A Checklist When Advocating with Public Policy Makers

DO NOT:

- **be disappointed** if you don't accomplish your purpose on the first visit - influence is the result of relationship built over time.
- **make your issue complicated.** Policy makers deal with several important matters simultaneously and will be more attentive if you keep your points short and simple.
- ever be **belligerent** or **threatening**. Consider opposing viewpoints, even if you do not share them. Conflict closes communication.
- **be late** for an appointment. Lack of respect for other people's time is rude.
- **forget other staff members** in your thank-you cards. Staff members are the key to direct dialogue with policy makers! And....
- **DO NOT quit!** Persistence and perseverance eventually pay off.
- Adapted from an article by Gina Ginsberg Riggs, copyright 1984.

Websites/Resources

- www.txgifted.org
- www.ccisd.net
- www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us