ABC Ottawa
Response to OCDSB Special Education Program and Service Review, January 2006

At a conceptual level, the Association for Bright Children of Ontario, Ottawa Chapter is pleased to support many of the strategic recommendations set out in Section 6.0 of the OCDSB Special Education Review report. Planning and implementation of program and service changes, however, must be based on sound research and the responsible use of data. Unfortunately, much of the information and data presented in this report with respect to the gifted exceptionality is factually incorrect and/or misleading.

Specific examples of incorrect and/or misleading information we have identified in this report include the following:

- ***Use of the CCAT***. The Reviewers' have implied that the CCAT is a suitable instrument for the identification of gifted students. It is our understanding that the CCAT will provide consistent results. That does not mean that it is a good tool for identifying gifted students. Numerous authors in the literature have commented on its inadequacies. It is our understanding that it has few false positives but a lot of false negatives. Many of our members have experienced this first hand. Matthews and Foster note:

  > "Group intelligence tests have the usual benefits of group administered tests—they are cost- and time-effective. However they are problematic for identifying giftedness…..Therefore, these tests miss the divergent or creative gifted thinker who looks at questions differently than others or who thinks in more complex ways than the "right answer" exemplifies. They miss the child whose reasoning ability is exceptionally advanced but whose reading and/or writing skills are not developing as well as might be expected. They almost always miss the child with double or multiple exceptionalities….Group intelligence tests can perhaps be useful for preliminary screening, with the understanding that there will be some gifted children who fall between the mesh-lines of this screening and who need to be " searched for" at some point below the cut-off score."[1]

- ***Presentation of the Number of Exceptional Students***. The Reviewers in Figures 1 and 2 of their report, have presented the number of students by exceptionality as a percentage in relation to the total number of exceptional students rather than the total student population within a Board. The Reviewers were questioned on this and a non-answer was provided: "As stated in our SEAC presentation, the % relation to the total number of special education students is an easier and more meaningful method of presenting the data." No explanation of why this is a more "meaningful" method of presenting the data is given.

[1] Matthews, Dona J. and Joanne F. Foster, *Being Smart about Gifted Children: A Guidebook for Parents and Educators*. Great Potential Press, 2005. page 69-70. (Dona Matthews, PhD. is an Associate Professor of Special Education at Hunter College, City University of New York. Prior to taking up her appointment, she taught at the University of Toronto and was the director of an extracurricular program for gifted students at University of Toronto Schools. Joanne Foster, Ed.D., teaches Educational Psychology as well as Gifted Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. She is also the Gifted Education Consultant for a school board in Toronto.

We disagree with their assessment. Problems with this approach include

- It can be distorted by the over or under identification of an exceptionality. The Ministry of Education for example, has moved to change Special Education funding because of the significant increase in the number of identified exceptional students who qualified Boards for Intensive Support Amount (ISA) funding. At the same time, exceptionalities that did not translate into additional funding (learning disability and gifted in particular) saw the rates of identification drop dramatically across the province.
- It assumes that all Boards are using the same criteria for identification, which is known to not be the case. Any comparison is mixing apples and oranges. Annex A provides a summary of the criteria utilized by the Thames Valley DSB and the Waterloo DSB to identify gifted children. It is not surprising given the approach taken by both Boards, that the rates of identification are significantly different than the rate in the OCDSB. Based on the information we have received, neither Board used for comparison purposes utilizes the CCAT as indicated by the Reviewers.

With respect to the gifted exceptionality, authors in the field have shown some consistency in their definitions of giftedness, and in terms of the numbers one would expect to find in the general population. One definition presented by Miraca Gross[2] is as follows:

Level	*IQ range*	*Prevalence*
Mildly (or basically) gifted	115-129	1:6 – 1:40 (> 2.5%)
Moderately gifted	130-144	1:40 – 1:1,000
Highly gifted	145 – 159	1:1,000 – 1:10,000
Exceptionally gifted	160-179	1:10,000 – 1:1 million
Profoundly gifted	180+	Fewer than 1:1 million

There is, therefore, an accepted baseline that can be used for comparison purposes that is far more meaningful and objective than the one selected by the Reviewers. When the number of identified gifted students in the elementary grades in the OCDSB are viewed in relation to general elementary enrollment, the OCDSB had an overall identification rate[3] of 2.9% in grades 1-8 for the 2005-2006 year[4]. Trustees need to balance a number of factors in deciding what if any action is required with respect to gifted identification and programming. First and foremost is whether they believe that this rate is too high given the average level of education of the residents of the City of Ottawa.

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[2] Gross, Miraca U.M., *Exceptionally Gifted Children, Second Edition*, RoutledgeFalmer, 2004, page 7. Miraca Gross is Professor of Gifted Education and Director of the Gifted Education Research Resource and Information Centre (GERRIC) at the University of New South Wales, Australia.

[3] The OCDSB identifies children as gifted who fall into Miraca Gross' definition of moderately gifted or higher. The OCDSB definition of profoundly gifted best equates to her definition of highly gifted and higher. The OCDSB's definitions of giftedness appear to align better with those of Barbara Clark who describes the highly gifted as being 1-2% and the exceptionally or profoundly gifted as <1% in her book *Growing Up Gifted, Sixth Edition*, pages 255-256.

[4] According to postal code data provided by OCDSB staff to Trustees in February 2006, there were 1,133 identified gifted students in grades 1-8. The October 31, 2005 report tabled at 18 January 2006 Business Services meeting shows that there were 39,497 students in the elementary panel in grades 1-8 or non-graded special education placements.

- ***Appropriate Placement.*** The Reviewers appear to have based their recommendations on placement based on what other Boards do rather than on what the research recommends. Despite their offer at SEAC to provide specific references in support of their criticism of specialized class placements for gifted students, they have not done so in their written response. ABC Ottawa was most interested in viewing research support for the Reviewers' suggestion that the regular class placement implied by the Cascade model is both appropriate and effective for gifted learners. The Reviewers have not been able to date to provide any research evidence to support this suggestion. ABC offers the following description of what the research indicates are appropriate placements for gifted students:

  - Schaffer[5] noted in her 2000 research review for the OCDSB

    Generally, a review of the literature suggests 1) that inclusion, as a delivery model for high-ability children, is poorly researched, 2) that models such as homogeneous and cluster grouping which bring capable students together help gifted learners reach their intellectual and social potential, and 3) that gifted students need more than can be provided in traditional pull-out programs in general classroom settings."

    Decisions to modify or eliminate programs for gifted learners are often based upon trends in educational reform instead of research (Renzulli, J., & Reis, S. (1991). *The reform movement and the quiet crisis in education*. Gifted Child Quarterly, 43 (1), 13-24.)

    Conclusions from research about inclusion with students of disability may or may not apply to the gifted (Cipani, E. (1995). *Inclusive education: What do we know and what do we still have to learn?* Exceptional Children, 61, 498-500.)

  - Very little attention is given to the gifted exceptionality in the Ontario Ministry of Education publication *Education for All*[6]. The only information in this document that might be construed to refer in particular to the gifted exceptionality is a statement in support of a particular Peer Assisted Learning Strategy: "Research suggests that putting students with similar achievement levels into a group separate from the rest of the class is detrimental to students with special needs and does little for high-achieving students, if the same curriculum is being delivered to all students.[7]" Work by James Kulik[8] (*Group and Tracking*, Chapter 21, p. 279, *Handbook of Gifted Education*, Nicholas Colangelo and Gary Davis, Third Edition, 2003) supports the perspective that if an undifferentiated curriculum is offered, there is likely to be little difference in student achievement in low, middle and high achieving groups.

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[5] Shaffer, Dianna, *Programming Options for Gifted Learners*, August 2000.
[6] The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students With Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6. The Ontario Ministry of Education financially supported this study.
[7] Whitehurst, G. (2003). Papers and presentations, mathematics and science initiative. Presentation at the mathematics summits, Washington, DC, February 6, 2003.
[8] James A. Kulik is a psychologist at the University of Michigan who has been Director of its Office of Evaluations and Examinations since 1998.

With respect to ability-grouping of gifted students in a full-time gifted placement, however, substantial advantages to learning outcomes were noted by James and Chen-Lin Kulik. As reported by Rogers[9], "the Kuliks' analyses showed that gifted children in a full-time gifted placement (special school, full-time program, or school-within-a-school) when compared to equally gifted students in mixed ability classes (untracked) showed an academic effect that was both substantial and positive. Almost half a year's additional academic progress was found for each year the gifted children were in the full-time program at the elementary level (K-6). Gifted students in full-time programs at the secondary level (grades 7-12), made one-third of a year's progress."

- Nicholas Colangelo[10], Susan Assouline[11] and Miraca Gross, the editors of *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students*, 2004, in their Message to Schools at the start of Volume 1 indicated "Acceleration is critical to the vast majority of academically gifted children who will not have the means to find alternatives."

- James Gallagher[12] summarized work originally undertaken by Shore and Delcourt (Effective curricular and program practices in gifted education and the interface with general education, B. Shore & M. Delcourt, 1996, Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 20, pp. 138-154, Prufrock Press) in the following Table.

Table 1: Desirable Practices in Gifted and General Education

Uniquely Appropriate for Gifted Education	Effective with Gifted and General
Acceleration	Enrichment
Career education (girls)	Inquiry, discovery, problem solving, and creativity
Ability Grouping	
High level curriculum	Professional end products as standards
Differential Programming	Microcomputers

He suggests that the "highly gifted" (less than 1% of the total) "needs more individual attention, perhaps by providing tutoring, acceleration, or planning individualized studies and projects."

[9] Rogers, Karen B. (2002). *Re-Forming Gifted Education: Matching the Program to the Child*, Great Potential Press. (page 213). At the time she wrote her book Karen Rogers was Professor of Gifted Studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, Minnesota. She is currently Director of Research and Professor of Education for GERRIC at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia

[10] Nicholas Colangelo is the Myron & Jacqueline Blank Professor of Gifted Education at The University of Iowa. He is also Director of The Connie Belin & Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development.

[11] Susan Assouline, Ph.D., is Associate Director of The Connie Belin & Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Iowa.

[12] Gallagher, J.J. (2000). Unthinkable thoughts: Education of gifted students. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 44(1), 5-12. National Association for Gifted Children. James Gallagher is a senior scientist with the University of North Carolina FPG Child Development Institute and Kenan Professor Emeritus in the Faculty of Education.

- Matthews and Foster[13] report (page 140)

  Many parents and teachers involved in the field believe that self-contained classrooms are the best way to provide appropriate intellectual stimulation, as well as opportunities to meet and interact with others of like mind and interest. There is also considerable support for this option in the gifted education literature. Nancy Robinson[14] describes self-contained classes as "singularly inexpensive and …probably constitut[ing] the easiest and most effective way to meet the needs of many (certainly not all) gifted children."

  They also note:

  "In our experience, and according to the literature in the field[15], [pull-out placements] are rarely a good option." (page 141)

- Barbara Clark[16] in *Growing Up Gifted, Sixth Edition*, 2002, Pearson Education Inc. states:

  "As long as the administrative philosophy contends that every teacher can and should be responsible for the learning of every student and has all the knowledge and skills necessary to provide for each child's appropriate educational experiences, and as long as equity is interpreted to mean that students of all levels of ability and need must learn together the same material, in the same way, at the same time, very bright students are at risk."… "In these settings, it becomes critical that those who plan programs are aware of the findings from brain research that admonish educators to challenge a learner at the point of growth, because if ability is not used, it can be lost." (page 257)

  She also references Jim Delisle[17] who noted "Inclusionary practices for gifted students and upgraded curriculum for all students have actually caused a decline in the rigor of academic options for able learners."

  Clark (page 255-256) outlines three categories of gifted learners—the mildly or moderately gifted (3-5%), the highly gifted (1-2%), and the exceptionally or profoundly gifted (<1%). Her recommended educational modifications are different for each category. She indicated that "mildly and moderately gifted students could be clustered in groups of at least five in a regular classroom *if* the teacher is skilled in assessing, differentiating curriculum, working with flexible grouping, and individualizing instruction". Highly and exceptionally gifted students "require opportunities for more

[13] Dona J. Matthews, Joanne F. Foster, *Being Smart about Gifted Children: A Guidebook for Parents and Educators*, Great Potential Press, 2005

[14] Robinson, N.M. (2003). Two wrongs do not make a right: Sacrificing the needs of gifted students does not solve society's unsolved problems. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 26(4), p 251-273.

[15] Cox, JH., Daniel, N., & Boston, B. (1985), *Educating able learners: Programs and promising practices*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press; Robinson, op cit

[16] Barbara Clark, Professor Emeritus, California State University, Los Angeles

[17] Delisle, J. (1999) For gifted students, full inclusion is a partial solution. *Educational Leadership*, 57 (3), 80-83.

accelerated pacing, more advanced materials, and a higher level of complexity and depth in their work. These need modifications are most effectively offered by special classes…or special schools…..A few gifted learners are so exceptional that many educators have suggested that schools as they are now organized have little to offer them. Radical acceleration and private tutoring can provide other appropriate programming options".

- Karen B. Rogers in *Re-Forming Gifted Education: Matching the Program to the Child*, Great Potential Press, 2002 devotes a significant portion of her book to identifying appropriate programming options for gifted students. She describes two broad categories of grouping: small group (a "dyad" of two students, a "cluster" of 5-8, an "enrichment grouping" of 8-12 or a regrouping based on performance level in specific subject areas), and whole class (heterogeneous or homogeneous groupings).

  She identifies three groups of researchers and nine analyses of the large body of research on full-time grouping that have been conducted (page 212-214).

  - Robert Slavin[18] (1987) concluded that the academic effect of tracking (e.g. putting students into a particular stream (e.g., university/college, general, vocational) based on their academic ability) is zero. The studies, however, used standardized tests to measure achievement. If a gifted child was tested before being tracked and scored near the ceiling of the test (97^{th}-99^{th} percentile), and was tested a year later—again scoring at or near the ceiling of the test—it would appear that no growth had taken place.
  - James and Chen-Lin Kulik[19] found that gifted children in a full-time gifted placement, when compared to equally gifted students in mixed ability classes, showed an academic effect that was both substantial and positive. Unfortunately, most of the studies looked only at the grouping strategy itself and paid little attention to actual teaching differences between the full-time gifted group and the mixed-ability classes. As a result, it is difficult to know what portion of the gains were a result of the children's interactions with each other and what portion could be attributed to differences in curriculum.
  - Research undertaken by Cornell and Delcourt in 1992 found that substantial positive effects in achievement in most academic core areas were found for gifted students in special schools when compared to students' achievement in options that had less than full-time grouping (regrouped classes, pull-out groups, within-class grouping, and no program at all).[20]

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[18] Slavin, R.E. (1987) Ability Grouping: A best-evidence synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, 57, 293-336.
[19] Kulik, J.A. (1992). *An analysis of the research on ability grouping: Historical and contemporary perspectives.* Storrs, CT: National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.; Kulik, J.A., & Kulik, C-L.C. (1982). Effects of ability grouping on secondary school students: A meta-analysis of evaluation findings. *American Educational Research Journal*, 19, 415-428; Kulik, J.A., & Kulik, C-L. C. (1984). *Effects of accelerated instruction on students.* Review of Educational Research, 54, 409-425; Kulik, J.A., & Kulik C-L. C. (1987). Effects of ability grouping on student achievement. *Equity Excellence*, 23, 22-30
[20] Delcourt, M.A., Loyd, B.H., Cornell, D.G., & Goldberg, M.D. (1994). *Evaluation of the effects of programming arrangements on student learning outcomes*. (research Monograph 94108). Charlottesville, VA: National Research Center on the Gifted & Talented.

In her recommendations for in-school provisions for gifted students, Rogers' first choice is ability grouping, due to its substantial positive effect on both academic achievement and student motivation: " Teachers and parents must find ways to allow gifted or talented students to spend the majority of their learning time in the academic core areas with others of like abilities and interest (p. 258)." Whole class instruction, meaning a regular classroom in which the teacher presents lessons to " the whole class with little or no differentiation for either lower or higher ability students…is not an appropriate option for gifted learners!" (p. 216).

Rogers concluded: "It seems that the arguments opposing full-time grouping for gifted children are based more on an educator's personal philosophy than on research results" (page 214). With respect to full-time gifted programming, she advises parents "If you are fortunate enough to have such an option available in your locale, you may wish to put your child on the waiting list. The academic and motivational benefits alone may make it worthwhile."

- ***High School Placements.*** In their report, the Reviewers indicate that a Level 4 intervention (partially integrated support) is the preferred choice for the majority of students at the secondary level[21]. No meaningful response was provided to the query asking them to explain the conditions that need to exist for a student at the secondary level to be in a "self-contained" placement versus a " partially integrated" placement.

  The extent to which gifted students at the secondary level are in a partially integrated or self-contained placement has nothing to do with preferred choice but rather the number of subjects where a self-contained class is available. It is generally only available for core academic subjects—English, math, geography, history, and science (in the senior grades it may not be available for all sciences). Depending on the high school and the language of instruction (English or French immersion), self-contained classes may or may not be available in all grades for these subjects. It would take an exceptional alignment of factors for a student to have all subjects in gifted classes, even for one semester at the secondary level. It is not surprising, therefore, that at the secondary level the majority of gifted students are deemed to be partially integrated (47%) or in a regular class with withdrawal assistance (37.5%).

- ***Number of Gifted Students***. Figure 6 in the Reviewers' report provides information on the number of identified gifted students in the OCDSB and the two comparator Boards. In their written response, the Reviewers indicate the data was from October 2006. Based on their other responses, we assume that they meant October 2005. The total number of students in

[21] The Reviewers don't indicate in their report, for whom this is the preferred choice. The conclusion is based on their analysis of the percentage of identified gifted secondary school students in one of five placements: regular class with indirect support, regular class with resource assistance, regular class with withdrawal assistance, partially integrated support, or self-contained support. At the secondary level, regular class with withdrawal assistance is used for students taking less than 50% of their classes in a specialized class. This means that if the student is taking one or two classes a semester in a designated gifted class, they are deemed to be in a regular class with withdrawal assistance. According to data provided to Trustees during 2005-2006, there are 1436 identified gifted students at the secondary level. Of these 1,018 (71%) attend a designated gifted centre.

the elementary panel is 10% lower than that provided in Report 05-295 to Business Services Committee on 18 January 2006. That report shows that the OCDSB had 47,669 students in the elementary panel. We can only come close to the Reviewers' number if we assume that the figure they used is based on the Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) rather than the total number of elementary pupils. Any comparison of identification rates would also need to make this adjustment. There is no evidence to show that this was done by the Reviewers.

- ***Identification Criteria***. The Reviewers' in their report imply that identifying gifted children between the ages of 4-9 is problematic although their written response to a query seems to suggest otherwise and they suggest the issue is more with placement. Research commissioned by the OCDSB in 2000[22] indicated that the research recommends that gifted learners be identified during the early elementary or preschool years (Gross, M., *Small poppies: Highly gifted children in the early years*. Roeper Review, 21(3), 207-214).

  Ken Seeley, writing in *Excellence in Educating Gifted and Talented Learners* (VanTassel-Baska, ed. 1998) noted that it is "a myth that young children cannot be tested because tests are not valid or reliable for early ages." (p. 72-73). While identification protocols for younger children should differ from those used for older children, combining "a more qualitative and interactive approach" with "standardized elements", this does not mean it is impossible or even difficult to adequately assess giftedness in young children once the appropriate protocols have been identified and instituted.

  Seeley also addresses the myth that "verbal young children can score high on IQ tests causing false positives; that is, the tests will identify children as gifted who are not really gifted." As Seeley notes "if the test is valid and reliable it will not give false positives. That is children cannot do better than they are capable of doing. However, tests often give false negatives. Children do not always do as well as they are capable of doing for a variety of reasons such as distractibility, testing environment, and lack of experience in test taking."

- ***Number of gifted students that are bused to school***. The Review Team has acknowledged in a response to a query that it did not obtain any information on the costs for transportation of students attending specialized programs. They appear to have made an extrapolation based on the total number of students identified as gifted who were in a partially integrated or self-contained class and estimated that approximately 605 gifted students would be bused (1,440 exceptional students bused x 42% of all exceptional students in part-time or full-time specialized classes are gifted). No reference appears to have been made to the OCDSB's Transportation Policy and the number of students actually in the classes. Transportation for gifted students is provided using the same criteria used for most other students in the Board, that is, it is provided based on the distance they live from school. With many other exceptionalities, the nature of the exceptionality will drive the need for transportation rather than the distance a child must be transported.

  According to OCDSB's October reports that are filed with the Ministry of Education, 574 students were in specialized gifted classes in the elementary panel in 2004-2005 and 641 in 2005-2006. The breakdown by grade is shown in Table 1.

[22] Shaffer, Dianna, *Programming Options for Gifted Learners*, August 2000.

Table 1: Number of Students Placed in a Specialized Gifted Class

Year	Grade 1-4	Grade 5-6	Grade 7-8	Total
2004-2005	104	179	291	574
2005-2006	148	230	263	641

At the secondary level, busing is only provided if a student lives outside the urban transportation area (UTA). Busing, therefore, is only available to students attending Bell High School, Gloucester High School, Merivale High School and Ridgemont High School where the number of identified gifted students was 267 (300), 104 (100), 165 (200) and 25 (25) respectively (estimated figures for 2004-2005 are provided in brackets)[23]. The catchment area for Glebe Collegiate Institute and Lisgar Collegiate Institute is solely within the UTA.

It is not clear what year the Reviewers used for their calculations. The response provided to a written query is not clear. The Reviewers simply indicate that they used data provided to them "by the OCDSB staff during the third week of November 2006"[24]. For 605 gifted students to be bused by the OCDSB in 2005-2006, it would mean that all grade 1-4 pupils are bused, 90% of all grade 5-6 students, 75% of grade 7-8 students and 10% of secondary students (at Bell, Gloucester, Merivale and Ridgemont). (The percentages have to be even higher if the analysis is based on 2004-2005 data.) Based on our experience, the Reviewers' estimate is significantly overstated.

It is also worth noting the Board's own estimate of what it costs to bus gifted students to specialized classes. During the 2002-2003 budget process it was estimated that 6.7% of the cost of transporting special education students was spent on gifted students. We acknowledge that this data is somewhat dated but it does provide a measure of the extent of the actual cost of transporting gifted students. If classes are concentrated in specific areas of the city, the Board can utilize large school buses to transport gifted students to a specialized class. Smaller vehicles, and in some instances staff in addition to the bus driver, are required to transport other special education students. The cost per student will clearly be higher when smaller vehicles and additional staff must be utilized rather than a standard school bus.

We find the extent of the incorrect and/or misleading information regarding the gifted exceptionality that has been presented in this Review report particularly troubling. We trust that as it moves forward, the OCDSB will take care to place the information provided in the appropriate context and base its future actions on sound research and the responsible use of data.

[23] We have extrapolated backwards from data provided to Trustees for 2005-2006 on the number of identified gifted students by grade at each secondary school in the system.

[24] We assume that this is a typo and they really mean the third week of November 2005. Knowing the extent of verification that must be done, we doubt that October 2005 data would have been available at that time. The data that was used does not reconcile back to either 2004-2005 or 2005-2006. Total enrollment in the elementary panel was 47,669 in 2005-2006 and 48,680 in 2004-2005 which is about 10% higher than the figure actually used by the Reviewers.

We believe that the OCDSB should keep the following in mind as it moves forward:

> "In an inclusionary era that assumes that each teacher is responsible for the learning of every student, some students will still be "outliers"—kids on the edges whose academic or emotional needs are such that full-time placement within a heterogeneous classroom does more of a disservice to them than offers a benefit. Gifted students are often these outliers when they exhibit thoughts, behaviors, and educational challenges that require more concentrated services than one teacher can deliver in one classroom.
>
> As individual educators, we must not apologize if we cannot meet a student's needs in a heterogeneous classroom. Instead, we must realize that, within the constraints of a single day, or a single career, we will face intellectual or emotional issues that would be better addressed by someone whose skills, training, and personality differ from our own. We must realize that "one size fits all", be it in shoes or in academic options, pinches everyone where it hurts and impedes the forward progress of those whose pace is different in speed and style.
>
> If we are truly committed to personalizing learning, we must appreciate that today's panacea—full inclusion for all students with special needs—is tomorrow's bad practice. Without the willingness and the ability to admit that each student's individuality demands something unique, our schools will continue to address only partially the needs of selected students. Gifted students are no exception to this rule."[25]

ABC Ottawa agrees with the Reviewers' comments that energies must be put into ensuring that children who are gifted are presented with high quality educational options and that there are problems with what is currently offered. The research shows that options such as acceleration and individual programming, in particular for the very brightest, should be possibilities within the range of programming that the OCDSB offers to gifted students. To date, the OCDSB has focused on specialized placements in self-contained classes. These classes may very well provide positive outcomes for the greatest number of gifted students at the lowest incremental cost for the OCDSB. They are certainly a good basis for building upon. We disagree with the Reviewers' assessment, that a regular class placement is an appropriate placement for gifted students. The Reviewers have not, in our estimation, adequately supported this suggestion with research-based evidence, nor have they countered the large body of research, some of which has been presented here, that supports self-contained classes as best practice in terms of meeting the educational and social needs of most gifted students.

[25] James R. Delisle, For Gifted Students, Full Inclusion is a Partial Solution, *Educational Leadership*, Volume 57, Number 3, November 1999. Dr. Delisle is professor of education at Kent State University, where he coordinates the undergraduate and graduate programs in gifted child education.

Annex A: Gifted Identification Practices in Other School Boards[26]

School Board	Screening Process & Identification Criteria	Gifted Programming & Placement Options			Transportation & Accessibility	Documentation & Statistics		
		Primary	Junior / Intermediate	Secondary		# IPRC	# on IEP	Modified Accommodated Or Alternate
Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) 2005 nearly 80,000 FTE	UNDER REVIEW OLSAT Global Screening offered to all grade 4: 1. 132 on OLSAT + 95th percentile on one area of WJ III = gifted 2. 126-131 on OLSAT + 95th percentile on one area of WJ III = referred for WISC IV 3. Full Scale score of 140 on WISC IV = gifted 4. option 2. + Full Scale score of 130 (98th percentile) on WISC IV = gifted 5. option 2. + 99th percentile on either Verbal or performance on WISC IV = gifted (possibly gifted / LD) Moving towards more use of learning styles assessments	N/A	UNDER REVIEW 1. within London placement in one 5/6 and two 7/8 full time congregated self-contained classes is possible 2. other gr 5-8 students receive differentiated programming in the regular classroom plus 15 days of pull-out programming with an itinerant teachers at various clustered locations throughout board	UNDER REVIEW 1. Gifted lines available to be used at discretion of local school administration 2. 1 school offers AP 3. some offer "gifted" section of gr.9/10 courses 4. One itinerant teacher provides service as needed throughout the board	bus passes only within city of London to access system congregated classes provided to 15 day clustered pull-out sessions (bus passes within London; taxi from home school elsewhere)	ALL formally Identified placement for all is regular class in home school unless attending self-contained class	ALL identified	alternate for cluster session participants accommodations only for others if needed modifications rarely if ever

[26] From a working document of the Western Ontario Resource Committee for the Gifted (WORC) provided in a personal communication from ABC Ontario's representative on WORC.

School Board	Screening Process & Identification Criteria	Gifted Programming & Placement Options			Transportation & Accessibility	Documentation & Statistics		
		Primary	Junior / Intermediate	Secondary		# IPRC	# on IEP	Modified Accommodated Or Alternate
Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) 2006 nearly 80,000 FTE	UNDER REVIEW: **NEW PROPOSED** OLSAT Global Screening offered to all grade 4: 1. 132 on OLSAT (98th percentile) = proceed to WJ 2. 84th percentile on one area of WJ III = proceed to WISC 3. Full Scale score of 130 (98th percentile) on WISC IV = gifted Educational assessment with psych services may be pursued without meeting criteria 1&2 or before or after gr. 4 upon teacher / parent request for further investigation Moving towards more use of learning styles assessments	UNDER REVIEW: **NEW PROPOSED** classroom differentiation in-class clustering possible acceleration variety of suggested teaching strategies LST & itinerant teacher support available to classroom teacher	UNDER REVIEW: **NEW PROPOSED** 1. classroom differentiation, in-class clustering, possible acceleration, variety of suggested strategies, LST & itinerant teacher support available to classroom teacher 2. Identified gr 5-8 students eligible for 15 days of pull-out programming with an itinerant teacher of the gifted at various cluster locations throughout board 3. System placement in a gr 5/6 and gr 7/8 full time self-contained congregated class is possible	UNDER REVIEW 1. Gifted lines available to be used at discretion of local school administration 2. 1 school offers AP 3. some offer "gifted" sections of gr.9/10 courses 4. One itinerant teacher provides support service as needed throughout the board NEW: expansion of availability of PLAR, reach ahead, AP, etc	bus passes within London; taxi or van outside London provided to access system congregated classes provided to 15 day clustered pull-out sessions (as above)	860 formally identified gifted students (10/2005) (18 of which are gifted/LD)	all 860 (10/2005)	Alternate for all in cluster sessions Modifications recommended but rare Accommodations only as needed in specific cases (no longer recommended for all)

School Board	Screening Process & Identification Criteria	Gifted Programming & Placement Options			Transportation & Accessibility	Documentation & Statistics		
		Primary	Junior / Intermediate	Secondary		# IPRC	# on IEP	Modified Accommodated Or Alternate
Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB)	1. Student demonstrates Characteristics of Giftedness in regular classroom 2. Teacher offers differentiated activities within class 3. Teacher consults with SBT or Enrichment Contact re: student involvement in out-of-school activity with peers of similar ability Consideration is given to: Observations; Curriculum-based assessments; Academic Reports; staff recommendations; response to differentiated curriculum; other available assessment data 4. Gifted teacher works with student in short-term activities, suggests in-class strategies, and if appropriate, recommends nomination for further short-term and Area Class involvement 5. Area class participation provides timely feedback re: student progress and may result in nomination for Congregated Class 6. Students in Congregated Program must be formally identified as Intellectual-Gifted		1. Differentiation & extensions to the regular curriculum in class 2. Group Workshops short-term, theme-based activities (3-5 half day sessions - over 1200 students per year participate) 3. Area Class Programs 1 day / week (for half the year in gr. 4, 7 & 8; for the full year gr. 5/6) -to foster self-directed, independent learning skill, HOTS, collaboration with like ability peers Placement is reviewed annually and student must be re-nominated to continue 4. Congregated Programs 6 classes - 3 gr 5/6; 3 gr 7/8, max 25 students each; in schools across district			some in Area Class Program ALL in Congregated Program	yes if they have IPRC Yes, if in Area Class Program Yes, All in Congregated Program	