

# Talking Points for Conversations with Policy Makers

Colorado funds the education of gifted and talented students by providing grant money for gifted programs to school districts through the Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA). In FY2018–19, \$12.5 million was allocated for gifted education. For districts to receive this funding, they must submit a gifted program proposal that outlines its definition for gifted and talented, along with details like budget, personnel, and accountability plans.

- Funding in general for Gifted and Talented needs to be increased.
- More resources are needed for Universal Screeners so that all districts can fund screening for every student in Colorado. Identification of gifted students is critical to providing services needed and cannot be ignored.
- Gifted students, if not challenged, are likely to lose interest and be turned off by school. They will drop out, disrupt the classroom or under-perform. Once lost, they are unlikely to re-engage in school. Gifted children don't just “take care of themselves.”
- We need qualified educators for our gifted students and need to provide professional development about best practices which is important for all teachers, and critical for teachers of the gifted.

We must ensure that:

- Districts are appropriately identifying students from all ethnic and economic groups.
- Student scores for gifted students are making gains similar to those in other populations of students.
- Gifted programming is available in some capacity at every school in Colorado.
- Data is collected and reported on services for gifted students.
- Teachers are trained in providing differentiated instruction in every classroom.
- Services continue to be provided during the school day, not as an afterschool option.
- Parents are aware of options for serving gifted students and how to advocate for those services.