

ISSUE BRIEF

April 19, 2004

Talented and Gifted (TAG) Education

Background

Oregon Revised Statutes for TAG (343.391-343.411) address identification and education. Subsequent Oregon Administrative Rules for TAG 581-015-0805 – 581-015-0820 and 581-022-1310 – 581-022-1940 address those statutes more specifically. Division 015 address rules for submission of application for funds “in any biennium in which the legislature appropriates funds....”. Division 022 contains language that specifies the requirements of districts for identification of TAG students, the rights of parents of TAG students, and programs and services for TAG students.

The Department of Education, in an effort to secure information about the current status of TAG education in Oregon, conducted a series of public input sessions across the state. A summary report (April 2004) of those sessions is available from the Department.

General Findings

Public reports from across Oregon indicated concerns for the TAG program in several areas including lack of funding, lack of Department leadership and direction, and inadequate and inconsistent program services. Several suggestions were made relevant to improving TAG programs such as regional support committees for staff, enhanced communication systems across the state, and professional development.

Recommendations

1. Work with the Oregon Legislature to develop a budget package to adequately fund districts in implementing program services for TAG students.
2. Re-establish the TAG Regional Planning groups to address statewide personnel development.
3. Enhance the use of various electronic venues to supply districts with timely and appropriate information relative to TAG best practices, processes and other issues.
4. Consider a statewide TAG advisory.
5. Move the TAG position in the Department of Education from the Office of Student Learning & Partnerships to the Office of Educational Improvement & Innovation to leverage additional leadership resources for the program.

Tasks

1. Assign an appropriate Department staff person to lead the efforts to address TAG issues.
2. Establish an internal Department charter to determine the resources and supports the Department is able to contribute for TAG implementation at the district level.
3. Conduct a second series of public meetings to share findings and ideas.
4. Carry out the work of the charter.

Implications

1. TAG students and programs will be enhanced by these efforts.
2. Communication with the public will be enhanced if the Department continues to share its progress in these areas.
3. Additional funding is not a realistic option and may have to wait for improved economic times.
4. Staff time and resources devoted to this effort will take away from other work. Priorities will need to be established.