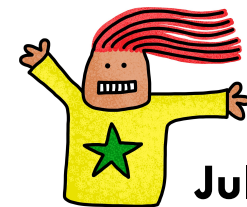


EMPOWERING GIFTED STUDENTS THROUGH SELF-ADVOCACY

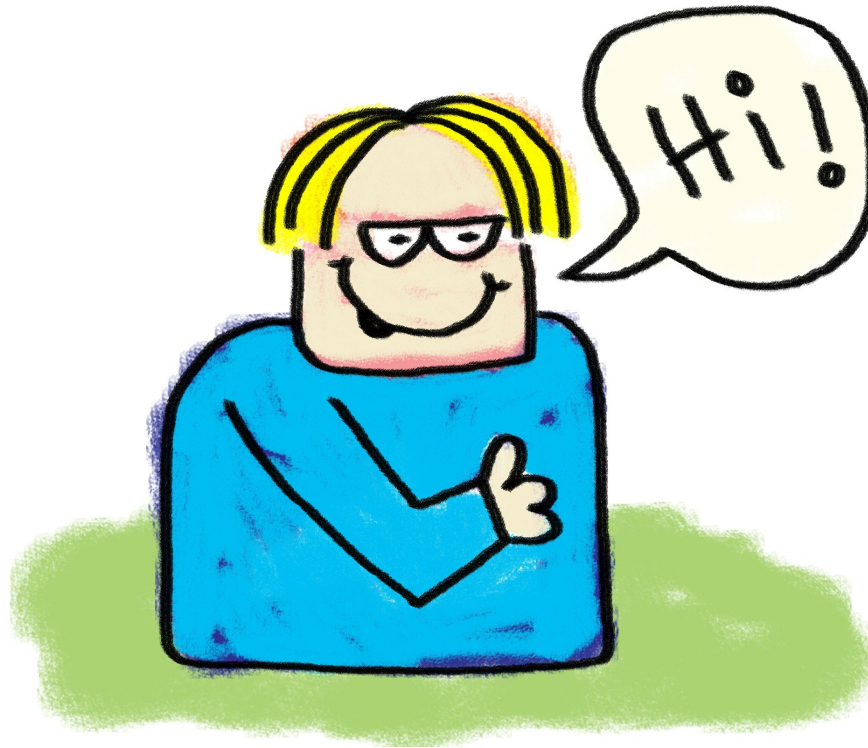


July 2017

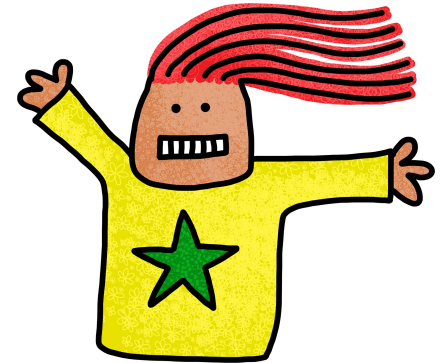
Deb Douglas, Presenter

**22nd Biennial World Conference, World Council for Gifted and Talented Children
The University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia**

RYAN'S STORY



SELF-ADVOCACY



The process of recognizing and meeting the needs specific to your own learning ability without compromising the dignity of yourself or others.

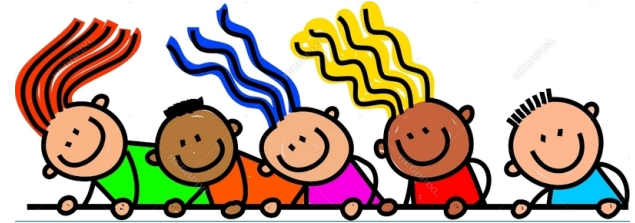
Loring Brinckerhoff, 1994



CHANGE HAPPENS

- in education
- in the field of gifted education
- in the state or province
- in the school district
- in gifted kids' lives

WHAT DOESN'T CHANGE?

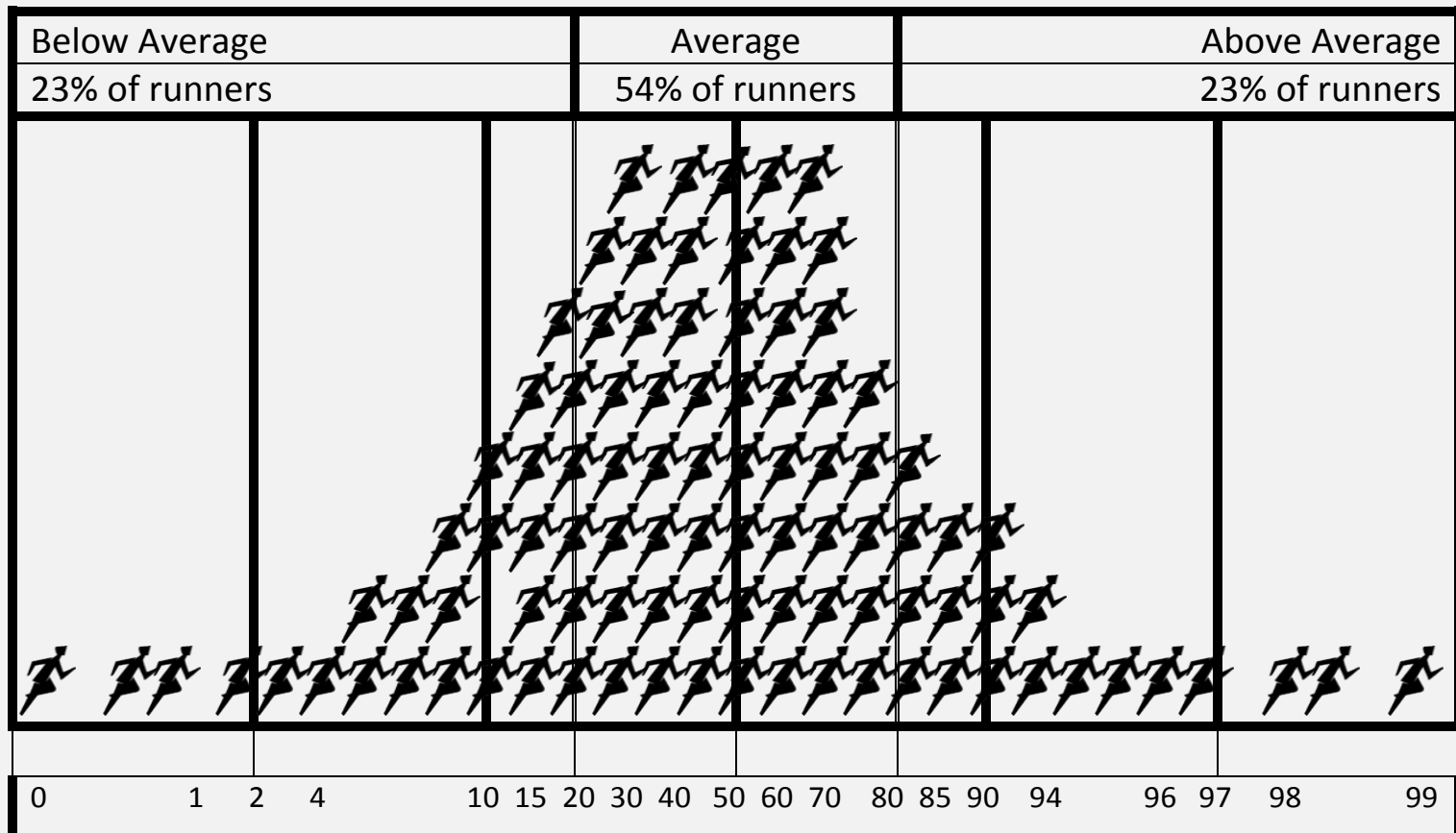


Each individual child's need for an appropriately challenging education and effective social and emotional support.

WHO **NEEDS TO SELF-ADVOCATE?**

Outliers

Normal Distribution





Pre- and Post-Workshop Surveys

SUBJECT DEMOGRAPHICS

25 School Districts

(Public, Private, Homeschool)

- Rural
- Town
- Suburb
- City



- 151 Males
- 172 Females
- Ages 11 - 18

DO THEY WISH FOR CHANGE?

Question: How often have you wished a teacher would modify something for you in order to make your work more challenging or more interesting?

N = 323	# of students	% of students	
	43		13.3
	110	34.0	86.6
	170	52.6	

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DO THEY ASK?

Question: How often have you asked a teacher to modify something for you?

N = 323	# of students	% of students	
Never/Almost never	201	62.3	92
Occasionally	96	29.7	
Frequently/Always	26		8.0

Adapted from *The Power of Self-Advocacy For Gifted Learners: Teaching the Four Essential Steps to Success* by Deb Douglas, copyright © 2017. Used with permission of Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; [800-735-7323](tel:800-735-7323); www.freespirit.com. All rights reserved. DEB DOUGLAS, COPYRIGHT © 2017.

ARE THEY COMFORTABLE ASKING?

Question: How comfortable are you asking a teacher to modify something for you?

N = 323	# of students	% of students	
Very Uncomfortable	59		18.3
Okay	165	51.0	81.7
Very Comfortable	99	30.7	

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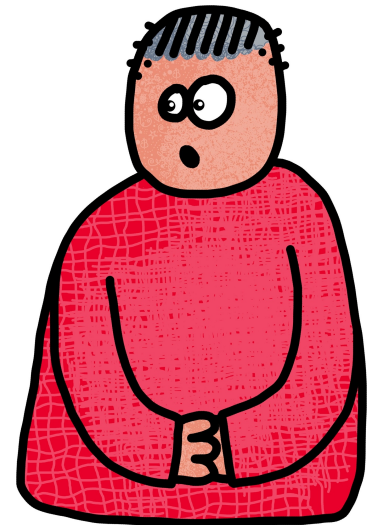
WHY DON'T THEY ASK?

Some of the myths . . .

- only struggling students have special academic needs.
- bright students should be able to get by without special programming.
- gifted education programs are elitist.

**Without training,
a gifted child's naïve
efforts to self-advocate
tend to antagonize others.**

**Their frustration may keep
them from being either
subtle or tactful.**



IN ORDER TO RE-IMAGINE THEIR ROAD TO GRADUATION, GIFTED STUDENTS NEED



- **Information**
- **Insights**
- **Tools**

4 (SIMPLE) STEPS

1. Understand your rights and responsibilities
2. Reflect on your learner profile
3. Match your profile to options and opportunities
4. Connect with advocates



STEP 1

UNDERSTAND YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

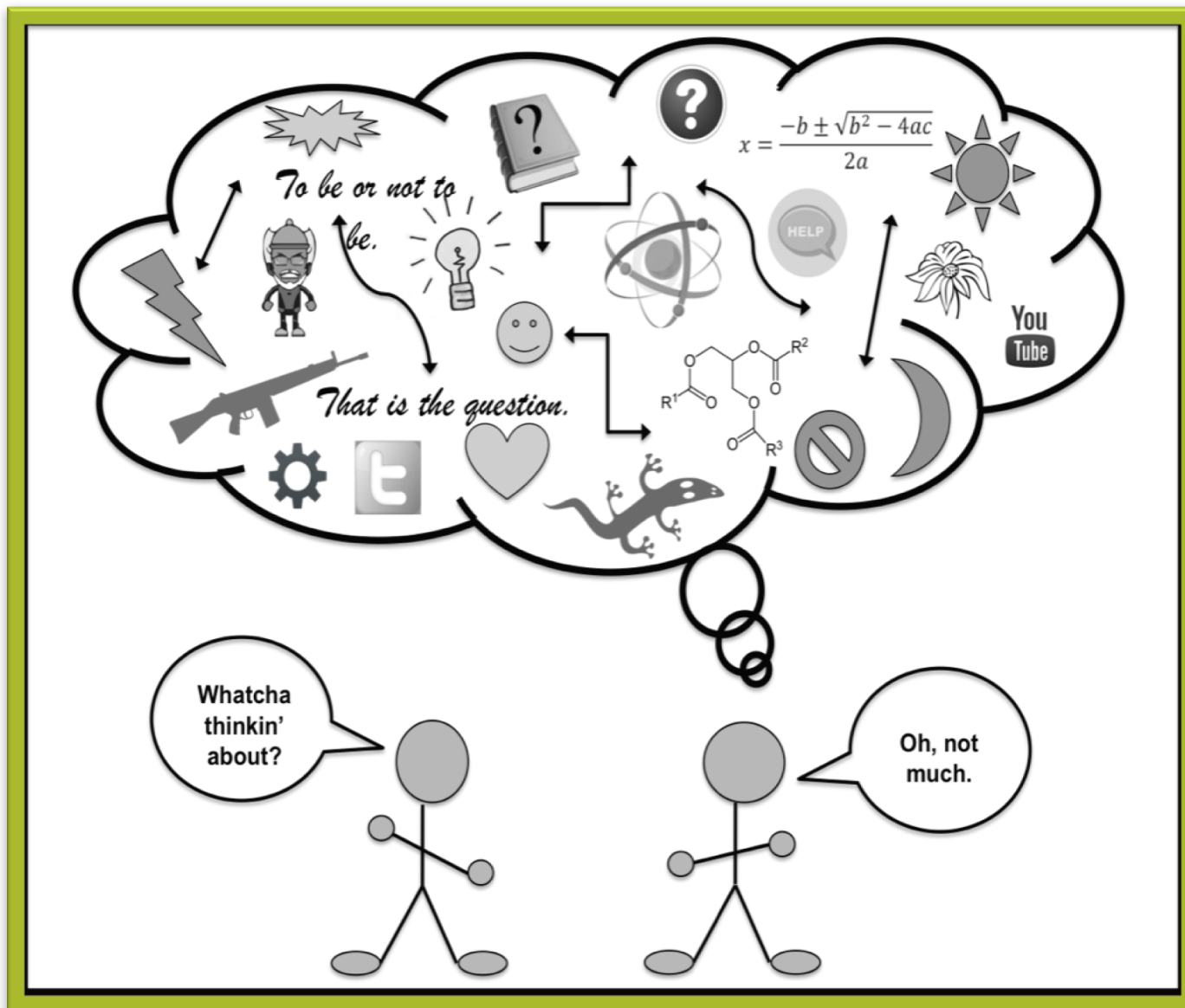
A long, rich history of recognizing, researching, debating, theorizing, legislating, and developing C&I just for you.

- **Federal and state/provincial laws**
- **School Mission Statements**
- **NAGC Gifted Students Bill of Rights**

TWO RIGHTS

AS A GIFTED INDIVIDUAL, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- **understand giftedness and how it relates to your unique self.**
- **an appropriately challenging education.**



TWO RESPONSIBILITIES

AS A GIFTED INDIVIDUAL, YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- **take charge of your own education**
 - **develop personal characteristics that support your success**
- 



STEP 2

REFLECT ON YOUR LEARNER PROFILE

5 Areas of Assessment

- **Cognitive Functioning Information**
- **Learning Strengths Information**
- **Personality Characteristics and Traits**
- **Learning Preferences**
- **Interests**

STEP 3

MATCH YOUR PROFILE TO OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Independent Study**
- **Compacted Classes**
- **Credit by Exam**
- **Online Courses**
- **Accelerated Classes**
- **Subject Acceleration**
- **Mentorships**
- **AP or IB**
- **Summer Courses**
- **Clubs/Organizations**

STEP 4

CONNECT WITH ADVOCATES WHO CAN SUPPORT YOUR PLAN



- **Teachers**
- **Counselors**
- **Family**
- **Friends**
- **Coaches & Advisors**
- **Administrators**
- **Regional G/T Groups**
- **State/Provincial Affiliates**
- **Talent Search Programs**
- **National and World Orgs**
- **Special Foundations**
 - (Davidson, JK Cooke, etc.)

STUDENT ACTION GOALS



- 1. Find appropriately challenging academic work**
- 2. Explore an interest**
- 3. Spend more time with other gifted peers**
- 4. Adjust school or home to better accommodate personal needs**

POSSIBLE GOALS

Do faster pace in pre-calculus

Take as many science classes as possible

Take college classes when I'm in high school

Study Latin

Investigate careers in gaming

Study computer programming online

Start an Academic Quiz Bowl

Join a writers group

Find other kids who want to learn to speak Tolkien Elfish

Talk to teachers about changing due dates

Start a counseling group on perfectionism

Get permission to eat breakfast mid-morning

ACTION PLAN

Action Plan		
Goal Statement: <i>I want to finish pre-calculus in one semester instead of two and take statistics second semester.</i>		
Implementation: Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Date completed
1. <i>Talk to counselor:</i> <i>a. Would this have any effect on graduation, college acceptance, ACT/SAT?</i> <i>b. What sort of signed approval do I need?</i>	<i>Mandy and Ms Douglas</i>	<i>Aug 28</i>
2. <i>Get recommendation from last year's math teacher</i>	<i>Mandy</i>	<i>Sept 1</i>
3. <i>Get approval from math dept. head</i>	<i>Mandy</i>	<i>Sept 2</i>
4. <i>Get approval from principal.</i> <i>a. What credit will I get?</i>	<i>Mandy</i>	<i>Sept 3</i>



GT Carpe Diem

Seize a day, change a lifetime



WHY?



- Efficient
- Effective
- Systematic and continuous
 - Provides:
 - Common knowledge base
 - Peer networking
 - Understanding of gifted learner diversity
- Leaves less up to chance

COMFORT IN ASKING FOR CHANGE

Question: How comfortable are you asking a teacher to modify something for you to make your work more challenging or more interesting?

N = 323	Pre-workshop		Post-workshop	
Very uncomfortable	59	18%	16	5%
Comfortable	165	51%	102	32%
Very comfortable	99	31%	205	63%

LIKELY TO ASK FOR CHANGE

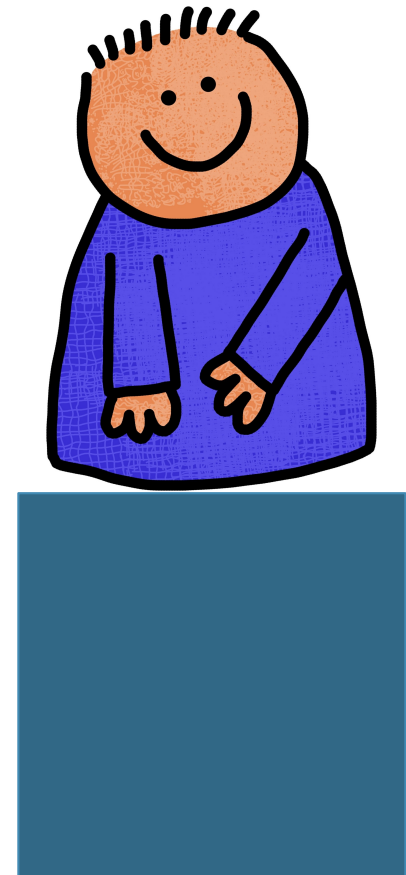
Question: How likely are you to talk with someone at your school in the near future about better meeting your needs?

N = 286	Pre-workshop		Post-workshop	
Not likely	88	31%	28	10%
Likely	124	43%	72	25%
Very likely	74	26%	187	65%

“I wish that I could stay here forever. I liked that I didn’t have to lower my vocabulary because everyone here was just as smart as me.

This was a great experience because I felt like I have known these people FOREVER!”

Cheyenne, grade 5





The single most powerful predictor of positive outcomes for vulnerable children is a relationship with a caring adult.



*“Risk and Resilience
in Gifted Children”*

Maureen Neihart

DEB DOUGLAS

I'd love to hear what you think.

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