To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Gail Hickey entitled "The Status of Goal Development for Gifted Programs as Perceived by Interested Groups." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Elementary Education.

C. Glennon Rowell

C. Glennon Rowell, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Russell L. French

Phyllis E. Huff

Lamon J. Coleman

Jerrold C. Ufkes

Accepted for the Council:

Lou Minkel

Vice Provost and
Dean of The Graduate School

THE STATUS OF GOAL DEVELOPMENT

FOR GIFTED PROGRAMS

AS PERCEIVED BY INTERESTED GROUPS

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Education

Degree

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Gail Hickey

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ABSTRACT

Authorities in the field of curriculum development recommend the establishment of goals and the inclusion of interested groups in the goal development process for educational programs at all levels. This study was an attempt to assess the status of goal development for gifted programs, particularly at the elementary level, as perceived by national leaders in gifted education; and administrators, teachers, and parents of gifted students in the state of Tennessee.

The Delphi technique, a method to obtain reliable group consensus through a series of questionnaires interspersed with controlled feedback, provided the means for gathering necessary data. A review and synthesis of the literature related to recommended goals for gifted programs yielded eleven goal statements. These were presented to a panel of experts, administrators, teachers, and parents for ranking. Four related questions pertaining to participation in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness, were also presented to the panel in an attempt to reach consensus.

The Delphi panel agreed that three goal statements,

to provide a learning environment which will permit and encourage the capable student to develop to his/her individual potential while interacting with intellectual peers,

to establish a climate which values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity, and decision-making,

to encourage the development of and provide opportunities for using higher level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation),

represent priority needs of the elementary gifted. In addition, the panel reached consensus that the goal development process should be a cooperative effort among interested groups, that systematic observation by trained personnel is the best procedure to determine goal implementation, and that giftedness is a multi-faceted concept including unusual awareness/perception/curiosity, extraordinary skill/talent, and advanced intelligence.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Identification of persons of high intellectual ability and organizational provisions for meeting their special needs is a long-recognized concern. In ancient Greece, Plato suggested that children of advanced mental ability existed at all societal levels, and attempted to identify and educate these individuals in science and philosophy (Freehill, 1961). Some other attempts to provide an adequate education for the intellectually talented, despite socioeconomic status, include those by Charlemagne in 8th century France, and efforts by the Turkish Empire to recruit Christian children to serve the interests of the Empire during the 15th and 16th centuries (Hildreth, 1966).

Early in the history of our own country, interest in providing appropriate educational opportunities for talented students is evident in the writings of Thomas Jefferson, who proposed that such students be identified and educated at public expense (Hildreth, 1966). The launching of Sputnik in the late 1950's has been perhaps the most influential event during this century in terms of alerting society to the special needs of the intellectually talented. Although the level of interest and financial support for special educational programs for the intellectually talented have waxed and waned over the past 200 years, the rationale for providing these programs has remained essentially the same: the wide range of abilities possessed by intellectually talented students in comparison to the majority of their age/grade peers

necessitates special provisions to insure development of these students' potential.

As is true with the development of programs at all levels, the development of programs for the intellectually talented must begin with the establishment of goals. Unfortunately, many programs have not considered goals before beginning services to students. Renzulli and Smith (1978) described this phenomenon by indicating that

> far too many programs for the gifted are essentially collections of fun-and-game activities. Children walk into a resource room for the gifted, play a game or engage in a craft-type activity until their class period is over, and return the next day to pursue some similar type of experience. In questioning teachers about the purpose or objectives of such activities, the reply is almost always that they are 'challenging' and 'really enjoyable' to the child.

Such a practice is contrary to the process of curriculum development. As early as 1949, Tyler described the importance of goals to an educational program in his classic work Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction:

> Many educational programs do not have clearly defined purposes. In some cases one may ask a teacher of science, of English, of social studies, or of some other subject what objectives are being aimed at and get no satisfactory reply. The teacher may say in effect that he aims to develop a well-educated person and that he is teaching English or social studies or some other subject because it is essential to a well-rounded education. No doubt some excellent educational work is being done by artistic teachers who do not have a clear conception of goals but do have an intuitive sense of what is good teaching, what materials are significant, what topics are worth dealing with and how to present material and develop topics effectively with students. Nevertheless, if an educational program is to be planned and if efforts for continued improvement are to be made, it is very necessary to have some conception of the goals that are being aimed at. These educational objectives become the criteria by which materials are selected, content is outlined, instructional

> procedures are developed and tests and examinations are prepared. All aspects of the educational program are really means to accomplish basic educational purposes. Hence, if we are to study an educational program systematically and intelligently we must first be sure as to the educational objectives aimed at.

Reference to the need for a common focus in educational programs is not rare. Ragan and Shepherd (1977, p. 183) comment on this problem concerning the elementary school: "Granted the sources of goals for the modern elementary school are varied and diverse. This diversity of sources results in a diversity of goals."

Despite disparity, the formulation and adoption of these guiding principles is a necessary part of program design. McNerney (1953, p.2) has confirmed that

> all curriculums that function in progressing nations seem to have three basic characteristics in common:
> 1. Definite and dynamic objectives that grow out of the values held by the sponsoring nation.
> 2. A curriculum that makes provision for the growth that is necessary in order to attain the objectives.
> 3. Methods of evaluating the product of the educational process.

The formulation of goals for specific programs involves an organized effort by persons who are directly involved. A considerable consensus exists about who these persons should be. Saylor and Alexander (1954, p. 149) have recommended that "teachers, other staff members, (the) board of education, citizens of the community, particularly parents of school children, and the governmental bodies that exercise direct control over the school" should be involved at some level.

Maker (1982, p. 139) has warned that

> no curriculum can be developed effectively by one person in isolation. There are too many factors to consider, too many people to satisfy, and too many problems to solve....Some persons who can be helpful are parents, students, other teachers, support personnel in the school, administrators, and influential community members....However, these persons should be involved from the beginning rather than after the curriculum has been developed.

Similar recommendations for involving all interested groups in goal selection for programs for the intellectually talented have been made by prominent persons in the field of gifted education. Witty (1954), in writing about New York's Hunter College Elementary School, observed that a most prominent aspect of the school is the participation of parents and other teachers in program planning. Sumption and Luecking (1960) recommended that parents and teachers work together to "make worthwhile contributions to, and gain valuable understanding of, the school's real tasks." Smutny (1982) has advocated that parents have a responsibility to participate in designing programs for the intellectually talented, including goal selection.

The involvement of interested groups in educational program planning is also supported by legislation. The Marland Report (1972), a study documenting the educational neglect of our nation's gifted, led to the passage of P.L. 95-561 (1978). Inherent in this law is the concept of a team approach calling for "active participation of parents with teachers and administrators, and where feasible, students, in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs" (Chapey and Trimarco, 1984).

At the state level, court interpretation of P.L. 95-561 and 94-142 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act) has led to a greater awareness of the need for active involvement of all interested persons in special educational programs. Recent litigation in the state of Pennsylvania has "mandated that parents of the gifted and talented share responsibility and decision making with educators" (Chapey and Trimarco, 1984). Similar decisions may soon follow in other states.

Statement of the Problem

While there is consensus about the need for goals for programs for the gifted, there is little agreement about what these goals should be. A review of the related literature reveals that a great variety of educational goals has been proposed for the gifted. These goals appear to fall into four general categories, including **climate/environment conducive to the development of advanced abilities, attitudes/values, independent study/research, and creative/critical thinking.**

However, the evident range of viewpoints among writers in the field concerning appropriate goals for special programs is possibly a reflection of the historical lack of agreement among educators regarding methods to challenge capable students (Sanders, 1959; Tuttle and Becker, 1980). This lack of agreement surfaces most often concerning the aims of education for the gifted. Some insist that the aims of education for the gifted must be differentiated from those for other children; others take the position that the general goals of American education are commonly applicable (Sanders, 1959).

Goals for programs for the gifted at the secondary level seem to indicate less confusion than goals for the gifted at the elementary level, since program titles or description of services at the secondary level (e.g., Advanced Placement Classes or honors sections) imply goals which may be stated within program philosophies (Silverman, 1980). At the elementary level, however, confusion exists concerning program goals. This confusion may be due in part to the many varieties of program organization (Clark, 1983), and also to the surprising proportion of elementary programs which exist without defined goals (Boston, 1985). As stated earlier, effective programming is dependent in part upon commitment among interested groups. Considering the historical lack of agreement in relation to programming for the gifted, especially at the elementary level, consensus among interested groups at the time of program development seems unlikely. The question, then, can be stated as follows: What is the status of goal development for elementary programs for the gifted as perceived by interested groups? In addition, does agreement exist among interested groups in regard to appropriate goals and the goal development process for programs for the gifted at the elementary level?

In order to explore these broad questions, a more specific set of questions must be addressed:

1. **What are the generally accepted goals for programs for the gifted as found in the literature?**
2. **What, if any, agreement exists among interested groups concerning goals appropriate for educating the gifted?**

3. Who are perceived by members of interested groups as appropriate participants in the goal development process for programs for the gifted?

4. What are the perceptions of interested groups regarding responsibility for instructional decision-making in special programs for the gifted?

5. What are the perceptions of interested groups regarding appropriate procedures to determine goal implementation?

6. What is the extent of agreement among interested groups' perceptions of educational needs for the gifted and their perceptions of schools' attempts to address these needs?

7. What, if any, agreement exists among interested groups concerning a definition of giftedness?

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of interested groups regarding the goal development process for programs for the gifted. Additional purposes are to determine what, if any, differences exist among interested groups as to the (1) goals appropriate for elementary gifted programs, (2) responsibility for instructional decision-making, (3) procedures to determine goal implementation for programs for the gifted, and (4) a definition of giftedness.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following operational definitions were accepted:

1. **Gifted** is a superordinate concept encompassing and used in conjunction with many subordinate concepts, including: gifted and talented, gifted education, gifted youth, intellectually capable, intellectually talented and academically able, as is evidenced by its generic use among authorities in the field (Schooling the Gifted, Coleman, 1985; Growing Up Gifted, Clark, 1983; Creative Thinking and Problem Solving in Gifted Education, Feldhusen and Treffinger, 1980). The use of the term 'gifted' in this study reflects its acceptance among authorities in the field of gifted education as an umbrella term representative of a variety of concepts relating to advanced intellectual abilities.

2. **Curriculum** refers to a plan for learning (Taba, 1962).

3. **Elementary school** is defined as a school encompassing grades kindergarten through eight, including any combination of grades kindergarten through eight.

4. **Goals** are defined as statements of broad intent which are general, timeless, and nonmeasureable (Joint Committee on Educational Goals and Evaluation, Vol. I, p. 7, 1972).

5. **Consensus** is defined as the judgment arrived at by most of those concerned, in this case, more than 50 percent of the survey participants.

6. **Interested groups** is defined as special education program administrators, teachers and parents of gifted students in the state of Tennessee, and leaders in education of the gifted nationwide.

Delimitations

This study is delimited by the following factors:

1. elementary school programs for intellectually talented students (as defined by one or more of the following)

   (a.) a program designed to serve students who have been identified as intellectually capable through procedures recommended by the Tennessee State Department of Education, and who have been certified with the exceptionality of giftedness.

   (b.) a program designed to serve students identified as intellectually capable through standards set up and accepted by the local education agency, but who may not have been certified as gifted.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I consists of the statement of the problem and related questions, the purpose of the study, definition of terms, and the delimitations of the study.

Chapter II consists of a review of the related literature, and is divided into four parts:

1. participation of interested groups in the curriculum planning process,

2. the need for goal definition in gifted programs and participation by interested groups in the goal development process,

3. goals recommended for educating the gifted, and

4. the Delphi method.

Chapter III presents the methods and procedures for data collection.

Chapter IV includes presentation and analysis of the data.

Chapter V presents a summary, provides conclusions, and presents recommendations from the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of interested groups (national experts; and program administrators, teachers, and parents of gifted students in the state of Tennessee) regarding the goal development process for programs for the gifted. Specific areas to be addressed included appropriate goals for gifted programs, participation by interested groups in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures whereby goal implementation should be determined for programs for the gifted, and a definition of giftedness.

This chapter is divided into four sections:

1. a review of the literature related to the participation of interested groups in the curriculum planning process,
2. a review of the literature related to goals for gifted programs and participation by interested groups in the goal development process,
3. a review of the literature listing goals recommended for educating the gifted, and
4. a review of the literature related to the Delphi method, the research procedure selected for this study.

Due to the lack of research specifically related to the topic of goal development for programs for the gifted, this chapter will present for the reader more informed opinion than is normally found in a review of related literature.

I. Participation of Interested Groups In the Curriculum Planning Process

A review of the literature related to the participation of interested groups in the curriculum planning process revealed that this is a recommended procedure within the structure of curriculum development. Since the needs of a society must be established prior to the identification of educational goals, many writers have expressed the need to include all interested groups in curricular planning (Chapey and Trimarco, 1984; Maker, 1982; Saylor and Alexander, 1954; Smutny, 1982; Sumption and Luecking, 1960; Witty, 1954). Other writers have suggested that such a practice is the hallmark of a democratic society:

> In America, all interested citizens, parents, learners and scholars from all of the disciplines must work with teachers, principals and supervisors in the planning. This planning should go on throughout America on a local, state and national basis. A democratic society cannot permit uniformity and centralization. The onrushing future requires many different autonomous, competing efforts to cope with its problems....In the long run, we can only build the curriculum and use the teaching methods which the active school public will accept. We must work with the public and have orderly patterns for its participation. People need to be involved in the process of planning and curriculum in order to change their beliefs, attitudes and behavior regarding it (Hass, Kimball, and Bondi (ed.), 1970, pp. 420-21).

Although school personnel often work cooperatively in program planning, persons not employed by the school system seldom become

involved. Whether they do not have the opportunity, or decline to participate due to feelings of incompetence is unclear, but according to recent literature a concerted effort should be made to involve non-school personnel, especially parents, in the planning process. Some writers have indicated that involving parents in the educational program of their child is generally believed to produce positive benefits (Turnbull, 1983; Wiegerink, Hocutt, Posant-Loro, and Bristol, 1980). Such benefits have been described in terms of:

(a) **improved child outcomes** (Brofenbrenner, 1974; Gordon, 1971; Karnes, Teska, Hodgins, and Badger, 1970; Schaefer, 1972; Weikart, Deloria, Lawser, and Wiegerink, 1970),

(b) **increased parent skill** (Gray and Klaus, 1966),

(c) **improved parent emotional well-being** (Lillie, 1975), and

(d) **improved operation of the educational program itself** (Clements and Alexander, 1975; Ora, 1973).

Belief in the benefits of parent participation has also been associated with legislative mandates requiring parental involvement components to be included within special educational programs. For example, one of the six major principles of P.L. 94-142 deals with parent participation (Cone, Delawyer, Wolfe, 1985; Turnbull, 1983). Despite support from the educational community for involving all interested groups in program planning, however, a popular belief is that appropriate education of the gifted is possible without any special program at school or any involvement of interested groups (Stanley, 1975). Conversely, experts have suggested that the involvement of

interested groups in educational planning is vitally important for gifted children (Blanchard, 1981; Maker, 1982; Whitmore, 1980). Perhaps parents of these children may be even more inclined to participate in program planning, due to their documented high levels of interest in educational programs for their children (Schatz and Sanborn, 1980, pp. 40-43), and to their belief that the traditional school program is not meeting the special needs of gifted children (Feldhusen and Kroll, 1985, pp. 249-252).

Scholars who study the difficulties and achievements of gifted students tend to agree that the potential of these children is suppressed by the traditional school curriculum, and suggest that group participation in program planning and evaluation may positively affect this situation (Callahan and Kaufmann, 1982, pp. 50-55). The involvement of interested groups in curricular planning for the gifted has even been linked to program success by some writers:

> The idea of ownership is critical to program success, and ownership of the program for the gifted must be developed with all the publics affected. Involving these various publics is crucial because each one must be mobilized to encourage program development....This helps the resulting program to be more responsive to the real needs and characteristics of gifted students....The first step, therefore, that a school should follow in developing a local school plan is to designate a planning committee composed of representatives from the following groups: teachers, administrators, parents, gifted students, and community representatives....Next, an assessment of school needs should be conducted and analyzed by the committee....The third step is to narrow the program's scope to realistic goals....It can then be determined how many of these needs can be handled in order of priority, considering the available resources and the parameters established by the district (Morgan, Harry J. and others, 1980, pp. 8-9).

Participation by parents of exceptional children in planning their child's educational program is supported by federal legislation (P.L. 94-142). Callahan and Kaufmann (1982) have discussed this legislation as it applies to education of the gifted:

> ...Given the family characteristics associated with high achievement of gifted children--parents who are involved with the child's learning at home--there is every reason to believe that the following assumptions should guide parents' involvement in the schooling of their gifted youngsters:
> (a) Parents will represent the interest of their child, (b) parental participation in decision making will enhance the appropriateness of their child's education, (c) parents' participation will increase the school system's accountability. (These are, of course, assumptions underlying parental participation in education of the handicapped under P.L. 94-142).

It is clear that the involvement of all interested groups in program planning for the gifted is supported by experts in the field, and that a greater effort should be made by educators to include these groups in some aspect of curricular planning. This investigator believes that one way this can be accomplished is through inclusion of interested groups in the introductory stages of program planning, specifically, through the identification of goals.

II. Need for Goals in Education of the Gifted

A review of the literature related to goals for gifted programs revealed much diversity among experts in the field. Sanders (1959, p. 46) stated that there exists "some disagreement and a great deal of confusion." DiNunno (1982), in her dissertation on curricular decision-making in programs for the gifted, indicated that frequently

the only goal a school may have for its gifted program is "to have a program" (p. 4). While this situation may satisfy the most basic federal or state demands, it is not likely to support the development of student potential to the fullest extent possible within the school environment.

DiNunno also stated that

> Uncoordinated decision making by too many people is common in efforts to develop programs for the gifted. If this condition persists, educators jeopardize both acomplishing the task of special programs for the gifted and cooperatively using the potential of professional staff members (DiNunno, 1982, p. 14).

Such practices cannot be expected to result in programs which will ultimately become a part of the school's total curriculum, and may even predetermine program failure. As Sanders (1959) has indicated, the best identification procedure for gifted children is futile if the school does not plan for curricular change. "The real crux of education for academically talented children is not just whether we know who the pupils are, but whether we know what to do <u>with</u> and <u>for</u> them. This is a curriculum issue" (Sanders, 1959).

In a similar vein, Dettmer set forth the following directives:

> It is time for bold actions which place gifted programs in the spotlight as exemplars of educational success. Unfortunately, planners and administrators of gifted programs too often have not specified adequately the outcomes expected from the programs, nor have they demonstrated effectively the student growths that have resulted....The time has come for education of the gifted to grow up and assume its rightful place as an integral part of public school education. Comprehensive goal-setting and evaluation are critical steps in the maturation process....Goal-setting and evaluation must be welcomed as opportunity as well as responsibility (Dettmer, 1985, p. 146).

How can educational change for gifted programs be implemented? Two possibilities exist. Persons responsible for making decisions about curricula for the gifted can permit the outcomes to be left to chance, or they can make conscious, informed plans to follow an accepted curriculum development technique (DiNunno, 1983, p. 3-4, 16). Experience and research show that the former choice will result in a program which fails to meet the needs of the gifted student (Cox, Daniel, and Boston, 1985; DiNunno, 1982).

Feldhusen and Kolloff (1978, pp. 3-5, 53-57) have suggested that educational programs for the gifted should be systematicaly designed and theoretical defensible if they are to be established as a part of the school's curriculum. These educators also indicated that a systematic, coherent plan for instructional decision could produce a better quality program designed specifically to meet the needs of the capable learner.

Additional support for systematic program development can be found in the writings of J. Renzulli, developer of the Enrichment Triad Model:

> ...an important part of all programs for the gifted should be the systematic development of the cognitive and affective processes that brought these children to our attention in the first place. Systematic development simply means that professional educators should know and be able to defend the types of processes that are being developed through the activities that gifted children pursue in special programs (Renzulli and Smith, 1978, p. 21).

An initial step in systematic program development is the establishment of goals, defined by the Joint Committee on Educational Goals and Evaluation (1972) as statements of broad intent which are general, timeless, and nonmeasurable. Fliegler (1961, p. 376) advised

of the importance of identifying educational goals for gifted programs prior to program development. He believed that goals are the

> extensive guidelines from which the substance of curriculum emerges. Curriculum is the means through which the aims and objectives are brought into focus; it fabricates content and activities which are planned in the direction of achieving goals...Far too often greater concern is shown for the curriculum which is direct and immediate than for the over-all scope of education. The consequences of this emphasis are confusion and distortion regarding the substance of education. The means for achieving a certain goal become more important than the goal itself.

In a recent nationwide study of practices in education of the gifted, Cox, Daniels and Boston (1985) concluded that exemplary programs for the gifted demonstrate certain criteria related to goal development and implementation. They recommended that school systems considering a special program for gifted students "develop a written philosophy for the education of able learners that is consistent with the goals and values of the school district and community" (p. 153). They also indicated some significant trends. School districts with

> 'substantial' programs [the writer herein defines substantial, as discussed by Cox, Daniels and Boston, to mean those programs determined by the authors to include all selected characteristics, such as special administrators, written philosophy, program goals, etc.]...tended to have supervisory staff for gifted/talented programs, a written philosophy and goals, and a special budget...The variable that emerged as the best predictor of a larger number of 'substantial' programs was whether a district had a series of written goals for its educational efforts for able learners; this result was indicated in 72 percent of the districts (Cox, Daniels and Boston, 1985, p. 36, 42).

An additional recommendation from the study, known as the Richardson Study, was the formulation of an advisory group, which would be responsible for studying the needs of the community and student

population, and would make preliminary recommendations for program planning and implementation. In programs studied nationwide, the Richardson study revealed that a majority of exemplary programs for the gifted have designated advisory councils composed of teachers, parents, and administrators (Cox, Daniel and Boston, 1985, p. 191).

A well-planned program for the gifted also includes procedures for evaluation. Since the evaluation process reflects well-defined program goals or the absence of appropriate goals, these procedures should be established during the initial planning process. Ideally, planning for progam evaluation occurs simultaneously with the development of goals.

Most school systems have a phrase included in their guidelines which states: 'Our school purpose is...to educate each student to the fullest extent of his or her abilities...' (Dettmer, 1985). However, not all school systems have established educational goals aimed at meeting the special learning needs of their capable students. Until specific goals are identified and accepted, accountability for the education of gifted students 'to the fullest extent of their abilities' cannot be evaluated.

III. Recommended Goal Statements for Gifted Programs

A review of the literature related to goals for gifted programs, as has been mentioned, revealed much diversity among writers in the field.

In order to develop the questionnaires necessary to this study, the investigator made a preliminary study of recommended goals for educating the gifted by reviewing sources which specifically focused on goals or aims. (This step was necessary because the state involved in this study did not, at the time of this writing, have established goal statements for educating the gifted (Dr. Emily Stewart, personal communiqué, June, 1986)).

After consulting more than forty sources spanning three decades, the investigator found seven sources which specified goals or aims in educating the gifted. These sources, representing a variety of writers in the field, are included with corresponding goal statements in **Figure I.**

An analysis of collected goal statements revealed that nearly all could be grouped into one of four general categories: **climate/environment, attitudes/values, independent study/research, or creative/critical thinking.** This analysis is illustrated in **Figure II.** (It was necessary to include a "miscellaneous" category also, as almost all sources contained at least one goal statement which did not fit the definition of any established category.)

Once goal statements had been collected and analyzed, the investigator attempted to construct goal statements representative of the four established categories. Since these statements would become the basis for the study, along with four statements relating to goal development in programs for the gifted, care was taken to insure that these would be both representative of the literature and comprehensible

Clark (1983)

Provide opportunities and experiences particularly suited to the needs of the gifted learners and through which they can continue developing potential.

Establish an environment that values and enhances intelligence, talent, affective growth, and intuitive ability.

Allow active and cooperative participation by the gifted students and their parents.

Provide time, space, and encouragement for gifted students to discover themselves, their powers and abilities, and to become all that they can be.

Provide opportunities for gifted students to interact with children and adults of various abilities, including the bright and talented, to be challenged to know and revere humanity for its uniqueness and connectedness.

Encourage gifted students to find their place in human evolution by discovering what abilities and in what areas they wish to contribute.

Gold (1980)

Intellectual development, including a demanding body of knowledge and critical thinking skills.

Development of fundamental human values with a sense of social responsibility for using one's unusual gifts and talents.

Development of creative thinking and expression.

Development of aesthetic awareness and ability to express oneself in a variety of art forms.

Development of ability for self-appraisal, identification of special abilities and interests, finding oneself by try-out; in short, goal-setting and self-concept building.

Development of social relationships and skills in interacting with other people and groups.

Runyon (1975)

Providing a learning atmosphere which will enable the gifted child to develop his or her unique potential and exceptional abilities, particularly in the areas of decision-making, planning, performing, reasoning, creating, and communicating.

Providing an opportunity for the student to use initiative, self-direction, and originality in dealing with problems.

Providing a realistic environment for goal-setting in which the student accepts responsibility as evidenced through the selection of projects and programs of study which are designed to aid in the development and expansion of both cognitive and affective skills which broaden fields of personal reference.

Providing activities which incorporate a multi-media, multi-level, interdisciplinary approach, in other words, activities which facilitate the transfer of learning across artificial boundaries.

Providing an opportunity for relationships and experiences which will expand experiential horizons, produce larger goals, and assist the student in gaining a sense of personal responsibility and intellectual freedom.

Vassar (1977)

The gifted and talented need to...

Use, develop, and understand higher level mental processes

Interchange and dialogue with their intellectual peers

Have the time, space, and staff necessary to assist the development of their outstanding ability

Understand, appreciate, and study the diversity among individuals

Have available an appropriate identification process and access to specialized counseling

Learn to develop lifestyles commensurate with their particular profile of abilities and talents

Have the opportunity to assess their unique talents and interests

Clendening and Davies (1983)

Superior achievement
Self-directedness
Acceptance and responsibility
Creative thinking and expression
Aesthetic awareness
Acceptance of divergent views
Pursuit of alternative solutions
Commitment to inquiry
Preparation for satisfying lifestyle and career

Kincaid (1956)

Effective thinking
Basic skills
Citizenship
Understanding of environment
Appreciation of beauty
World understanding
Character and human relations
Vocational competence

Tuttle and Becker (1980)

Leadership qualities, such as self-awareness, social awareness, responsibility, and independence.

Advanced communication skills in a variety of areas.

Higher level thinking skills (e.g., analysis, synthesis, and evaluation).

Creative and productive thinking skills.

Problem-solving and problem-finding skills.

Independent research skills.

FIGURE 1

GOAL STATEMENTS FOR GIFTED PROGRAMS

Source	Climate/ Environment	Attitudes/ Values	Independent Study/Research	Creative/Critical Thinking Skills	Miscellaneous
	Category				
Clark (1983)	+	+			+
Clendenning and Davies (1983)		+	+	+	+
Gold (1980)		+		+	+
Kincaid (1956)		+		+	+
Runyon (1975)	+	+	+		+
Tuttle and Becker (1980)		+	+	+	+
Vassar (1977)	+	+		+	+

A + indicates representation of category.

FIGURE II

ANALYSIS OF GOALS RECOMMENDED FOR GIFTED PROGRAMS

BY CATEGORIES

to the sample. **Figure III** delineates the goal statements constructed by the investigator for use throughout the study, and **Figure IV** presents these goal statements with the four corresponding categories representative in the literature on education for the gifted.

In summary, a review of the literature specifying goals for educating the gifted yielded seven sources listing a total of forty-seven goal statements. An analysis revealed that these goals could be grouped mainly into one of four general categories: **climate/environment, attitudes/values, independent study/research, or creative/critical thinking.** A synthesis of goal statements from the literature, resulting categories, and the need for a comprehensible representation yielded eleven goal statements which were used throughout this study.

IV. The Delphi Method

The Delphi method, a technique for obtaining reliable group consensus through a series of questionnaires interspersed with controlled feedback, was the research procedure selected to collect data for this study. The origin of the Delphi technique can be traced to the early 1950's, when the Rand Corporation developed the technique as one means of collecting expert opinion concerning the future of technology (Linestone and Turoff, 1975, p. 10).

The Delphi technique provides three basic features: confidentiality, repetition and controlled feedback, and group response. These features make the Delphi method useful in educational situations where convergence of opinion is advisable. Members of the group are

GOAL STATEMENTS

A. To provide a learning environment which will permit and encourage the capable student to develop to his/her individual potential while interacting with intellectual peers.

B. To establish a climate which values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity, and decision making.

C. To encourage capable students in developing and using abilities for self-appraisal, recognition of personal talents/interests, and setting short and long-term goals.

D. To assist the capable student in acquiring a sense of social responsibility in developing and using his/her special abilities.

E. To enhance the development of leadership skills, social awareness, and personal responsibility.

F. To provide opportunities for and develop skills in independent study, self-directed learning, and research.

G. To provide linkages between meaningful tasks/class assignments and independent study/research.

H. To provide instruction in problem solving and critical thinking skills.

I. To encourage the development of and provide opportunities for using higher level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

J. To encourage creative thinking and expression in a variety of communication skills.

K. To provide for aesthetic awareness and the ability for self-expression through artistic means.

FIGURE III

GOAL STATEMENTS
FOR PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED
AS PRESENTED IN THE DELPHI PROBE

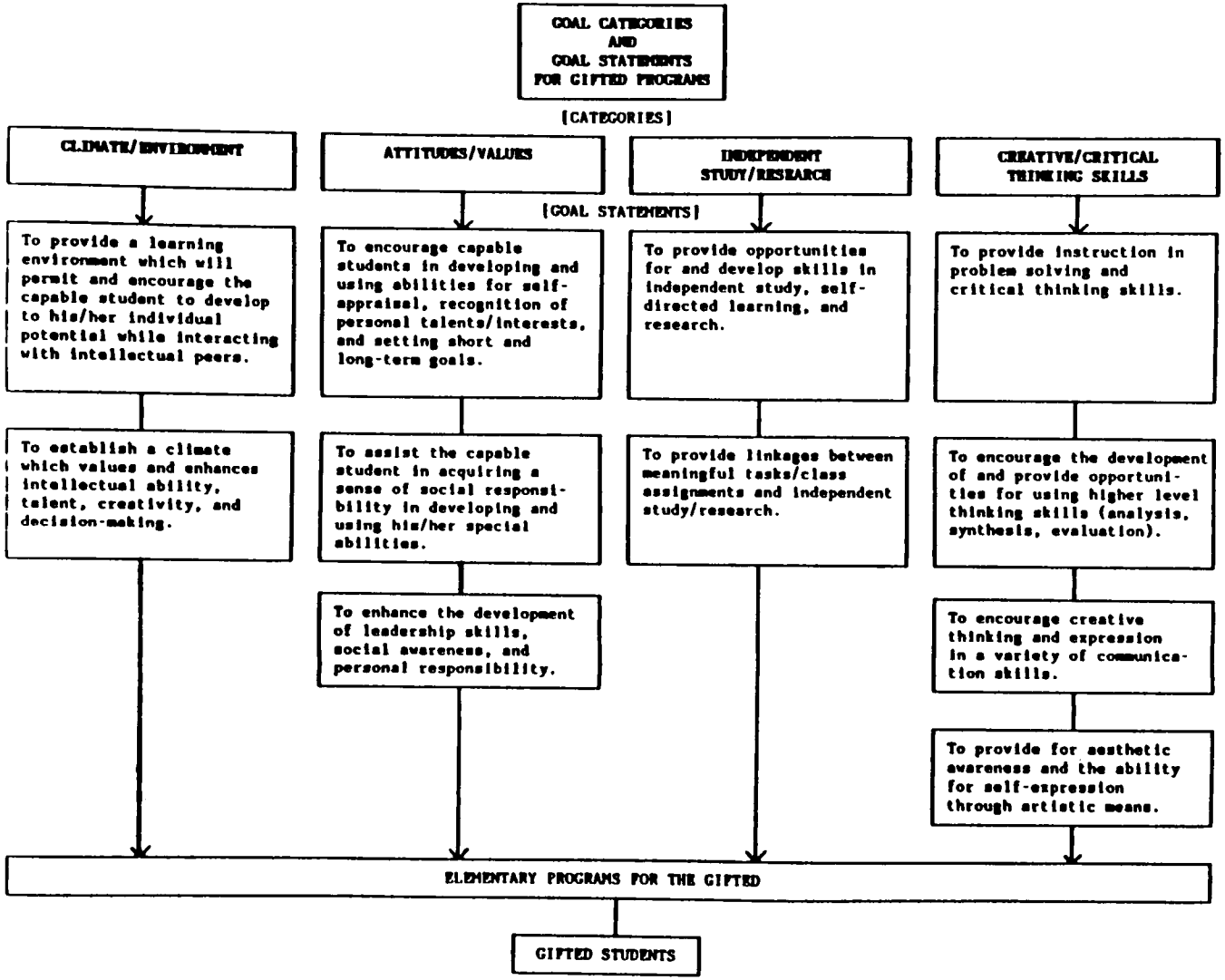


FIGURE IV

GOAL CATEGORIES AND GOAL STATEMENTS FOR GIFTED PROGRAMS

polled separately, usually through a series of probes in which opinions are elicited, tabulated, and synthesized; for this purpose, several probes may be used. When the final probe is completed, data are reported in the form of a group analysis. Individual opinions remain confidential (Dalkey, et al, 1972).

The Delphi method provides several advantages for the educational researcher. Issues clarified and conclusions reached are more likely to reflect careful thought than would be procured from a single questionnaire. Because each respondent is called upon to re-evaluate his/her position several times, the technique tends to build consensus based on reflective thinking. The potential for developing consensus makes the Delphi procedure very desirable in such areas as educational need surveys, since consensus facilitates implementation of findings (Borg and Gall, 1983).

Other advantages make the Delphi method an ideal tool when consensus is needed. Its confidentialty removes the threat of confrontation and encourages free exchange of ideas. There is no penalty for expression of nonconformist views, and each respondent has several opportunities to state his/her position. When experts are geographically dispersed, a Delphi probe provides the opportunity to arrive at decisions without the inconvenience of convening the group.

Some limitations of the Delphi technique include cost, time, lessened representation of extreme viewpoints, and possible misrepresentation due to the lack of a theoretical base (Amara, 1974, p. 12). The technique is rather costly and time consuming when compared to

other methods of research. An attempt to reach consensus will invariably exclude opposing views, and the selection of "experts" as respondents does not guarantee unbiased opinions (Amara, 1974). However, these concerns do not limit its usefulness for obtaining consensus in educational matters. The Delphi technique is particularly suited to this study because it

(a.) is recommended as one of the most promising techniques available to decision-makers concerned with the identification of goals (Dalkey, 1972);

(b.) gives the investigator "direct control of the scope of the investigation" (Amara, p. 12, 1974); and

(c.) is an ideal research tool when the problem does not lend itself to precise analytical techniques but can benefit from subjective judgments on a collective basis (Linestone and Turoff, p. 4, 1975).

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The aim of this study was to determine the status of goal development in elementary programs for the gifted as perceived by interested groups (national experts; special education program administrators, teachers, and parents of the gifted in the state of Tennessee). Specific areas which were examined included appropriate program goals, participation by interested groups in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures whereby goal implementation may be determined, and a definition of giftedness. In order to explore the problem, this investigator surveyed a panel of interested groups using a three-round Delphi probe.

Steps in conducting a Delphi study include:

1. preparation of a set of statements and/or questions for evaluation;
2. identification of population/sample;
3. circulation of initial questionnaire among proposed sample (response indicates a willingness to serve as a member of the Delphi panel for the remainder of the study);

4. development of a revised questionnaire based on responses to the first questionnaire, which is then circulated to original respondents;

5. the revision procedure may be repeated for one or more additional questionnaires at the discretion of the investigator.

Development of Initial Questionnaire

As was described in **Chapter II** (p. 19), the investigator reviewed the literature specifying goals for programs for the gifted and, through an analysis and synthesis of existing goal statements, developed a representative collection of goal statements for programs for the elementary gifted to be evaluated by the Delphi panel. This collection of eleven goal statements, along with four statements relating to the goal development process for gifted programs, was the basis for the initial questionnaire (**Round I**).

In an attempt to offset decreased representation of extreme viewpoints, which is one limitation of the Delphi technique (Amara, 1974), one open-ended item was added to the original eleven goal statements to allow for unstructured response. Additional open-ended statements designed to allow respondents to address the four related statements at issue in this study made up the remainder of the **Round I** questionnaire (see **Appendix B**, pp. 82-83, for a copy of **Round I**).

Panel Selection

The sample of panelists selected for participation in this study was drawn from three sources: national leaders in education of the gifted, administrators of special education programs in the state of Tennessee, and parents and teachers who hold membership in the Tennessee Association for the Gifted. Each respondent, then, could be considered an "expert" in comparison to the general populace, whether by virtue of his/her contributions to, training in, or admitted support for gifted education.

In a national census of graduate degree programs in education of the gifted, Parker and Karnes (1984) listed leaders identified with the universities represented. From this listing, fifteen program directors were selected to represent major geographical areas nationwide. In an attempt to validate this selection, Karnes and Peddicord's (1980) Programs, Leaders, Consultants, and Other Sources in Gifted and Talented Education was consulted. Ten of the fifteen persons selected were identified by Karnes and Peddicord as national leaders in the field of gifted education. In the investigator's opinion, the remaining five have received significant recognition by virtue of service and/or publication since Karnes and Peddicord's work was released in 1980.

Using the 1983-84 edition of Tennessee's Directory of Public Schools, a list was made of special education directors and/or gifted program coordinators in the state. Out of 142 school systems, 94 listed the name and title of such a person. Using the Tennessee Statistical

Abstract 1984-85, a corresponding list of counties was made to indicate population density. The investigator made the decision to assign each of the 94 school systems a number (3,2,1) indicative of population density in order to guarantee representation from each division (Babbie, 1973, p. 94). A stratified proportional random sampling technique (McMillan and Schumacher, 1984, p. 119) was then utilized to create a pool of administrators for the Delphi probe representative of the state of Tennessee. School systems were grouped according to population density and randomly selected; for every six systems selected, three were representative of high population density (>200 per square mile), two of moderate population density (50-199), and one of low population density (<50), until a total of 24 school systems had been selected from which special education administrators would comprise the second category of panelists.

The membership of the Tennessee Association for the Gifted, a state-wide organization advocating support for educational opportunities for gifted children, is composed primarily of parents and educators of gifted students. Using the current membership list (1985), consisting of a total of 958 addresses, the investigator divided the list into categories corresponding with the 24 school systems previously selected by matching cities. So that some geographical areas would not be over-represented, two names were selected at random from each category until all categories had been exhausted, then names were chosen at random from the remaining membership list until a total of 76 names had been selected. Of these, 26 were parents, and 50 were teachers, as

determined by records of the Tennessee Association for the Gifted. Thus, 115 persons made up the potential pool of panelists for the Delphi probe: 15 experts in gifted education nationwide; 24 coordinators of special education programs, 26 parents of gifted students, and 50 teachers, representing the state of Tennessee.

Procedures of Data Collection and Analysis

Factors Used in Content Analysis

Following a preliminary study of the data returned from each round of the Delphi probe, the investigator developed categories for content analysis of the data. An attempt was made to comply with Holstoi's requirements that categories in content analysis "should reflect the purposes of the research, be exhaustive, be mutually exclusive, independent, and be derived from a single classification principle" (Holstoi, 1969, p. 95). The categories established would also have to be quantifiable (Berelson, 1952).

Development of Round I of the Delphi Probe

The basic questions at issue in this study included:

1. What are the generally accepted goals for programs for the gifted as found in the literature?
2. What, if any, agreement exists among interested groups concerning goals appropriate for educating the gifted?

3. Who are perceived by members of interested groups as appropriate participants in the goal development process for gifted programs?

4. What are the perceptions of interested groups regarding responsibility for instructional decision making in special programs for the gifted?

5. What are the perceptions of interested groups regarding appropriate procedures to determine goal implementation?

6. What is the extent of agreement among interested groups' perceptions of educational needs for the gifted and their perceptions of schools' attempts to address these needs?

7. What, if any, agreement exists among interested groups concerning a definition of giftedness?

In order to address the first question, a review of the literature concerning recommended goals in education of the gifted was conducted. This review, reported in **Chapter II**, revealed much diversity among experts in the field. Goal statements from seven sources were synthesized for the purpose of developing the **Round I** questionnaire; further analysis by predetermined key terms revealed that these goal statements could be said to represent four categories: **climate/environment, attitudes/values, independent study/research, creative/critical thinking**. Subsequently, eleven goal statements were constructed to represent original goal statements selected from the

literature. As has been mentioned, one open-ended item was added in an attempt to offset decreased representation of extreme viewpoints.

Field Testing of Initial Questionnaire

In order to determine the relative clarity of goal statements, readability of the instrument, and length of time required to complete the questionnaire, a pre-test was conducted in a graduate level college class which was composed of students from three of the intended respondent categories: administrators of special programs, teachers, and parents of gifted children. The first draft of the questionnaire provided space for unstructured goal statement completion intended to correspond with the four goal categories identified through the review of related literature. Participants in the pre-test to determine clarity of goal statements, however, either failed to respond to open-ended items, or responded to one only. The decision was made at this point to reduce unstructured goal statements to one open-ended response, and the questionnaire was redesigned accordingly. The average length of time required to complete the questionnaire was judged to be about twenty minutes. **Round I**, the first questionnaire in the Delphi probe, was finalized following field testing and distributed to panel members by mail. (See **Appendix A**, pp. 74-80, for facsimiles of correspondence.)

Data Analysis of Round I and the Development of Round II

The investigator analyzed the data from **Round I** by categorizing responses of the 36 panel members (31%) who replied. (According to Borg

and Gall (1983), a nationwide Delphi probe sponsored by the Council for Exceptional Children suffered a drop-out rate of 96 percent; most Delphi studies can anticipate an initial return of less than 50 percent (Sackman, 1972)). Since panel members were asked to rank order goal statements, the investigator accordingly assigned weighted values to each of these responses, and placed the response, with its value, in one of the four goal categories. Mean scores revealed that seven of the eleven goal statements were ranked higher more often by respondents; these became the basis for the second questionnaire.

Open-ended responses to the other questions at issue were analyzed through a search for key terms which had been previously established by the investigator. These categories of responses were used as the basis for multiple forced-choice responses in the second questionnaire.

Purpose and Format of Round II

The purpose of **Round II** was to indicate the appropriateness of goal statements selected by the panel to elementary programs for the gifted, and to gain a closer consensus of the panel concerning the goal development process, instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness. Respondents were given an opportunity to rank seven of the original eleven goal statements according to appropriateness for elementary programs for the gifted. Questions concerning goal development, instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal

implementation, and a definition of giftedness were presented as multiple forced-choice response items.

Data Analysis of Round II and the Development of Round III

The data returned for **Round** II were analyzed with a response rate of thirty-six (36) or 100 percent of the panel members responding to **Round** I. Frequencies for goal statement rankings were tallied; those receiving majority ratings of importance (>50%) were retained for **Round** III. Goal statements not receiving majority support were deleted. Deleted goal statements included all those from the category of **attitudes/values**, which eliminated this category for the remainder of the study. (See **Appendix B**, pp. 84-87, for copies of **Rounds** II-III.)

Responses to questions concerning goal development, instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness were tallied according to categories determined in the analysis of **Round** I. Those categories not receiving majority support were deleted.

Purpose and Format of Round III

The purpose of **Round III** was to refine and confirm the beliefs submitted in **Round II** by panel members. Panelists were asked to prioritize goal statements in reference to educational need. They were also asked to indicate to what extent they believed schools in their area to be meeting these identified needs. Questions concerning goal development, instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal

implementation, and a definition of giftedness were included in **Round III** as statements with which panelists could agree, disagree, or respond with "don't know."

Data Analysis of Round III

The data returned for **Round III** were analyzed with a response rate of thirty (30), or 86 percent of the panel members who responded to **Round I**. Frequencies for prioritized goal statements were tallied, with levels of agreement determined for each interested group and for the Delphi panel as a whole. The level of agreement for the schools' attempts to address prioritized goal statements was determined in the same manner. Responses to items dealing with goal development, instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness were tallied, and frequencies determined to indicate consensus.

Information about the analysis of each round of the Delphi probe and a collective synthesis of results from the probe will be presented in greater detail in **Chapter IV.**

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine the status of goal development for elementary programs for the gifted as perceived by interested groups. Related issues investigated included identification of appropriate goals, participation by interested groups in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures for determining goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness. Opinions regarding these issues were solicited from parents of the gifted, teachers of gifted students, and administrators of special programs within the state of Tennessee, and from experts in education of the gifted throughout the nation, with the assistance of a three-round Delphi probe.

Round I of the Delphi probe directed panelists to rank order goal statements developed through a review of the literature, and to respond individually to open-ended statements concerning participation in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures to determine whether program goals are being implemented, and a definition of giftedness. Panelists also indicated the demographic category with which they would be identified throughout the study.

Round II of the Delphi probe was designed from analysis of responses to **Round I**. The purpose of **Round II** was to indicate the degree of importance for goal statements given high ranking by the panel, and to gain a closer consensus of the panel concerning participation in the goal development process, instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness.

Round III of the Delphi probe was designed from analysis of **Round II** responses. The purpose of **Round III** was to refine and confirm the beliefs submitted by panel members in **Round II**. Panelists were asked to prioritize the goal statements given high ranking in **Round II**, and to indicate the extent to which they believed schools in their area to be meeting these goals. Members of the panel were also asked to indicate agreement/disagreement with responses most frequently made to items concerning participation in the goal development process, instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness.

In this chapter the data from each of the three (3) rounds of the Delphi probe are presented and analyzed.

Analysis of the Data from Round I of the Delphi Probe

The purpose of **Round I** was to elicit from panelists expert opinion concerning the status of goal development for gifted programs through the following related issues:

1. What goals are appropriate for elementary gifted programs?

2. Who should participate in the goal development process for programs for the gifted?

3. Who should be primarily responsible for instructional decision-making in programs for the gifted?

4. What procedures should be used to determine goal implementation in programs for the gifted?

5. What is the definition of giftedness?

Panelists

Round I was mailed to 115 persons: fifteen national leaders in education of the gifted, and twenty-four administrators of special programs, fifty teachers, and twenty-six parents of gifted students within the state of Tennessee. Thirty-six persons (31 percent) responded, indicating their willingness to participate as members of the Delphi panel. **Table** I indicates the distribution of the Delphi panel according to respondent category.

Reasons for low teacher-response rate are not known. However, it should be pointed out that the initial questionnaire provided two distinctions relating to teacher respondent identification: "classroom teacher" and "teacher of the gifted." It could not be determined from Tennessee Association for the Gifted membership records which job titles were held by randomly selected teachers, but all three teachers responding to **Round** I identified themselves as teachers of the gifted. Nevertheless, it should be noted that with a response rate of only six percent, or three of the original fifty teachers contacted, the

responses of teachers in this study cannot be said to be representative of teachers in the state of Tennessee.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF DELPHI PANEL RESPONDENTS

Group	No. Contacted	No. Responding	Percent Represented
National Experts	15	7	47
Program Administrators	24	15	63
Teachers	50	3	6
Parents	26	11	43

Eleven goal statements were written to represent those goals found in the literature. These were organized around four goal categories, also based on analysis of the literature. An open-ended response item was added to allow panelists to create additional goals. The twelve total statements were presented in **Round I**. Panelists were instructed to rank order each statement according to its appropriateness for programs for the gifted. (See **Figures III** and **IV**, pp. 24-25, for goal statements and corresponding categories.)

Rankings of goal statements were tallied and percentages determined. Of the original eleven goal statements, seven (goal statements **A, B, D, F, I, H, and E**) were strongly supported (>50 %) by the panel. Open-ended goal statement responses were analyzed and categorized, but no one area received sufficient support to be included

in subsequent questionnaires. (Open-ended responses and comments are included in **Appendix C**, pp. 89-99.)

Table II, "Response to Appropriateness of Goals as Given by Delphi Panel Groups, Rounds I-III," illustrates the analysis of response frequency for each interested group participating. All groups supported goal statements **A** and **B**. Program administrators favored goal statement **H**, while national experts in gifted education supported goal statement **C**. Group support for other goal statements was scattered, but total panel response indicated support for the seven goals previously mentioned.

Questions representing the issues of goal development, instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness were represented by open-ended response items (see **Appendix B**). Responses to these items were analyzed according to predetermined key terms (**administrators, teachers of the gifted, classroom teachers, coordinators of special programs, experts, parents, students**), and placed in categories relating to those terms. Each category supported by the Delphi panel was included as a response choice to related statements in **Round II**. (**Table III**, "Response to Related Statements as Given by Delphi Panel Groups," illustrates frequencies of response by panel member groups.)

Analysis of the Data from Round II of the Delphi Probe

The purpose of **Round II** was to provide an opportunity for panel members to re-examine goal statements given high ranking in **Round I**, and

TABLE II

RESPONSE TO APPROPRIATENESS OF GOALS AS GIVEN BY DELPHI PANEL GROUPS, ROUNDS I THROUGH III

Goal statement	Category[2]	Deleted After Round:	ROUND I[4]				ROUND II[5]				ROUND III[6]			
			Experts (High----------Low)	Administrators	Teachers[3]	Parents	Experts	Administrators	Teachers	Parents	Experts	Administrators	Teachers	Parents
			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
A	C/E		3 2 1 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	7 2 0 0 1 1 0 0 2 1 1 0	2 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	5 1 1 2 0 0 1 0 1 0 0 0	6 1 0 0	13 2 0 0	3 0 0 0	10 1 0 0	3 2 0 1 0	7 0 2 1 1	1 1 1 0 0	4 2 0 2 2
B	C/E		2 1 2 1 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0	5 2 2 0 1 0 1 0 3 0 0 1	0 1 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	1 5 1 0 1 1 0 0 0 2 0 0	6 1 0 0	14 1 0 0	3 0 0 0	10 0 1 0	2 2 1 0 1	2 4 3 0 1	1 1 1 0 0	2 5 2 0 1
C	A/V	I	1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 1 1 0 0	0 3 3 2 1 2 2 0 1 0 0 0	0 0 0 1 0 0 2 0 0 0 0 0	1 0 1 2 0 1 1 0 1 0 1 3	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
D	A/V	II	0 0 0 2 0 0 1 1 0 2 1 0	0 1 1 1 0 1 3 3 2 2 0 1	0 0 0 0 1 0 0 2 0 0 0 0	0 1 3 2 0 0 2 1 1 0 1 0	3 2 2 0	8 5 2 0	1 2 0 0	3 5 2 1	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
E	A/V	II	0 0 0 0 0 1 1 1 2 0 0 2	1 0 1 1 4 3 1 2 0 2 0 0	0 0 0 0 0 3 0 0 0 0 0 0	1 2 0 1 1 0 1 2 0 3 0 0	2 3 2 0	10 4 1 0	2 1 0 0	3 6 2 0	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
F	I/E		0 1 0 1 3 1 1 0 0 0 0 0	0 1 1 4 3 2 1 1 1 1 2 0	0 1 0 1 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0	0 3 1 1 0 1 1 2 1 1 0 0	3 4 0 0	11 2 2 0	2 1 0 0	9 2 0 0	0 1 2 0 3	1 2 1 3 4	0 0 1 0 2	0 3 2 4 1
G	I/E	I	0 0 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 0 4 0	1 1 0 0 1 2 1 2 1 3 2 0	0 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 1 1 0 0	0 0 2 0 0 1 2 0 1 1 3 1	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
H	C/CT		0 1 0 0 2 1 0 0 1 2 0 0	1 2 4 1 0 4 0 1 1 1 0 0	0 0 1 0 1 0 0 1 0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0 3 3 0 2 1 1 1 0	3 3 1 0	14 1 0 0	3 0 0 0	5 5 1 0	0 1 1 3 1	0 3 3 2 3	0 0 0 3 0	0 1 2 3 4
I	C/CT		0 0 2 0 0 1 1 0 1 1 1 0	0 3 0 5 0 0 4 0 2 0 1 0	1 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0	1 0 0 2 3 1 0 1 2 0 1 0	3 2 2 0	14 1 0 0	3 0 0 0	6 1 4 0	1 0 2 2 1	1 2 2 5 1	1 1 0 0 1	3 0 3 1 3
J	C/CT	I	0 0 0 1 0 0 3 3 0 0 0 0	0 0 1 1 2 1 2 5 0 3 1 0	0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 1 1 0 0	1 0 0 0 2 3 2 0 0 2 1 0	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
K	C/CT	I	0 0 0 0 0 1 0 1 1 1 2 1	0 0 0 0 2 0 0 1 2 2 7 0	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 2 0	0 0 0 1 1 0 0 3 2 1 2 1	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
L_1	M	I	0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	0 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	0 1 2 0 0 0 1 0 0 1 1 1	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -

1 represents open-ended item

2 C/E - climate/environment
A/V - attitude/value
I/E - independent study/research
C/CT - creative/critical thinking
M - miscellaneous

3 Since only three teachers participated in the Delphi probe, teacher responses cannot be said to be representative.

4 Respondents were asked to rank eleven goal statements and one open-ended goal according to appropriateness for elementary programs for the gifted

5 Respondents asked to indicate degree of importance (1-very important, 2-important, 3-moderately important, 4-not important) to gifted programs for seven highest ranked goal statements from Round I

6 Respondents asked to prioritize highest ranked goal statements from Round II (1-highest priority, 5-least priority) according to perceived needs of gifted students

TABLE III

RESPONSE TO RELATED STATEMENTS AS GIVEN BY DELPHI PANEL GROUPS

ROUND I

Statement	Response Categories	Experts	Administrators	Teachers	Parents
Goals for programs for the gifted and talented should be developed primarily by _____.	Admin., teachers, parents	4	8	3	4
	Coordinators/trained teachers	3	4	0	4
	National/state experts	0	0	0	2
	Administrators	0	1	0	0
	Classroom teachers and teachers of the gifted	0	2	0	1
Program goals should be primarily carried out by _____.	Teachers of the gifted	4	8	3	7
	Cooperative effort	2	3	0	4
	Classroom teacher and teachers of the gifted	0	3	0	0
	Experts in gifted education	1	0	0	0
	Students in the program	0	0	1	0
The best way to find out whether program goals are being implemented is _____.	Through systematic observation/monitoring	2	8	0	4
	Survey students/parents	0	4	2	4
	IEP's	0	1	2	2
	Planned evaluation of goals	3	0	0	0
	Testing	1	1	0	0
	Ask teacher/principal	0	1	0	1
	Don't know	1	0	0	0
Giftedness can best be defined as ___.	Extraordinary skill/talent	5	7	2	3
	Advanced intelligence	0	7	1	4
	Unusual awareness/perception	0	0	0	2
	Unusual curiosity	0	0	0	2
	Creativity	2	0	0	0
	Don't know	0	1	0	0

N=36

(continued on next page)

TABLE III (continued)

ROUND II

Statement	Response Categories	Experts	Administrators	Teachers	Parents
Goals for programs for the gifted and talented should be developed primarily by _____.	Administrators	5	9	1	3
	Teachers of the gifted	5	13	3	9
	Classroom teachers	4	9	2	5
	Parents	3	8	0	3
	Coordinators of special programs	5	10	2	6
	Experts at the state/national level	3	6	0	2
Program goals should be primarily carried out by _____.	Administrators	5	3	1	0
	Teachers of the gifted	6	12	3	11
	Classroom teachers	5	12	2	6
	Parents	1	5	1	3
	Students	2	5	2	5
	Coordinators of special programs	4	4	0	2
	Experts at the state/national level	0	1	0	0
The best way to find out whether program goals are being implemented _____.	Through systematic observation	7	9	0	3
	Through monitoring teachers and classes	4	8	1	3
	To survey students in the program	3	8	0	5
	To survey parents of students in the program	3	7	0	6
	Through the development and evaluation of IEPs	1	8	1	6
	No response	0	0	1	0
Giftedness can best be defined as _____.	Extraordinary skill/talent	4	10	3	6
	Advanced intelligence	3	10	2	7
	Unusual awareness, perception, curiosity	1	11	2	10
	No response	2	0	0	0

N=36

(continued on next page)

TABLE III (continued)

ROUND III

Statement	Response Categories	Experts	Administrators	Teachers	Parents
Goals for programs for the gifted and talented should be developed primarily by _____.	Teachers of the gifted in cooperation with program coordinators and classroom teachers	4 (67%)	10 (83%)	3 (100%)	6 (67%)
Program goals should be primarily carried out by _____.	Teachers of the gifted	4 (67%)	6 (50%)	1 (33%)	8 (89%)
The best way to find out whether program goals are being implemented is _____.	Through systematic observation by trained personnel	5 (83%)	8 (66%)	3 (100%)	5 (56%)
Giftedness can best be defined as ___.	Unusual awareness/perception/curiosity, extraordinary skill/talent, and advanced intelligence	3 (50%)	12 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)

N=30 Frequencies for ROUND III indicate number of panel members who agreed with each statement.

to gain a closer consensus concerning participation in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness.

Panelists were instructed to indicate the degree of importance to elementary programs for the gifted and talented for each of the seven goal statements retained from **Round** I. Responses were tallied and percentages determined. At this point, panelists viewed five goal statements (**A, B, F, H, I**) as important to programs for the elementary gifted. Goals emphasizing learning environment, learning climate, problem solving and critical thinking skills, higher level thinking skills, and self-directed learning were all strongly supported by panel groups. Analysis of goal statement categories revealed that goal statements receiving majority support represented three of the four categories; one category, **attitudes/values**, was deleted at this point due to lack of panel support.

As is illustrated in **Table** II, p. 43, national experts again supported goal statements **A** and **B**. Program administrators supported **E** and **F** as well as **A** and **B**, while teachers favored **A, B, E, F, H,** and I. Parents of the gifted supported **A, B, F,** and I.

Items concerning participation in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness were presented as incomplete statements with multiple-choice responses. These were tallied and frequencies determined; responses became the

basis for related statements in **Round III**. In some instances, more than one possible response received majority support; this was reflected in **Round III** item statements. (See **Table III**, pp. 44-46, for analysis of response to related statements by panel groups.)

Analysis of the Data from Round III of the Delphi Probe

The purpose of **Round III** was to refine and confirm the beliefs submitted in **Round II** by panel members.

Five of the original eleven goal statements were again presented, and panelists were instructed to prioritize goals in reference to perceived educational need. Panel members were also instructed to indicate to what extent they believed local schools to be meeting the needs of gifted students.

Items relating to participation in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, evaluation of goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness were included as statements with which panelists could indicate level of agreement (see **Appendix B**).

The number of panelists responding to **Round III** was thirty (30), or 86 percent of the original panel. This figure indicates a drop-out rate from **Round II** to **Round III** of fourteen percent.

Responses to prioritized goal statements were tallied, and percentages determined for each level of agreement. Goal statements **A**, **B**, and I received the highest prioritization, representing the goal categories of **climate/environment** and **creative/critical thinking**. Thus,

a second goal category, **independent study/research**, failed to receive majority support from the panel.

Analysis by panel groups (see **Table II**, p. 43) revealed that all groups again supported goal statements **A** and **B**. Although teachers also supported goal statement **I**, opinion was divided among panel groups for the other goals included in **Round III**. Total panel response, however, indicated group support for **A, B** and **I**.

Responses to the item concerning attempts by schools to address the prioritized goals were also tallied and percentages determined. Panelists agreed that schools in their neighborhoods are addressing most goals appropriate for the gifted (**F, H, I**) "to some extent," but that none of these goals are being addressed "very well" or even "adequately." **Table IV** illustrates total response to this item, and **Table V** depicts analysis by panel groups.

Questions attempting to elicit opinion regarding participation in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, evaluation of goal implementation, and a definition of giftedness were analyzed by tallying responses and determining frequencies for each item. Consensus was reached for all related statements, with the exception of the issue of responsibility for instructional decision-making. See **Table III**, pp. 44-46, for further analysis.

TABLE IV

DELPHI PANEL RESPONSE TO "PLEASE INDICATE HOW WELL YOU BELIEVE THE SCHOOLS IN YOUR AREA ARE MEETING THESE GOALS"

Goal Statement	Very Well N	Very Well %	Adequately N	Adequately %	To Some Extent N	To Some Extent %	Not Being Met N	Not Being Met %
A	5	(17)	4	(13)	13	(43)	8	(27)
B	4	(13)	7	(23)	14	(47)	5	(17)
F	2	(7)	6	(20)	19	(64)	3	(10)
H	4	(13)	6	(20)	17	(57)	3	(10)
I	4	(13)	5	(17)	19	(64)	2	(7)

N=30

TABLE V

RESPONSE TO "PLEASE INDICATE HOW WELL YOU BELIEVE THE SCHOOLS IN YOUR AREA ARE MEETING THESE GOALS" BY DELPHI PANEL GROUP

Goal Statement	Experts (N=6)				Administrators (N=12)				Teachers (N=3)				Parents (N=9)			
	Very Well	Ade-quately	To Some Extent	Not Being Met	Very Well	Ade-quately	To Some Extent	Not Being Met	Very Well	Ade-quately	To Some Extent	Not Being Met	Very Well	Ade-quately	To Some Extent	Not Being Met
A	1	0	4	1	3	1	6	2	0	1	2	0	1	2	1	5
B	1	0	3	2	3	2	6	1	0	1	2	0	0	4	3	2
F	1	1	4	0	1	2	7	2	0	1	1	1	0	2	7	0
H	2	1	3	0	1	3	7	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	5	2
I	2	1	3	0	1	2	9	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	5	2

Summary

Thirty-six of 115 persons originally contacted agreed to participate in a three-round Delphi probe to determine consensus among interested groups regarding goals appropriate to programs for the elementary gifted, participation in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation for existing programs, and a definition of giftedness. All thirty-six panelists responded to Rounds I and II of the Delphi probe; thirty (86 percent) responded to Round III. Consensus was reached for five of eleven goal statements, and a strong degree of panel support (>60 percent) was evidenced for the remaining concerns.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the status of goal development in elementary programs for the gifted as perceived by interested groups (national experts; and program administrators, teachers, and parents of gifted students in the state of Tennessee). Some related issues included appropriate goals for gifted programs, participation by interested groups in the goal development process, responsibility for instructional decision-making, procedures to determine goal implementation for programs for the gifted, and a definition of giftedness.

Participants

A total of thirty-six persons representing national leaders in gifted education; administrators, teachers, and parents of the gifted within the state of Tennessee, composed the panel of participants in this study. The seven national leaders were voluntary participants from a stratified sample of fifteen persons selected by the investigator to represent national geographic areas. Fifteen administrators of special education programs within the state of Tennessee were voluntary participants from twenty-four school systems selected by stratified

proportional random sampling; eleven parents and three teachers of gifted children were voluntary participants from a similar sample of 26 parents and 50 teachers holding membership in the Tennessee Association for the Gifted.

Procedures

Using the Delphi technique, an investigator attempts to obtain reliable consensus through a series of questionnaires interspersed with controlled feedback. The technique, pioneered by the Rand Corporation, was deemed most appropriate for gathering data for this study. There are three basic features which make it useful: confidentiality, repetition with controlled feedback, and group response.

Following a review of the related literature, the investigator developed a questionnaire designed to elicit opinion in regard to the questions at issue in this study. This was field tested by the investigator with a graduate level college class in education of the gifted, and revised accordingly. Copies of the initial questionnaire (**Round** I) were mailed to the group of experts and to interested groups in each of the randomly selected school systems. Responses to this first questionnaire provided a basis for the development of a second questionnaire (**Round** II); likewise, responses to the second questionnaire provided a basis for development of the third questionnaire (**Round** III). All questionnaires were analyzed according to categories of responses and by demographic data.

A concern of the study was the low response rate for teachers as an interested group. Because only three (3) of the 50 teachers contacted agreed to participate as members of the Delphi panel, responses of teachers in this study cannot be said to be representative of teachers in the state of Tennessee.

Findings

Seven research questions were posed to address the problem. These questions, supported by the data reported in **Chapter IV**, represent the major findings of this study.

1. What are the generally accepted goals for programs for the gifted as found in the literature?

Through a review of the literature it was determined that the establishment of goals is an important step in the development of gifted programs. Few of those writing about gifted education, however, have made lists of goals considered appropriate for educating the gifted. A total of forty-seven goal statements were identified as representative of the most generally accepted aims for gifted programs. Analysis revealed that the forty-seven goals abstracted from the literature could be categorized into four general (though not mutually exclusive) groups:

- **climate/environment,**
- **attitudes/values,**
- **independent study/research,** and
- **creative/critical thinking skills.**

2. What, if any, agreement exists among interested groups concerning goals appropriate for educating the gifted?

From the review of related literature, the investigator collected forty-seven recommended goals for gifted programs, which were then synthesized as eleven goal statements for the purpose of this study. The Delphi panel was in consensus for three program goals, and indicated that these were priority needs in educating the gifted. Two prioritized goals (**A** and **B**) represented the category of climate/environment, and one goal (I) represented creative/critical thinking skills. In **Round III**, the final round of the Delphi probe, national experts and parents of the gifted ranked goal statements **A** and **B** (climate/environment) as having highest priority in education for the gifted. Administrators were somewhat divided in their opinions, but goal statement **A** received the highest level of support. Teachers favored goals **A, B,** (representing climate/environment) and **I** (creative/critical thinking). When total panel support for all goal statements represented was considered, agreement was obtained that three goals are most appropriate for educating the gifted (**A, B,** and **I**):

> **to provide a learning environment which will permit and encourage the capable student to develop to his/her individual potential while interacting with intellectual peers,**
>
> **to establish a climate which values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity, and decision-making,** and
>
> **to encourage the development of and provide opportunities for using higher level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).**

3. Who are perceived by members of interested groups as appropriate participants in the goal development process for programs for the gifted?

It was the consensus of the panel in this study that goals for programs for the gifted should be developed primarily by teachers of the gifted in cooperation with program coordinators and classroom teachers.

4. What are the perceptions of interested groups regarding responsibility for instructional decision-making in special programs for the gifted?

Opinion was divided among panel members for this question in **Round** III, and consensus was not obtained. Teachers of the gifted, classroom teachers, and students in the program were choices named by all panel groups. A majority of the panel indicated that goal implementation should be a cooperative effort, and that teachers of the gifted should be included on the cooperative team.

5. What are the perceptions of interested groups regarding appropriate procedures to determine goal implementation?

The Delphi panel reached consensus for the support of systematic observation by trained personnel as the appropriate procedure for evaluating the implementation of goals for gifted programs.

6. What is the extent of agreement among interested groups' perceptions of educational needs for the gifted and their perceptions of schools' attempts to address these needs?

Goals receiving high priority ranking according to perceived educational need included

to provide a learning environment which will permit and encourage the capable student to develop to his/her individual potential while interacting with intellectual peers,

to establish a climate which values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity, and decision-making, and

to encourage the development of and provide opportunities for using higher level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

The panel agreed that schools are attempting to address each of these goals to some extent. None of the interested groups surveyed believed that educational needs of gifted students are being met by the schools "very well" or even "adequately."

While there was no consensus for goal statement H (**to provide instruction in problem solving and critical thinking skills**) as a priority need, the panel nevertheless indicated that this goal was being addressed "to some extent" in the schools.

7. What, if any, agreement exists among interested groups concerning a definition of giftedness?

The highest level of consensus for any question at issue in this study was obtained for the definition of giftedness. All parents, teachers, and program coordinators participating in the final round

agreed that giftedness can best be defined as **unusual awareness/perception/curiosity, extraordinary skill/talent, and advanced intelligence.** National experts participating in the final round of the Delphi probe were divided in their opinions for the definition of giftedness.

Discussion

As is true with most scholarly research, a simple reporting of the findings provides the reader with pertinent facts relating to the investigator's purpose for commencing the study. During the process of research and data collection, however, events and experiences may occur which, while unintended, prove to be salient to the outcome of the study. These are reported here for the benefit of the interested reader and potential investigators.

A major area of concern to the investigator when reporting the results of this study was the fact that only three (3) of the 50 teachers contacted chose to participate as members of the Delphi panel. A deeper and perhaps more relevant concern, however, should be addressed. Why did only three teachers elect to participate? Did the prospect of committing oneself to a series of three questionnaires, when teachers are already overburdened with paperwork, seem overwhelming? Do teachers as a group have less commitment to educating the gifted than the other groups surveyed? Or, do they simply not consider the goal development process an integral part of their professional obligations? Perhaps none of these suggestions are correct, but the fact that so few

teachers were inclined to become involved in this study is still an area of concern.

Although selection of a sample for this study was statistically accurate, for the purpose of obtaining consensus it would have been desirable that a greater percentage of interested groups contacted elect to participate on the panel. The literature repeatedly confirms that one may expect a less than 50 percent return rate, with additional dropouts as a Delphi probe progresses. While the Delphi technique is a recommended procedure for obtaining reliable consensus concerning the identification of goals, it is the opinion of the investigator that a more effective means of facilitating participation by interested groups may exist.

Procedures inherent in the Delphi technique itself may be of concern to those planning to investigate problems in gifted education. The Delphi method is a means whereby consensus may be obtained while maintaining the confidentiality of participants, but the procedure necessitates mediation by an individual--the investigator. Thus, face-to-face discussion for clarification, interpretation, and/or constructive brainstorming is not possible. A specific example in this study is the issue of responsibility for instructional decision-making in programs for the gifted, which appeared in each questionnaire as "Program goals should be primarily carried out by _____." In a deliberate attempt to obtain consensus through the use of a forced-choice response, the statement was reworded in **Round III** as "Program goals should be primarily carried out by teachers of the

gifted," reflecting the one response most frequently selected in **Rounds** I-II. The **Round III** statement did not reflect, however, that a majority of the panel had selected more than one response, and that "teachers of the gifted" was only the response choice with the highest overall frequency count. Consensus was not obtained, but perhaps communication among panel members may have facilitated agreement.

Another example of the possible inefficiency of the Delphi technique for studies such as this one is the finding related to appropriate procedures to determine goal implementation in programs for the gifted. The reader may recall that goals considered appropriate by the participants in this study included two goal statements representing **climate/environment** and one representing **creative/critical thinking skills**. The procedure selected by participants as the best way to evaluate implementation of goals was "**systematic observation by trained personnel**." Interestingly enough, it would be difficult if not impossible to evaluate classroom climate and opportunities for development of higher level thinking skills through observation alone. Again, whether communication between and among panel members may have brought about a different consensus is not known.

Although writers in the field of general curriculum development and in program planning for the gifted agree that participation by parents in program planning can bring about positive benefits, the panel in this study did not support the inclusion of parents in the goal development process. As was mentioned in **Chapter II** (p. 12), it is often difficult to convince persons not employed by the school system to become involved

in program planning. However, the fact that 43 percent of the parent group, or 11 of the 26 contacted, agreed to participate in the Delphi probe indicates that there is some hope for the involvement of parents in program planning, particularly for elementary programs for the gifted.

Finally, this investigator noted an apparent pattern of responses among three of the four interested groups surveyed. This pattern is revealed in the analysis of responses by national experts, administrators of special programs, and parents of the gifted to the questions involving participation in the goal development process and responsibility for instructional decision-making in programs for the gifted: each group consistently named "teachers of the gifted" more often than any other individual response choice. What does this mean? Is the response pattern an indication that interested groups truly believe that teachers of the gifted should be entrusted with the primary responsibility for goal-setting and implementation? Or, does it mean that among interested groups are those individuals who do not want to become actively involved in program planning, and so perceive that the primary responsibility belongs to a group or groups other than their own? This phenomenon is only one of several the investigator feels would lend itself to further probing.

Conclusions

The following conclusions relating to the status of goal development for programs for the gifted can be drawn from the results of this study.

1. Contrary to the diversity of traditional and written opinion, agreement exists among interested groups for only a limited number of goal areas for educating the gifted. Appropriate goals for elementary gifted programs should focus on providing both an environment conducive to the enhancement of advanced intellectual abilities, and opportunities for the development of higher level thinking skills.

2. Schools do not appear to be adequately addressing the needs of gifted learners in the areas of climate/environment conducive to the enhancement of advanced intellectual abilities and opportunities for developing higher level thinking skills.

3. Giftedness is a multi-faceted concept, and cannot be defined in terms of simple ability or talent.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, this investigator makes the following recommendations:

1. School districts deciding to develop a program for the gifted should first designate an advisory committee composed of members from interested groups. This committee should be responsible for goal development as an initial step in program planning.

2. Schools should make a more conscious effort to address the needs of gifted students, especially in the areas of climate/environment conducive to the development of advanced abilities, and the fostering of creative/critical thinking skills.

3. Further research is needed into the process of program development for gifted programs, especially as it relates to decision-making among interested groups, both within and outside the jurisdiction of school systems and individual schools.

4. The investigator would suggest a study which would particularly address the perceptions of teachers of the gifted: possible conflict between administrative guidelines and classroom implementation; whether teachers are indeed involved in the goal-setting process; whether goal statements exist for individual programs and whether teachers are aware of and/or implementing established goals.

5. The study should be replicated in other states to determine whether the categories of goals determined to be priority needs in this study are local in scope, or generalizable across state lines.

6. A similar research design might be used to conduct a nationwide study of appropriate goals for educating the gifted and teaching strategies for addressing these goals. Such information would be a valuable addition to the literature, since educators would have a broader base from which to plan programs and curricula for the gifted.

7. Additional research is needed in which there is an investigation of the goal categories for educating the gifted which were utilized in this study: climate/environment, attitudes/values. independent study/research, and creative/critical thinking skills.

8. Investigators planning to use the Delphi technique to define educational program goals should consider modifying the procedure to facilitate reliable consensus.

In conclusion, the investigator of this study has synthesized available information regarding goals for gifted programs, demonstrated that some consensus is needed regarding these goals, particularly at the elementary level, and shown that the Delphi technique is one means whereby a degree of consensus may be sought among interested groups. It is hoped that the results of this study will serve to further emphasize the need for a coherent, systematic procedure for the development and implementation of programs for the elementary gifted, and that school districts will utilize the findings and recommendations from this study to develop or improve their own gifted programs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FACSIMILES OF CORRESPONDENCE

January 2, 1986

Dear Friend:

You have been identified as one having an interest in and commitment to quality education for gifted and talented children. This is why I am contacting you now and asking you to take part in a series of three surveys. These surveys are intended to provide information about goals for educational programs for gifted and talented children.

The enclosed questionnaire is the first in this series and should require no more than twenty minutes of your time. A postage-paid envelope is provided and I need to have the questionnaire returned by January 17, 1986. The second questionnaire will reflect the results of this survey and also include some follow-up questions. The third and final questionnaire will be handled in a similar manner to the second. Your responses will be kept entirely confidential. I will be happy to provide a copy of the results if you so indicate on the third questionnaire.

For this study to be valid, I need each of you to participate in all three surveys. I know your time and effort are very valuable, but I think you will agree that we really need to define our direction better. Please join me in this attempt to provide information about programs for the gifted and talented.

Thank you,

Gail Hickey
Doctoral Candidate,
The University of Tennessee

February 10, 1986

Dear Friend:

Not long ago you were asked to participate in a survey concerning goals for gifted programs. Since I had not received your response by the original deadline, I am writing to ask you to please reconsider.

Perhaps you were involved in another project at the time, and could not give it the attention you felt it deserved. Or perhaps, if your desk is like mine, you laid it aside, meaning to complete it on another day. Whatever the reason, please complete the survey as soon as possible and mail it to me in the postage-paid envelope before February 21, 1986. This will enable me to analyze all responses more effectively.

Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Gail Hickey

March 6, 1986

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your response to **Round** I of the study regarding goals for the gifted and talented. Enclosed you will find **Round II**, which was developed from the analyzed **Round I** responses.

Most of you agreed that seven of the original eleven goal statements were appropriate for elementary gifted programs. Additionally, when responses to the statements concerning giftedness, goal development and implementation were analyzed, several patterns emerged. These are reflected in Part II of the current questionnaire.

The objective of **Round II** is to obtain an indication of agreement and the importance which you feel should be accorded to each statement.

A few directions are in order for completion of **Round II**:

Part I

Indicate the degree of importance for each statement by placing a check mark on the appropriate line.

Part II

Place a check mark beside each choice which best completes the phrase. Check all that apply.

Should you have further questions, do not hesitate to contact me:

Ms. Gail Hickey
216D Claxton Education Building
The University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996-3400
(615) 974-4187

I look forward to receiving your response. For your convenience, a postage-paid envelope is enclosed. Please return the questionnaire before **March 19, 1986.**

Thank you,

Gail Hickey

Enclosures

March 17, 1986

Ms. Sherry Martin
Rt. 12 Box 45, Palmer Rd.
Lebanon, TN 37087

Dear Ms. Martin:

After our telephone conversation on March 14, I compiled a list of names from my computer file for your convenience in supplying information about members of TAG. As indicated, the names highlighted are the ones I need more information about, such as whether each is a parent of gifted child(ren), or a teacher employed by a school system (I do not need the name of a system, just the fact that a person teaches is sufficient).

I hope you will be able to discover more about these persons. As you mentioned, such information about TAG members would be beneficial to officers in the future, as well as assisting me in my research.

Thank you again for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Gail Hickey
Doctoral Candidate,
The University of Tennessee

(A self-addressed stamped envelope has been included for your convenience in returning the list.)

April 22, 1986

Dear Friend:

I am writing to remind you of the study concerning goals for education of the gifted. As you know, it is vitally important that each of you participate in the entire study.

In the event that you have misplaced **Round II**, I am enclosing a second copy along with a postage-paid envelope. Please take time to complete the questionnaire and put it in the mail today, if possible.

Thank you for your support of gifted children and continued interest in this field.

Sincerely,

Gail Hickey
Doctoral Candidate,
The University of Tennessee

May 13, 1986

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your response to **Round II** of the study regarding goals for programs for the gifted and talented. Enclosed you will find **Round III**, the third and final questionnaire, which was developed from analyzed **Round II** responses.

Most of you agreed that five of the seven goal statements were very important to elementary gifted programs. Responses to the statements concerning giftedness, goal development and implementation were also analyzed, and the response patterns are reflected in Part III of the current questionnaire.

The objective of **Round III** is to obtain an indication of consensus as to the educational priority which should be accorded selected goals, and to determine whether schools are presently addressing these needs.

I look forward to receiving your responses. For your convenience, a postage-paid envelope is enclosed. Please return this final questionnaire before **May 21, 1986**, and remember to indicate whether you would like to receive a copy of the results.

Thank you,

Gail Hickey

Enclosures

May 26, 1986

Dear Friend:

Recently you received **Round III** of the study concerning goals for gifted programs. This is the final questionnaire you will be asked to complete, but it is vital that all persons participating in the study return the third questionnaire. Please take a few minutes now to complete **Round III** and return it in the postage-paid envelope.

Please remember to sign your name in the space provided, as this information is essential if you wish to receive a copy of the results. All responses will be kept confidential.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you again for your cooperation,

Gail Hickey

APPENDIX B

THE DELPHI PROBE: ROUNDS I, II, AND III

I. A. PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING ELEVEN GOAL STATEMENTS, CONSIDERING THEIR APPROPRIATENESS TO ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED. IF YOU THINK THERE ARE APPROPRIATE GOALS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED HERE, PLEASE WRITE THEM IN THE SPACE PROVIDED.

____a. To provide a learning environment which will permit and encourage the capable student to develop to his/her individual potential while interacting with intellectual peers.

____b. To establish a climate which values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity, and decision-making.

____c. To encourage capable students in developing and using abilities for self-appraisal, recognition of personal talents/interests, and setting short and long-term goals.

____d. To assist the capable student in acquiring a sense of social responsibility in developing and using his/her special abilities.

____e. To enhance the development of leadership skills, social awareness, and personal responsibility.

____f. To provide opportunities for and develop skills in independent study, self-directed learning, and research.

____g. To provide linkages between meaningful tasks/class assignments and independent study/research.

____h. To provide instruction in problem solving and critical thinking skills.

____i. To encourage the development of and provide opportunities for using higher level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

____j. To encourage creative thinking and expression in a variety of communication skills.

____k. To provide for aesthetic awareness and the ability for self-expression through artistic means.

____l. Other

_____

_____

B. NOW RANK THE ABOVE GOAL STATEMENTS BY PLACING A NUMBER TO THE LEFT OF EACH GOAL ACCORDING TO ITS DEGREE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL: "1" BEING "MOST APPROPRIATE," "2" "NEXT MOST APPROPRIATE," ETC., TO "LEAST APPROPRIATE." PLEASE RANK ALL GOAL STATEMENTS, INCLUDING THOSE YOU HAVE ADDED.

II. COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

a. Goals for programs for the gifted and talented should be developed primarily by _____

_____

_____.

b. Program goals should be primarily carried out by _____

_____

_____.

c. The best way to find out whether program goals are being implemented is _____

_____

_____.

III. PLEASE STATE YOUR DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV. PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS SO THAT WE MAY BETTER ANALYZE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES:

Which ONE of the following best describes you?

____a. Classroom teacher

____b. Teacher of gifted/talented students

____c. Parent of gifted child(ren)

____d. Coordinator/Director of Gifted Program

____e. Consultant/Professor for Education of the Gifted

____f. Other _____

Name _____

ROUND II

1. READ THE FOLLOWING GOAL STATEMENTS. CONSIDERING THEIR IMPORTANCE TO ELEMENTARY GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS, INDICATE THE DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE FOR EACH STATEMENT BY PLACING A CHECK MARK IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACE (VERY IMPORTANT, IMPORTANT, MODERATELY IMPORTANT, NOT IMPORTANT).

	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Not Important
a. To provide a learning environment which will permit and encourage the capable student to develop his/her individual potential while interacting with intellectual peers.	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. To establish a climate which values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity, and decision making.	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. To encourage the capable student in acquiring a sense of social responsibility in developing and using his/her special abilities.	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. To provide instruction in problem solving and critical thinking skills.	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. To provide opportunities for and develop skills in independent study, self-directed learning, and research.	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. To encourage the development of and provide opportunities for using higher level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. To enhance the development of leadership skills, social awareness, and personal responsibility.	_____	_____	_____	_____

II. PLACE A CHECK MARK BESIDE EACH CHOICE WHICH BEST COMPLETES THE PHRASE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

1. Goals for programs for the gifted and talented should be developed primarily by

____administrators

____teachers of the gifted

____classroom teachers

____parents

____coordinators of special programs

____experts at the state or national level

2. Program goals should be primarily carried out by

____administrators

____teachers of the gifted

____classroom teachers

____parents

____students

____coordinators of special programs

____experts at the state or national level

3. The best way to find out whether program goals are being implemented is

____through systematic observation

____through monitoring teachers and classes

____to survey the students in the program

____to survey parents of students in the program

____through the development and evaluation of IEPs (individualized educational programs)

4. Giftedness can best be defined as

____extraordinary skill or talent

____advanced intelligence

____unusual awareness, perception, curiosity

III. PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WITH THE SAME RESPONSES USED FOR ROUND 1.

Which ONE of the following best describes you?

____a. Classroom teacher

____b. Teacher of gifted/talented students

____c. Parent of gifted child(ren)

____d. Coordinator/director of special program

____e. Consultant/professor for education of the gifted

Name _____

ROUND III

1. A. YOU, THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS STUDY, HAVE AGREED THAT THE FOLLOWING GOAL STATEMENTS ARE APPROPRIATE FOR AND IMPORTANT TO ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED. PLEASE RANK ORDER THESE ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS OF GIFTED STUDENTS BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE, "1" HAVING GREATEST PRIORITY, FOLLOWED BY "2," "3," "4," AND "5," WITH "5" HAVING LEAST PRIORITY.

____a. To encourage the development of and provide opportunities for using higher level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

____b. To provide opportunities for and develop skills in independent study, self-directed learning, and research.

____c. To provide a learning environment which will permit and encourage the capable student to develop to his/her individual potential while interacting with intellectual peers.

____d. To establish a climate which values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity, and decision making.

____e. To provide instruction in problem solving and critical thinking skills.

B. THE SAME GOALS APPEAR BELOW. PLEASE INDICATE HOW WELL YOU BELIEVE THE SCHOOLS IN YOUR AREA ARE MEETING THESE BY PLACING A CHECK MARK IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACE:

	Very Well	Adequately	To Some Extent	Not Being Met
a. To encourage the development of higher level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).	___	___	___	___
b. To provide opportunities for and develop skills in independent study, self-directed learning, and research.	___	___	___	___
c. To provide a learning environment which will permit and encourage the capable student to develop to his/her individual potential while interacting with intellectual peers.	___	___	___	___
d. To establish a climate which values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity, and decision making.	___	___	___	___
e. To provide instruction in problem solving and critical thinking skills.	___	___	___	___

II. PLACE A CHECK MARK IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACE FOR EACH STATEMENT:

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
a. Goals for programs for the gifted and talented should be primarily developed by teachers of the gifted in cooperation with program coordinators and classroom teachers.	____	____	____
b. Program goals should be primarily carried out by teachers of the gifted.	____	____	____
c. The best way to find out whether program goals are being implemented is through systematic observation by trained personnel.	____	____	____
d. Giftedness can best be defined as unusual awareness/perception/ curiosity, extraordinary skill/talent, and advanced intelligence.	____	____	____

III. CHECK THE ONE CATEGORY WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOU:

____a. Teacher of the gifted/talented

____b. Parent of gifted child(ren)

____c. Coordinator/director of special program

____d. Consultant/professor in education of the gifted

Name _____

(IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE FINAL RESULTS OF THIS STUDY, PLEASE INDICATE BY CHECKING THE APPROPRIATE SPACE.)

____ YES, I wish to receive a copy.

____ NO, I do not wish to receive a copy.

APPENDIX C

DELPHI PANEL MEMBER RESPONSE TO OPEN-ENDED STATEMENTS, ROUND I

RESPONSES OF DELPHI PANEL MEMBERS TO OPEN-ENDED GOAL STATEMENT BY PANEL GROUP: ROUND I

National Experts	To increase the students' knowledge base. To develop in students a real sense of efficacy at tackling real problems.
Program Administrators	To challenge capable students with learning tasks which require in-depth analysis and creative thinking. To expand broad areas of knowledge (exploration and career awareness). To encourage a positive self-concept.
Parents	To encourage a positive approach to intellectual activity that rewards the gifted student so that he or she is not turned off or turned into a "gifted underachiever." To provide suitable gifted role models and mentors. To provide time just to exist and dream without a schedule. To provide support so "fear of failure" and the requirement to produce a product will take a back seat to the fun of learning to just learn. To provide student-initiated learning situations. To provide an environment in which a student can test the limits of his/her ability for the joy of learning--not grades. To try to get the teacher to recognize the value of each child. To provide orientation on career areas.

RESPONSES OF DELPHI PANEL MEMBERS TO OPEN-ENDED RELATED STATEMENTS IN ROUND I OF THE DELPHI PROBE BY PANEL GROUP

RESPONSES TO "GOALS FOR PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED SHOULD BE DEVELOPED PRIMARILY BY:"

National Experts

People who are well trained in gifted education and knowledgeable about the development of gifted students.

Team-effort--program manager for gifted, teacher of gifted, parents of gifted--submitted to board of education.

School district policy makers should develop program goals; teachers should develop instructional goals compatible to program goals.

Groups composed of community leaders, parents, educators.

Program staff.

School staff, TAG staff, administrators.

A representative committee.

Program Administrators

Coordinator, teacher, parent, and student.

Teachers, principals, administrators.

Cooperation between regular and special teachers.

Professional educators but taking into consideration

a. what the research tells us about gifted learners
b. what the regular curriculum already offers
c. the type of giftedness targeted
d. parent and community expectations as defined by an advisory committee
e. long-range educational opportunities available to the students

A group of specialists under the guidance of the State Dept. of Ed.

The individual classroom teacher with the leadership of supervisors and in cooperation with the students.

The school system with modifications for individual needs made [by] the M-team.

Professionals, parents, and students.

Gifted program coordinators, teachers, and other educators with an awareness of and knowledge of the needs of gifted students.

Professionals in the area of gifted particularly the teachers in the program, parents, and the students in the program.

RESPONSES TO "GOALS FOR PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED SHOULD BE DEVELOPED PRIMARILY BY:" (continued)

Program Administrators	Teachers, curriculum committees, parents, and students.
	Teachers, supervisors, administrators, college and university academic experts, parents, and the students.
	Teachers in school-related activities, parents for moral values and "enrichment" activities.
	Coordinator/director of gifted program who can evaluate present effectiveness of academic programs and consult teachers as to student needs observed.
	Gifted coordinator and teachers of gifted with input from other members of the M-team.
Teachers	The gifted/talented teacher...however her goal should reflect or consider opinions/goals recommended by the classroom teacher and parents.
	Need-assessment done by each system--one person must be responsible; form teacher/administrator/parent committee.
	Parents, teachers.
Parents	Educators or expert advice of people in fields of particular interest of the gifted child.
	Those trained to educate the gifted.
	Parents who see everyday developments and interests of children and teachers who see specific interests displayed in specific subject areas.
	Specialists in gifted education.
	Someone with special training in working with gifted children along with parents.
	Experienced CLUE teachers and CLUE coordinators.
	Task forces of parents, teachers, "experts," and a few administrators.
	Students, parents, mentors, gifted ed. specialists, teachers of the gifted.
	Those best educated and the most experienced in working with the gifted and talented.
	Committee of school administrators, teachers of gifted, parents, and perhaps concerned adults who are gifted themselves.
	Classroom teachers who have had classes under professors or consultants for the gifted!

RESPONSES OF DELPHI PANEL MEMBERS TO OPEN-ENDED RELATED STATEMENTS BY PANEL GROUP: ROUND I

RESPONSES TO "PROGRAM GOALS SHOULD BE PRIMARILY CARRIED OUT BY:"

National Experts	Personnel who are well trained in gifted education. Teacher and manager of gifted program. Educators. Entire district staff. People most appropriate to each goal--classroom teachers for appropriately challenging curriculum, interest development, development of critical, creative, problem solving skills, etc.; TAG teachers to assist classroom teachers to assist classroom teachers, do more specialized skill training, facilitate independent investigations, etc.; administrators to support, facilitate appropriate activities on the part of children, teachers, and school policies. Teachers. A representative committee.
Program Administrators	Teacher. Teachers--regular and special. Regular teachers with resource provided by "special staff." Professional educators using a variety of community resources. The local school system, with help from the state dept. of ed. The classroom teacher. Teachers and students. Teachers of gifted children. The teachers of individual classes and students. Teachers, students, parents. Teachers, parents, students, school. Parents and teachers. Classroom teachers utilizing community resources. The teacher of the gifted.
Teachers	The gifted teacher's use of several methods and materials. Trained teachers. The student: the teachers of the students should provide opportunities to accomplish these goals.

RESPONSES TO "PROGRAM GOALS SHOULD BE PRIMARILY CARRIED OUT BY:" (continued)

Parents	Local teachers and administrators.
	Those trained to educate the gifted.
	Teachers with special training in gifted education.
	Someone trained and hired to work in this capacity.
	CLUE teachers.
	Teachers and the school system.
	Teachers, advisor trained in field, and parents.
	The best educated and the most experienced in working with the gifted and talented.
	Teachers.
	Teachers, with help from parents and community.
	Children, parents, and teachers.

RESPONSES OF DELPHI PANEL MEMBERS TO OPEN-ENDED RELATED STATEMENTS BY PANEL GROUP: ROUND I

RESPONSES TO "THE BEST WAY TO FIND OUT WHETHER PROGRAM GOALS ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED IS:"

National Experts	Observe classes systematically and also evaluate outcomes with various measurement procedures. Observation/test-retest. Careful, planned program evaluation relevant to program goals. To develop an evaluation plan at the time the goals are developed. To evaluate the program. Look at what is actually taking place in TAG program and the rest of the school. Ask the recipients of the service.
Program Administrators	Evaluation of goals using pre-and post-testing of children with teacher and parent input. Good evaluation and supervision. Talk to students, parents, teachers; look at records, etc. Teacher evaluation and observation of student performance, parent response, and student response. Monitoring of self and/or monitoring by the state dept. of ed. Survey students and parents. To observe classrooms and interview teachers. To complete periodic formal evaluation. By classroom observations and examination of student projects and classroom assignments. By clearly defining goals before the program begins and determining a method to systematically evaluate goals. Evaluations by students, teachers, and parents. Testing, observation, monitoring of curricula and lesson plans. Ask the children what they are doing. Annual or semi-annual reports made by teachers to program director.

RESPONSES TO "THE BEST WAY TO FIND OUT WHETHER PROGRAM GOALS ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED IS:" (continued)

Teachers	Evaluate student response and progress often. Survey students. With the M-team for individual goals and objectives. Overall goals for the class should be evaluated by teachers of the students.
Parents	Review board at state or county level to observe and evaluate. I don't know. Perform evaluation of children both before and after participation in the program. Evaluate those skills which were intended to be developed more fully by participation in the program. To talk with teachers and principal. To routinely inspect class work and projects. Also, by objective class observation. Ask the children and parents. Student reaction to the program. To talk with the child and the teacher responsible for implementing the program. Ask students. I don't know. Stay in constant contact with school, teachers, and child--see what they are doing. To have a conference including students, parents, teachers, principals, and school psychologists to discuss interests and plans of action to be followed. The important thing is to include the student in this process.

RESPONSES OF DELPHI PANEL MEMBERS TO OPEN-ENDED RELATED STATEMENT BY PANEL GROUP: ROUND I

RESPONSES TO "PLEASE STATE YOUR DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED:"

National Experts	Superior talent or ability in any worthwhile and valued line of human endeavor.
	Giftedness is both demonstrated achievement and potential in a number of talent areas such as intellectual, creative, leadership, leadership, kinesthetic and specific academic areas.
	Gifted students are the students in a given school or school district who are exceptional by virtue of outstanding potential or ability (relative to other children in that setting) in some area of human activity normally considered to be the province of the educational system.
	Preadolescent gifted children have potential or demonstrated ability in two areas: general cognitive ability and creative ability. Adolescent gifted children have demonstrated ability in abstract thinking, have produced creative work in some worthwhile area, and have demonstrated consistent involvement in activities of either type.
	See Renzulli's article in Nov. 1978 Kappan.
	Creative productivity in the area of real world problems of personal interest to the student.
	In truth I am of the old school--top 2% of any talent continuum. But I use the professional party line of the 3-ring model.
Program Administrators	Giftedness: children who give evidence of high performance capability in areas including intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership ability, or specific academic fields.
	I don't have one I use the state definition which has some limitations.
	An ability to excel in a given area of human activity. Gifted education should create a forum in which students can experience a love of learning for its own sake.
	High performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership capacity, or specific academic fields.

RESPONSES TO "PLEASE STATE YOUR DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS" (continued)

Program Administrators (continued)

State definition of giftedness.

To be identified as gifted, a student should meet one of the following: intellectual ability 1 1/2-2 S.D. above the mean, superior academic achievement at or above the 96th percentile in 2 or more areas, superior achievement demonstrated by ideas or projects related to an academic field or to a creative arts area.

Having basic respect for all human beings, I believe that everyone is gifted in one way or another. And, we've all heard of Downe syndrome children who play classical piano, etc. For public school purposes, I think we should stick to the definition of intellectual giftedness, 2 standard deviations above the norm should be for that particular school district, not the notion at the elementary level. Even so, I think you'll find that with rare exceptions, within the group of intellectually gifted students you will find the majority of those who are gifted in the creative and expressive arts.

Giftedness is the ability of a person to express himself using higher level thinking skills in a way that is above the "average" in one or more areas of learning, or performance.

Talented/giftedness is showing at least one deviation above the norm, and showing a talent or giftedness in at least one area of endeavor as measured by appropriate tests.

Children identified by professionally qualified persons who are capable of high performance (in only one or a combination of the following: general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, and visual and performing arts) and who require differentiated educational programs.

The ability to acquire knowledge and skills at a significantly faster rate and through different modalities than age peers and the potential to utilize this knowledge and skills using higher level thinking skills.

RESPONSES TO "PLEASE STATE YOUR DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS" (continued)

Program Administrators (continued)	Any student who normally achieves in <u>any</u> given area to a degree that is highly unusual for his/her normal peers.
	No response.
	My personal definition of giftedness is performance at a high level in any of the six areas included in the 1972 U. S. Office of Education definition.
	Giftedness involves the demonstration of excellence in a particular academic or aesthetic area which is far above average for the student's chronological age and is observed on a consistent basis.
Teachers	A student who excels in the areas of leadership, creativity, adaptability, motivation, and learning.
	A student who is able to obtain 130 or above on a fair I.Q. test. Also, a student who demonstrates extraordinary ability in a specific area for example, music, math, etc.
	A gifted person is one who has the potential to excel in any of the following academic, artistic, kinesthetic, leadership/social.
Parents	Above-average intellectual ability or artistic creativity, exceptional ability in one thing such as music, math, etc.
	The capacity to perceive relationships (scientific, literary, philosophical, etc.) without having to be shown them.
	Giftedness is a special awareness and alertness that enables the gifted child to think or reason through a particular problem or situation. It is a characteristic that enables the gifted child to ask why things are the way they are, instead of accepting them without question; and quite often to provide imaginative and acceptable avenues of change. Giftedness is a keen sensitivity to other people that prompts the gifted child to be more aware of social injustices and unfairness and allows him/her to easily emphasize with others.
	To me giftedness is a strong desire to obtain knowledge by accepting a challenge, and exercising self-discipline. This cannot be developed without the child's willingness.

RESPONSES TO "PLEASE STATE YOUR DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS" (continued)

Parents (continued)

Giftedness is being endowed with superior ability or potential in a broad range of intellectual, artistic, or related areas of human endeavor.

A person with the potential to change (enhance) the quality of life for thousands in their generation possibly for generations to come.

People capable of outstanding or high achievement <u>if</u> such capability is understood, recognized, nurtured and educated.

Great interest in learning, great joy in using and improving intellect, creative and strategic thinker. Many varied interests, restless desire to learn all and explore the universe.

Giftedness is the possession of a talent or skill (cognitive, aesthetic, athletic, leadership) to such a degree that it appears in no more than 3-5% of a population.

Having a <u>natural</u> ability--a very active imagination--very inquisitive from the day they can talk--like, why do spiders not stick to their own web?

A gifted person is someone who demonstrates the ability to comprehend a subject area with minimal effort to a high degree, shows an individual interest to incorporating a subject area into his/her everyday routine, or developing a working knowledge of a subject area that contributes to a more productive environment for that person. A gifted person does not necessarily do "everything well," is sometimes shy or requires "free time" to relax and "get away" from pressures, needs time to "think" and to determine specific areas of interest to pursue as career choices or personal goals and objectives.

I don't know.

VITA

Gail Hickey was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee on March 20, 1955. She attended Sequatchie and Bradley County schools, and was graduated from Bradley Central High School in 1973.

Upon graduation from high school, Ms. Hickey attended Cleveland State Community College and Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee. In May, 1978, she received her B.S. degree in elementary education.

Ms. Hickey began teaching in the fall of 1978, and taught in the elementary classroom for four years. In 1980 she enrolled in graduate school at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and received her M.S. in elementary education with an applied emphasis in education of the gifted in August, 1983.

In the fall of 1982, she accepted a position as gifted resource teacher in Murray County, Georgia, and during the 1983-84 school year served as coordinator of gifted programming for Chickamauga City Schools, Chickamuaga, Georgia.

In September, 1983, she enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she was assigned as graduate teaching assistant for the Department of Elementary Education, 1984-86. Her major area of study was elementary education with a specialization in education of the gifted. She received the Doctor of Education degree in December, 1986.

While at The University of Tennessee, Ms. Hickey was elected to Pi Lambda Theta and Phi Kappa Phi, recognized by the Knoxville Women's

Commission for scholarship and community service, nominated to the Cleveland Jaycees Outstanding Young Woman of the Year, and named to Outstanding Young Women of America, 1984.

Ms. Hickey is a member of The National Association for Gifted Children, the Council for Exceptional Children, The Association for the Gifted, Tennessee Association for the Gifted, and National Council for the Social Studies.