

Meeting the Needs of Students Who Are Twice Exceptional

Mary Ruth Coleman, Christine Harradine, and Emily Williams King, Guest Editors

This issue of *TEACHING Exceptional Children* features several articles on meeting the needs of children who are twice exceptional. The term *twice exceptional* was coined by James J. Gallagher to denote students who are both gifted and have disabilities. In this issue, we focus on these students. This is an exciting time to turn our focus to these children and their needs. With the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), we see for the first time that gifted students with disabilities are mentioned as a priority group of students whose needs can be addressed with federal funding. The actual language in IDEA can be found in:

PART D-NATIONAL ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES; in SUBPART 4-GENERAL PROVISIONS; SEC. 681. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR SUBPARTS 2 AND 3. Under (d) PRIORITIES; (3) projects that address the needs of (J) children who are gifted and talented.

The inclusion of twice-exceptional children in Federal Law is a major step forward to help advocate for meeting their needs. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and TAG (The Association for Gifted) are working with the National Association for Gifted Children on strategies to ensure that, as the regulations for IDEA are developed, we have guidelines on how this new priority should be addressed.

CEC has another exciting undertaking that pertains to students who are twice exceptional. CEC, in partnership with the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, will be working with the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. This work will assist the Cooke Foundation in selecting 3 to 5 students who are twice exceptional for their Young Scholars Program. For more information on the Young Scholars

Program, please visit www.jackkent-cookefoundation.org. This is an exciting time and we hope that this special issue will be a key piece of a growing movement to meet the needs of students who are twice exceptional.

The articles in this issue offer key ideas on best practices to nurture the academic, social, and emotional needs of students who are twice exceptional. We have also included a resource list that can be used to guide the gathering of additional information. The lead article, "The Eye of the Storm: Services and Programs for Twice-Exceptional Children," by Drs. Dennis Higgins and Elizabeth Nielsen sets the tone for the issue. Using the metaphor, *the eye of the storm*, Dennis and Elizabeth share over 20 years of experience and research on how to create educational environments that help twice-exceptional students thrive. They offer concrete examples through sharing the outcomes for two students who have participated in the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) Twice Exceptional Program. This program has been in place since the early 1990s and is a model program for meeting the needs of students who are both gifted and disabled. Dennis and Elizabeth are the founders of the APS program.

In the second article, "Addressing the Social and Emotional Needs of Twice-Exceptional Students," Emily Williams King discusses the social and emotional needs of students who are twice exceptional. She begins with information on the identification of students who are twice exceptional noting the specific areas of concern for their emotional and social development and concludes with strategies for support of social and emotional needs. The third article, "Making a Difference: Motivating Gifted Students Who Are Not Achieving" turns our focus toward the students who are not thriving in school in spite of their giftedness. This article is co-authored by Drs. Del Siegle and Betsy McCoach who are both faculty at the University of

Connecticut and members of the National Research Center on Gifted and Talented. The issue of motivation is a huge one for students who are twice exceptional, so the lessons learned about motivation are especially useful as we think about how to meet their needs.

The fourth article, "Academic Strategies That Work for Gifted Students With Learning Disabilities," by Dr. Mary Ruth Coleman extends the basic learning principles identified by the National Research Council to offer specific guidelines for addressing students who are twice exceptional. Mary Ruth explores how time, structure, support, and complexity can be used to ensure the academic success of these students.

Dr. Edwin Ellis offers us food for thought on the current myths we operate under as we think about the education of children with disabilities in "Big Ideas about Teaching Big Ideas." Ed challenges us to think about the big ideas that guide our teaching and he gives us a clear and strong argument for the incorporation of big ideas in our curriculum and pedagogy. Ed's article is a rallying cry for the inclusion of meaningfulness, importance, and complexity in all that we do with our students.

Article number six, "Puzzles, Mysteries, and Picasso—A Summer Camp for Students Who Are Gifted and Learning Disabled" by Nina Yssel, Judith, Margison, Tracy Cross, and John Merbler, describes a summer enrichment program at Ball State University for students who are twice exceptional. In this program, students were given opportunities for enrichment and in-depth exploration of topics in science and the arts. The program also included a social/emotional component.

The final article in this special issue is a reflective piece, "What We Have Learned: Experiences in Providing Adaptations and Accommodations for GT/LD Students" written by Rich Weinfeld, Linda Barnes-Robinson, Sue Jeweler, and Betty Roffman Shevitz.

This team has more than 15 years of experience working with students in Montgomery County Maryland Public Schools who are twice exceptional. Collectively, they reflect on this experience and share the lessons they learned with us so that we can all benefit from their wisdom.

We sincerely hope that you find the articles and information in this special issue useful, practical, and even perhaps inspiring. Please call on us if we can be of any further support to you as you think about meeting the needs of students who are twice exceptional.

As guest editors, we wish to thank Alec Peck and Stan Scarpatti for allowing us to work with them, for supporting this effort, and for their patient advice as things unfolded. We are grateful to them!

Reference

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Pub L. No. 108-446 (2004). Section 681, (d), (3), (J).

CEC has just received an exciting grant from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation that recognizes students who are twice exceptional. The purpose of the grant is to assist the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation in finding outstanding students who are twice exceptional for their Young Scholars Program. The Young Scholars Program is designed to support outstanding middle school students who also have extreme financial needs. The Foundation offers these young scholars financial and academic support to help them be successful. CEC will be working directly with Mary Ruth Coleman at the Frank Porter Graham Institute to locate twice-exceptional students who may be nominated for the Young Scholars Program. For more information about this exciting program, visit jackkentcookefoundation.org and/or contact Richard Mainzer at RICHARDM@cec.sped.org.

Get Ready to Vote for CEC's Board of Directors

It's time for CEC members to vote for incoming members of CEC's Board of Directors. This is your opportunity to ensure that the individuals, who represent your wishes for the future of special education, as well as CEC's future direction, are elected into office.

You can read about the candidates and their views on CEC's Web site, www.cec.sped.org. The position of Student Member is appointed by the Board of Directors and will not appear on the ballot.

The election will be conducted by individual secret ballot. Members are encouraged to vote online on CEC's Web site, www.cec.sped.org, or you can vote by mail.

Slate of Candidates for 2006

President Elect

Mary Ruth Coleman
Harold Tarriff

Member-at-Large (3 positions)

Elizabeth Drame
Beverly McCoun
Dave Roels
Jim Siders
Azure Dee Smiley
Gloria Taradash

Member-at-Large Classroom Ranks

Carol Eisenbise
Martha Harris
Amanda Hopkins

Member-at-Large Diverse Ethnic and Multicultural Groups

Jonathan Stout
Roberta Unger

Student Member

Caroline Marrett

Students to Elect Representative

CEC's Student members will also elect a student to represent them at the CEC Representative Assembly. Candidates are:

Lynn Cain
Samantha Hucks

The election occurs September 19–October 24, 2005. For more information about the candidates, go to the CEC Web site, www.cec.sped.org.