

PERCEPTIONS OF GIFTEDNESS AND OTHER FACTORS IMPACTING THE GIFTED
IDENTIFICATION OF BLACK STUDENTS IN A SMALL, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Abstract

The disproportionality of Black students identified as gifted has been a hot topic of discussion in the field of education for decades. If the purpose of education is to maximize the potential of all learners, then educators are missing the mark. Although multiple factors may impact the gifted identification of Black students, one of the biggest conundrums in the field of gifted education—the process of gifted identification—may stem from the lack of common definitions of intelligence and giftedness. The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perception of giftedness and other factors that may be impacting the gifted identification of Black students in a small, rural school district. This comparative descriptive research design examined the role teachers play within the gifted identification process by analyzing the following data gathered from three elementary schools: teacher perception of giftedness, teacher perception of the gifted identification process, and teacher perception of factors that may provide a more equitable gifted identification process. Descriptive statistics and nonparametric data analysis were used to analyze and compare quantitative survey results. In vivo coding and inductive thematic analysis were used to analyze qualitative data from open-ended survey items and interviews. Key findings were reported to division leadership and recommendations for increasing the number of Black students identified as gifted were provided. To ensure equitable access to appropriate education for all students, especially those who have been historically underrepresented, continuous improvement of the gifted identification process through planning and policy is integral for the progression of society.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Underrepresentation of Black students identified as gifted is pervasive (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.) and has been a topic of discussion within the field of education for decades (Gagné, 2011; Gentry, 2021; Jolly & Robins, 2016, 2022; Luria et al., 2016; Peters & Engerrand, 2016, Peters, 2019, Peters & Gentry, et al., 2019.). “Data from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education reveal that as of 2009, African American students constitute 16.7% of the population but just 9.8% of students in gifted programs” (Grissom & Redding, 2016, p. 1). Peters (2019) determined that Black students are underrepresented in gifted education by 43% using the Representation Index (RI), a formula that describes to what degree a population of students is represented in gifted programs compared to the total number of students in that same population. Calculation of data provided by the Virginia Department of Education (n.d.), indicated that Black students identified as gifted state-wide are underrepresented by 54% whereas their White counterparts are overrepresented by 124% (see an explanation of RI calculation and a recent measure of the RI of Gifted Students in Virginia in Appendix A). This disproportionality is disturbing; Black students in Virginia who might need more challenging instruction are not receiving it.

Giftedness is complex and lends itself easily to multiple interpretations due to many factors. One such factor is teacher perception of the definition of giftedness and how it is

identified. Teachers are often viewed as the gatekeepers to gifted identification (McBee Orzulak, 2013), but how can equitable access to gifted programming be ensured if there is no common definition of giftedness?

Aside from the ambiguous concept of giftedness and its identification practices, other variables might affect the number of Black students identified as gifted. Carman (2011) found that underrepresentation of Black students may stem from a teacher's gender in addition to the stereotypical thoughts teachers hold. Female teachers perceived traits of giftedness as equally male and female, whereas their male counterparts perceived giftedness more often as a male trait (Carman, 2011).

Academic achievement is usually one criterion of the gifted identification process, thus closing the door on academically underperforming students. Olszewski-Kubilius and Corwith (2017) cited studies reaffirming that poverty, statistically proven to be more prevalent in Black families than White families (Duncan & Murnane, 2011; Kornrich & Furstenberg, 2012; Micheltore & Dynarski, 2017), has a negative effect on academic achievement of students. Lower-income families tend to spend less on educational resources for their children whereas their counterparts spend more, suggesting one cause of poor student performance (Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2017). Poverty is often related to a student's low socioeconomic status (SES) which may also have a negative impact on achievement (Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2017).

According to Grissom and Redding (2016), many factors such as the school a student attends, the race of the student's teacher, and the student's classroom environment may affect the identification of giftedness among Black students. Conflicting research, however, indicated that the race of a student's teacher might not affect the gifted identification of Black boys and lists

behavioral concerns and poor parental involvement as larger factors (Harradine et al., 2013).

This finding, however, begs the question of the root cause of misbehavior and lack of parental involvement.

Implicit bias might play a role in teacher perception of giftedness. Implicit bias is defined as “a prejudice that is present but not consciously held or recognized” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.a, p. 1) and is likely formed from experiences throughout a person’s life (Crawford et al., 2019). Implicit bias is a potential barrier to the gifted identification of Black students (Holroyd & Puddifoot, 2020). Nominations to gifted programs are subjective and most often conducted by teachers (Ricciardi et al., 2020). Because of this subjectivity, the implicit bias of those teachers may impact the nomination of students of different racial groups (Crawford et al., 2019) and/or gender (Ricciardi et al., 2020). After controlling for poverty, Ricciardi et al. (2020) determined that White boys are more likely to be identified as gifted than Black students.

Crawford et al. (2019) suggest that researchers have been largely focusing on academic settings to determine the cause of underrepresentation of Black students in gifted programming; ignoring the entirety of influences in a child’s life as represented by Bronfenbrenner’s (1981) bioecological systems theory. These influences may include a student’s emotional and psychological capacity, the classroom environment, interaction between the student’s teacher and parents, state policy, a teacher’s implicit biases or lack of training in gifted services, and societal view of giftedness (Crawford et al., 2019).

In short, there are issues inherent in the gifted identification process perhaps stemming from various conceptions of how giftedness is defined and barriers negatively affecting the academic achievement of Black students. Without a common definition and appropriate supports to overcome those barriers, Black students have the potential to be underrepresented in gifted

programs. As educators, it is our duty to afford every one of our students a challenging and appropriate education.

Dissecting a teacher's perceptions of giftedness and other factors impacting the gifted identification of Black students may provide the impetus to move toward equitable access to the gifted curriculum for eligible students regardless of race. In this study of the underrepresentation of Black students in the gifted program in a Virginia school district, I sought to provide clarity on educators' perceptions of giftedness and other factors that might affect the gifted identification of Black students to inform leaders how to make improvements to the gifted program thus aligning with the district's mission statement of maximizing the potential of all learners.

Statement of the Problem

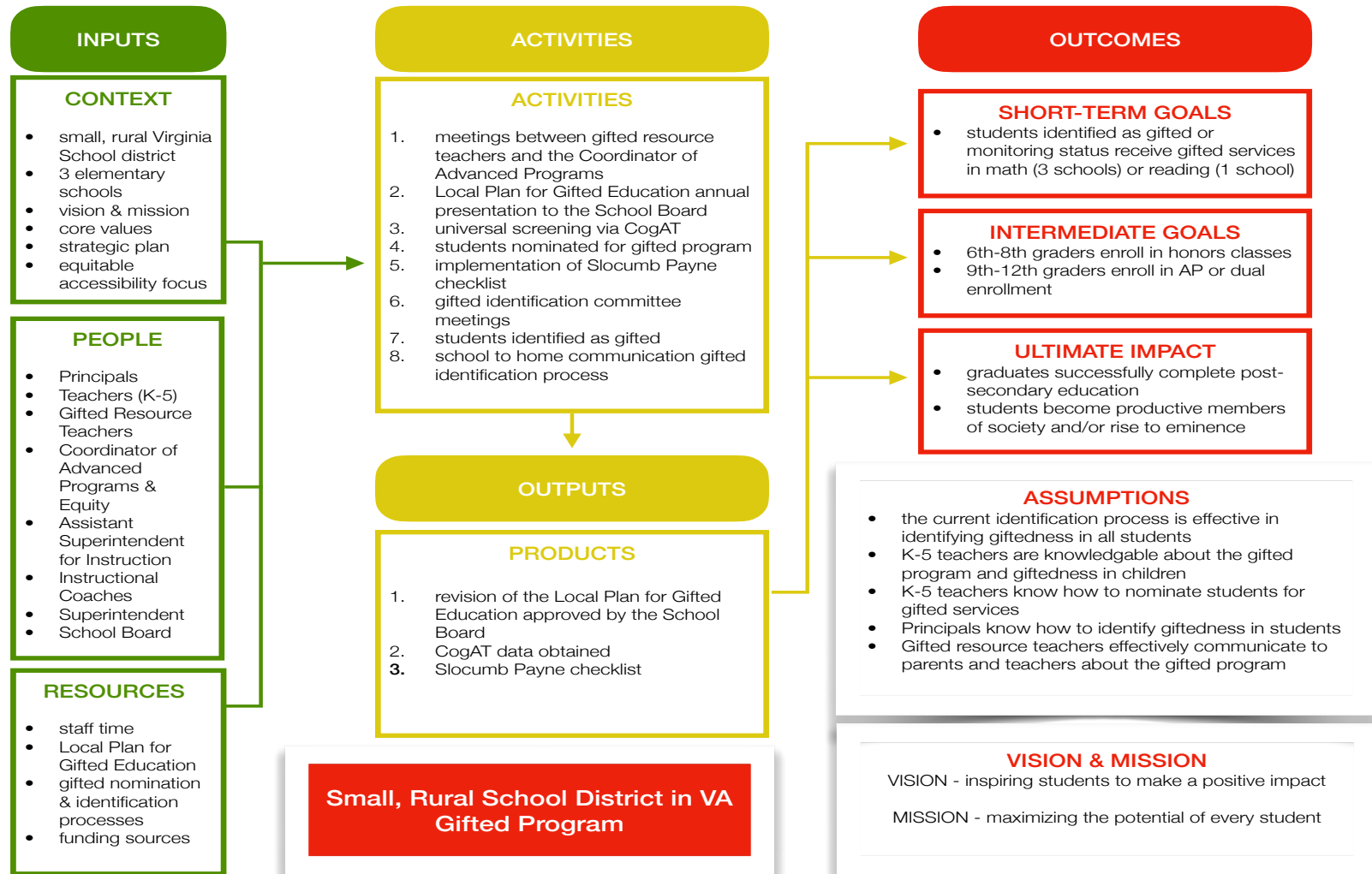
Local data in a small, rural school district related to this study support the existence of similar disproportionality across the nation as Black students in the district are currently underrepresented by 39% in the gifted program. Historical data over the past 10 years in this district indicate that 85% of the total number of students in Grades 3 and 5 who received gifted services were White. Currently, the demographics in this school district indicate that 68% of students in Grade 3 are White and 58% of students in Grade 5 are White. Not only is this discrepancy concerning, 6 years of data indicate fewer than 10 White students per year were nominated for gifted services in Grade 2, but an average of 20 White students per year were receiving gifted services. Historical data show that fewer than 10 Black students were referred for gifted services in Grade 2 per year. On average, however, three Black students were identified. How were 20 White students identified when fewer than 10 were referred? And why the discrepancy between the identified racial groups? The data prove there is an issue of underrepresentation of Black students in the gifted program in this school district.

Brief Program Description

This section provides insight into the context where the gifted program is implemented as well as a detailed description of it. A logic model is provided as a visual representation of the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the program. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1

Logic Model of the Gifted Program in a Small, Rural Virginia School District



Context of the Study

The rural district in this study has an enrollment of roughly 2600 students from PreK to 12th grade. There are three elementary schools in the district that serve 1,128 students from PreK through fifth grade. Each elementary school is situated in different areas of the county with different demographics. Haxton¹ Elementary School and Stirling Elementary School serve the wealthier population whereas Robb Elementary School is a Title I school that serves the more rural areas of the district. It is clear based upon the data in Table 1 that disproportionality of Black students identified as gifted exists in this Virginia school district.

Table 1

Percentages of Black Students Identified as Gifted in Grades 3-5

School	% of Black Students	% of Black Students Identified as Gifted
Haxton Elementary School	9.91 %	3.23%
Stirling Elementary School	12.43%	4.35%
Robb Elementary School	20.97%	9.09%

The district's vision of inspiring and preparing the next generation to make a positive impact and its mission of maximizing the potential of all learners drive the goals of the district's strategic plan and moral imperative. The core values of the district (i.e., excellence, courage, creativity, honor, and optimism) are reflective of the values of all staff and serve as the backbone of the district's strategic plan. The district strives to keep a lens of equity on all that impacts student success, including the provision of appropriate education for all students. Evaluation of activities that impact student success occurs periodically at the building level and district level.

¹ I assigned pseudonyms to the elementary schools listed in this study.

People. Each elementary school is led by a principal who has the autonomy to implement programs as they see fit. Depending upon the school, a specific number of teachers in grades three through five teach science and social studies to gifted students within their general education classroom but send their gifted students to the Gifted Resource Teacher for math. Prior to this school year, gifted students only left the classroom for math, thus language arts was taught by the general education teacher. This past year, a piloted gifted language arts pull-out program was implemented at Haxton Elementary School, the largest of the three schools with the lowest percentage of students who receive free or reduced-price lunch. All K-5 teachers, however, are responsible for differentiating lessons to meet the various needs of their students and are expected to remain alert to those students who may exhibit talents that are far more superior than their peers. In this way, all teachers play a part in the gifted identification process.

The data in Appendix B describe the demographics of elementary educators in the district per school. Incidentally, all elementary teachers (i.e., K-5 and GRTs) in the district are White (95.52%) or Black (4.48%). It is important to note that all three GRTs are White females, and two of the three principals are White females; one principal is a Black male. Further, minority representation by gender and race across all three schools is low; the average percentage of Black female K-5 teachers is 4.32% with 0% of Black teachers (male or female) serving at one school and no Black male teachers are represented in Grades K-5. The average percentage of White male K-5 teachers is 3.09% with 0% of White male teachers serving at one school. The data in Appendix B describes the demographics of K-5 elementary teachers, GRTs, and principals in the district per school. All elementary teachers (i.e., K-5 and GRTs) in the district are White (95.52%) or Black (4.48%). Most teachers are White females (92.54%). No other races are represented in the K-5 teacher population at the elementary schools and very few

Hispanic staff members are represented in supporting, hourly roles (e.g., custodial staff, cafeteria staff, or instructional assistants). No other races are represented among the staff at the elementary schools. Turnover was extremely rare in this district in years past, but the emergence of COVID-19 negatively affected its retention record.

Central office staff members important to the gifted identification process are as follows: two instructional coaches (one math, one reading), responsible for modeling appropriate and differentiated instructional strategies, the Coordinator of Advanced Programs, the division lead in gifted education, the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, the division instructional lead, the Superintendent, and the School Board. It is important to note that the Coordinator of Advanced Programs is only in Year 2 of her role.

Description of the Gifted Program

The theoretical framework of the district's gifted program reflects Joseph Renzulli's (2005) Three-Ring approach to giftedness: advanced cognitive ability, creativity, and task commitment. The district's operational definitions of General Intellectual Aptitude and Specific Academic Aptitude both include consideration of a student's potential for remarkable aptitude, discussion involving the potential talents of students has been inconsistently used in conjunction with the traditional gifted identification process for the past 3 years to mitigate the disproportionality of Black students identified as gifted. This past year, in place of the traditional teacher recommendation referrals, the Slocumb-Payne Teacher Perception Inventory checklist was piloted in an attempt to reduce teacher biases in the referral process and identify giftedness in students of diverse backgrounds (Slocumb et al., 2018).

The gifted identification process in the district has evolved over the years but for the past several years has begun with a push-in model provided by the GRT in Kindergarten through

second grade. The GRT provides enrichment lessons, observes student participation, examines student work samples, collects other undefined anecdotal data, analyzes early literacy data (i.e., through Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening), analyzes early numeracy data (i.e., through locally created assessments), and documents discussions conducted with teachers that describe the potential of students. These data are housed in student portfolios that follow each student through elementary school.

Although the identification process begins in Kindergarten, it culminates into a semi-holistic examination of ability toward the end of second grade to determine whether a student is in need of gifted education. In November of a student's second grade year, universal screening takes place through the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) to obtain verbal and non-verbal scores while teachers continue to build upon student portfolios. In late winter to early spring, second grade teachers nominate students to be considered for gifted education through forms sent to the GRT. In May, a gifted identification committee (i.e., Coordinator of Advanced Programs, the student's second grade teacher, the principal, and the GRT) meets to review various sources of data: teacher anecdotal reports and nominations, growth assessment data (e.g., Measure of Academic Progress scores), Standards of Learning scores, CogAT scores, student portfolios, grades, and sometimes the use of criteria that may be considered similar to that of local norms, an identification process that compares the abilities of students from the same school (Peters & Engerrand, 2016; Peters, Rambo-Hernandez, et al., 2019). During the review, the nominated student is either identified as gifted, placed on monitoring status for possible gifted services, or turned away from the gifted program. No single criterion affects a student's eligibility for gifted services.

This process is repeated to identify any third, fourth, or fifth grade student who may have transferred into the district or who was missed in second grade but showed potential in Grades 3–5. Originally identified students do not go through another round of eligibility. Any previously identified student who transfers out of the district, then transfers back into the district must go through eligibility to maintain gifted status.

Consideration of talent development and/or the impact of other factors such as similar age, experience, and environment began in school year 2018-2019 during gifted identification committee meetings. These factors were not an explicit part of the district’s identification process and do not reflect the district’s definition of giftedness nor do they appear in any section of the local plan for gifted education. Committee members may or may not consider these factors during committee meetings; the reason for which is unknown. The inconsistency across the district, however, could be allowing the gifted identification of some students through non-traditional approaches but closing the gate on others.

Overview of the Evaluation Approach

Because the school district’s gifted identification process is failing to recognize proportionately higher ability or potential in Black students, an evaluation of the gifted identification process was warranted. This formative program evaluation focused on teachers’ perceptions of how giftedness is defined, perceptions of the gifted identification process, and other factors that may positively or negatively impact the gifted identification of Black students. Educators’ perceptions were obtained from three elementary schools in a small, rural school district to gain insight into the impact a teacher’s role in the gifted identification process may have on the identification of Black students. Ultimately, the findings from this program

evaluation were used to make recommendations to leadership to develop a more equitable identification process.

Program Evaluation Model

The purpose of this program evaluation was to provide recommendations to increase the number of Black students identified as gifted. Thus, it was conducted with a lens of utility within the pragmatic paradigm and based upon Stufflebeam's CIPP program evaluation model (Stufflebeam, 1971), specifically focusing on one aspect of the process, that is, teacher perception.

Stufflebeam's CIPP model includes four components: Context, Input, Process, and Product. Context evaluations offer insight into the overarching needs of an organization that may be used to develop an organization's vision, mission, and strategic plan (Mertens & Wilson, 2018). Input evaluations assess multiple approaches, action plans, and budgets to determine the most effective and efficient route to meet the moral imperative of an organization (Mertens & Wilson, 2018). According to Mertens and Wilson (2018), process evaluations scrutinize and judge the implementation of a program to provide recommendations for improvement. Product evaluations identify and assess the outcomes of a program to measure the success of an intended program and guide staff to refocus on the collective objectives in an organization (Mertens & Wilson, 2018).

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this formative program evaluation was to examine one facet, teacher perception, of the gifted identification process used in a small, rural school district to make recommendations to positively impact the identification of Black students. Because school district leadership (i.e., Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Coordinator of

Advanced Programs, and the School Board) are important stakeholders charged with developing and revising policy, the key findings of this program evaluation and recommendations for improvement were shared with them for consideration of an improved gifted identification process that aims to proportionately increase the number of Black students identified as gifted.

Focus of the Evaluation

This program evaluation focused on the gifted identification process across three elementary schools in a small, rural school district to gain insight into variables affecting the gifted identification of Black students. Important to the purpose of this program evaluation, teacher perception of giftedness, the gifted identification process, and other factors that may impact the gifted identification of Black students were measured. The questions below guided the research.

Research Questions

1. Across three elementary schools, what do educators perceive to be the definition of giftedness?
2. Across three elementary schools, how do educators perceive the gifted identification process?
3. What factors do educators perceive to be negatively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted?
4. What factors do educators perceive to be positively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted?

Brief Description of Methods

This comparative descriptive study with a mixed methods design provided a multi-faceted examination of teacher perception as it related to giftedness and the gifted identification

process as well as other factors that may impact the gifted identification of Black students in the district. Participants in this study included K-5 general education elementary teachers, gifted resource teachers, and the principals from each elementary school in the district.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in this study through surveys and interviews. Closed and open-ended survey items captured data from research questions one through four. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and compared using nonparametric data analysis. Interviews were conducted to gather deeper participant perceptions related to research questions one through four. Qualitative data from both open-ended survey items and interviews were analyzed using in vivo coding and inductive thematic analysis.

Definitions of Terms

Black

This phrase refers to any person of color regardless of descent who has chosen Black as their racial identification in PowerSchool, a longitudinal database used by the school district.

Gifted Identification Process

The process through which students are identified as gifted within the context of state guidelines and the district's local plan for the education of the gifted.

Gifted Resource Teacher (GRT)

The educator responsible for providing gifted education services to students identified as gifted, observing K-2 students for signs of giftedness, and providing professional development as it relates to gifted education to school staff.

Giftedness

A social construct that has proven to be historically undefinable but is most often used to describe high ability and potential for academic excellence in students. Giftedness could also

describe students whose abilities in any category (e.g., sports, music) fall into the upper echelon relative to peers.

Implicit Bias

Implicit bias is defined as “a prejudice that is present but not consciously held or recognized” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.a, p. 1).

Perception

Perception is defined in the Merriam-Webster’s dictionary as “quick, acute, and intuitive cognition” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.b, p. 1).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

“For nearly a century, scholars have sought to understand, measure, and explain giftedness” (Subotnik et al., 2011, p. 3) without consensus on what it is or how to measure it. This broad perception of giftedness likely has contributed to the underrepresentation of Black students in gifted programs; however, research has shown that multiple factors, not just the perception of giftedness, have affected the representation of minority students in gifted programs (Carman, 2011; Crawford et al., 2019; Gagné, 2011; Gentry, 2021; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Maker, 1996; Michelmore & Dynarski, 2017; Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2017; Ricciardi et al., 2020; Wright & Ford, 2017). As previously stated, Black students are underrepresented in gifted programs across the nation (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.) and although a pervasive and consistent concern, little research has been conducted to determine whether or not teachers can recognize giftedness in students who are typically underrepresented (McBee, 2006). Because I explored teacher perception of giftedness, the focus herein includes various definitions of giftedness, issues inherent in the traditional gifted identification process, and other factors that may be impacting the gifted identification of Black students.

Intelligence and Giftedness

Giftedness is a social construct that has been a topic of debate for decades. No true definition has been agreed upon—even by experts in the field—and because of this, equitable identification processes have been difficult to establish across the nation. Currently, giftedness in students is defined by the United States government per 20 U.S. Code § 7801 as “high

achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields.” Comparatively, the state of Virginia defines giftedness through Title 8 of Virginia Administrative Code § 20-40-20 as “high levels of accomplishment or who show the potential for higher levels of accomplishment when compared to others of the same, age, experience, or environment.” Both definitions include high ability of some sort but do not provide a definite measure of such and the ambiguity of the state definition leads to differing interpretations by local education agencies.

In his seminal work, Spearman (1927), purported that intelligence was made up of a general factor “g” that varied from person to person but remained constant upon intellectual performance in addition to a less important aspect of intelligence, a specific factor “s” that varied from task to task. In comparison to Spearman’s “g”, Bjorklund (2005) described a positive manifest, the correlation between low IQ and low performance in all areas as well as high IQ and high performance in specific areas, as “evidence for the existence of g” (p. 432). Sternberg’s (1997) Triarchic Theory of Intelligence, perhaps related to Spearman’s “s”, focuses on the mental capacity to adapt to or change a specific environment. In other words, an individual must be able to analyze a situation, create a response, then act on that response. In addition, Sternberg (1997) gleaned from a 1921 survey of experts that higher-level ability was a common theme in the definition of intelligence. Using data from a survey conducted in 1986, however, Sternberg (1997) reported that “the most common elements of the definition of intelligence were (a) higher level abilities, (b) that which is valued by culture, and (c) executive processes” (p. 1030). It is important to note that the mention of culture in Sternberg’s research indicates a long-held and common belief that it affects intelligence, a factor that might play a role in gifted identification.

For decades, the concept of giftedness has been built upon the ambiguity of intelligence. Because there are many conceptions of intelligence, many conceptions of giftedness appear in the literature (Borland, 2005; Gagné, 1985; Renzulli, 2005; Subotnik et al., 2011). Borland (2005) proposed getting rid of the term *giftedness* altogether to provide all children with an appropriate education and stressed that giftedness is inconsistently defined and may appear differently in every locality. This leads one to ponder if Borland is implying the importance of culture as it relates to giftedness that Sternberg mentioned in his 1986 survey review. If so, the current paradigm of giftedness, void of cultural relationships, may be incomplete and outdated.

Unlike Borland's (2005) conception of giftedness, Gagné (1985) conceptualized a two-pronged approach to define giftedness: students exhibit natural abilities or *gifts* that directly relate to higher-level competence in six domains and strengths or *talents* demonstrated through higher-level performance in a broad range of domains that must be developed through specific catalysts (Gagné, 2010). Gagné (2010) proposed through his Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent 2.0 framework that three factors of chance (i.e., intrapersonal, environmental, and developmental process) "facilitate or inhibit the talent development process" (p. 101). Chance plays "a prominent role in [Gagné's] model, as it affects the availability of learning opportunities and environmental supports" (Subotnik et al., 2011, p. 28). One sub-component to chance is individuals, such as teachers, as potential catalysts to a student's talent development (Gagné, 2009). If teachers are potential catalysts in the gifted identification of Black students, then a teacher's perception of or implicit bias toward a student's abilities may relate in some way.

Renzulli's (2005) Three-Ring approach to giftedness includes a motivation component he calls *task commitment* in addition to above-average ability and creativity. Although both Renzulli's and Gagné's conceptions of giftedness are somewhat similar, Gagné (1985) argued

that motivation is not a characteristic of giftedness but a catalyst in the development of talents. “Motivation, a major component of giftedness in Renzulli’s model, becomes one of the principal catalysts of the actualization of giftedness into talent, more particularly, of the emergence of exceptional talent” (Gagné, 1985, p. 111). Without appropriate identification thus appropriate instruction, are our Black students seemingly unmotivated to learn? Although motivation may be considered an individual’s inherent trait, motivation could be influenced by external variables surrounding the individual, that is, a teacher’s belief that a student can excel.

Subotnik et al. (2011) proposed a comprehensive definition of giftedness that combines science-based factors (e.g., biological or psychosocial), is outcome-based, and is reflective of societal values to include “the manifestation of performance or production that is clearly at the upper end of the distribution in a talent domain even relative to that of other high-functioning individuals in the domain” (p. 7). This conception of giftedness also includes a developmental component based upon an initial potential of giftedness, mastery of achievement, and eminence; all of which may appear in specific domains at different ages in a person’s life (Subotnik et al., 2011). Related to elements of Gagné’s (2010) Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent 2.0 framework and Bronfenbrenner’s (1981) principle of ecological system theory, outside influences such as a mentor or another prominent figure in a person’s life may impact the development of gifts or talents (Subotnik et al., 2011). Although all of these conceptions of giftedness are somewhat similar, there is a common theme in all; the reiteration of the notion that outside influences such as a teacher (or parent) affect a student’s development. Because perception and implicit bias are distinct to each individual and shaped by experience, both may be factors that result in the underrepresentation of Black students in gifted programs.

The Exclusivity of Gifted Identification

Over the years, public interest in gifted education has ebbed and flowed (Jolly & Robins, 2016). During one such era of interest, a United States Congressional mandate in the late 1960s led to the provision of a national definition of giftedness to include intellectual ability and academic aptitude in addition to non-traditional views of giftedness (e.g., creative thinking and leadership) but also suggested that identification practices reflect such criteria (Marland, 1971). Marland (1971) reported that “the problems of screening and [gifted] identification [of minorities] are complicated by assumptions that talents cannot be found as abundantly in certain groups as in others...[and] these assumptions may have influenced meager search and identification among certain groups” (p. 33); however, Marland (1971) affirmed that giftedness appears in every racial group and efforts to combat the issue of underrepresentation began to appear in the research. Sternberg (n.d.) proposed through his Adaptive Intelligence Theory that “we can no longer afford to define intelligence merely as *g* or IQ” (Sternberg, n.d., para. 1) and stressed the importance of broadening the identification process to include problem solving in terms of environmental adaptation (Sternberg, 1997). Additional research suggested the use of local norms, the ranking of students from the same grade level within the same school to compare students who are similar in age, experience, and environment to focus on higher-ability students (not necessarily deemed gifted) who may be in need of more challenging work (Peters & Engerrand, 2016; Peters, Rambo-Hernandez, et al., 2019). Usually, gifted identification begins in elementary school when underrepresented students may not have had the opportunity to develop their verbal abilities (Hodges et al., 2018), a testing method of academic performance relied heavily upon to identify giftedness. To increase the identification of such groups, districts began incorporating a nonverbal assessment component such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities

Test or the Raven Standard Progressive Matrices in addition to teacher nomination process (Hodges et al., 2018), a subjective and most likely biased component that incorporates the potential of giftedness (Grissom & Redding, 2016; Hodges et al., 2018). With the greatest effort to mitigate biases through various instrumentation, biases remain as evidenced by the persisting identification gap of Black students (Hodges et al., 2018). And although Hodges et al. (2018) stress that “for equitable representation to exist, definitions of giftedness and identification methods must be congruent and concerned with equity” (p. 150), teacher nomination is discretionary and may contribute to the inequitable access of Black students to gifted programming (Grissom & Redding, 2016).

It is evident that simply being aware that an ineffective identification process exists has not resolved the issue of underrepresentation. Excellence in intellectual performance appears in some form or another in many definitions of intelligence and it stands to reason that giftedness and its identification process have most often been associated with higher levels of abilities and academic performance. “Historically, the primary and still most concentrated attention to giftedness and gifted education is directed at high intellectual abilities” and remains a major component of district policies nationwide (Subotnik et al., 2011, p. 5). Inarguably, the demographics of the nation over the last century have evolved greatly incorporating new cultures, perceptions, and needs; however, reliance on traditional measures of giftedness has continued (Maker, 1996). Hodges et al. (2018) “found that 43 of the 50 states placed an emphasis on intellectual and academic abilities” (p. 148) to define giftedness. Wright and Ford (2017) purport that teachers recognize signs of giftedness in children but nominate only those students who excel academically. The belief that higher-level verbal abilities, measured by IQ tests, as a means to identify giftedness is pervasive and perhaps detrimental to the gifted identification of

Black students, but not all research supports such notion. In contrast, Grissom and Redding (2016) argued that academic achievement is not a factor in the gifted identification of Black students and point to teacher nomination instead, a measure that carries a greater potential of bias.

Other Factors Impacting Identification

Perceptions

Teachers are agents of change (McBee Orzulak, 2013); their perspective is important to student learning and, perhaps most importantly, the apparent capacities of their students.

According to Hattie and Zierer (2017),

Learning has a lot to do with perspectives—particularly on the perspective of the teacher and its impact on the learner’s motivation, the perspective of the parents and its impact on the learner’s confidence, the perspective of the peers and their impact on learner’s engagement, and the perspective of the learners themselves and its impact on their ability to see themselves as consumers or producers of their own learning. (p. 40)

The principle of Bronfenbrenner’s (1981) ecological system theory asserts that human development is dependent upon the interaction between a person’s sense of self and the environmental factors surrounding that person. In other words, our sense of being and self-perceptions are impacted by all that surrounds us. Bronfenbrenner’s theory can be applied to education in relation to how others perceive our academic abilities in addition to how we perceive our own; therefore, it might be surmised that the way a child’s academic ability is perceived by others plays an important role in a child’s personal perceived ability. In fact, ten Hagen et al. (2022) linked positive teacher and student perceptions of students’ ability to achievement in math and reading.

In addition, Bronfenbrenner (1981) asserted that parents and teachers must have solid beliefs in their own abilities to effectively fulfill their roles but must also work together to foster a child's self-efficacy, that is, a belief in oneself to complete a task effectively and successfully (Bandura & Schunk, 1981). Understandably, based upon self-perceptions of personal abilities, people choose the types of activities they are willing to participate in, "how much effort they expend, and how long they will persist in the face of difficulties" (Bandura & Schunk, 1981, p. 587). Aside from the feelings parents and teachers may have of their own competence as parents and teachers, although influential to their child's self-efficacy, the way children feel about their own academic abilities in conjunction with how their abilities are perceived by others also affects their academic success. It is no surprise then that some students, who have great potential for talent development, are turned off by certain academic content areas or shut down altogether while others excel.

People do not often understand how their abilities compare to the abilities of their peers (Bandura & Schunk, 1981). Hattie and Yates (2014) support this notion but relate it to self-confidence: "Aside from our own perception, we have almost no secure index of what it means to be confident" (p. 216). Past success is one measure that may be employed to discover an understanding of one's abilities. Beneficial to student success, Uchida et al. (2018) found that experiences of success increased the self-efficacy, or confidence levels, of students. Further, Hattie and Yates (2014) found that teachers perceive a student's ability based upon how confidently a student answers a question or performs a task. Not taking into account the possible lack of training or ability to recognize giftedness in students, this makes one wonder if teacher perception of a student's confidence level plays a role in the identification of giftedness. And if

students are unsure of their own abilities as a result of minimal academic success, how confident are they performing in front of their peers?

Through his social cognitive theory of human development and concept of self-efficacy, Bandura (1977) developed a widely accepted definition of collective efficacy as the shared belief that a team can achieve a common goal together. Broadening Bandura's work through an educational lens, Donohoo et al. (2018) surmised that the way "teachers collectively think about their impact and student progress is most relevant to the success for their students" (p. 26). The concept of *collective teacher efficacy* is a powerful educational tool with a relatively large effect size of 1.57, indicating a strong positive impact on student learning (Donohoo et al., 2018; Hattie, 2014; Waack, 2018). Related to collective teacher efficacy is the principle of *academic optimism*, a term coined by Hoy, professor emeritus in educational administration (UCI Division of Continuing Education, 2019). Academic optimism, a construct that includes the interaction between the academic emphasis, collective teacher efficacy, and student-teacher trust level of a school, positively affects student achievement after controlling for student demographics and achievement (Hoy et al., 2006; Smith & Hoy, 2007). Further findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between academic optimism and student achievement of elementary students in rural, urban, and suburban school districts (Anderson et al., 2018). This means that academic optimism might boost the self-efficacy, that is, the confidence levels of Black students to believe that they can achieve beyond their peers. If this is so, teachers may perceive higher capabilities in Black students. As might be surmised, most educators are altruistic in their mission to maximize the potential of all students. Alas, underrepresentation of Black students in gifted education still exists.

Implicit Bias

The mere perception that a student has the capacity to learn and excel beyond peers of equal age and maturity is a plausible factor that may impact the gifted identification of Black students. Teacher perceptions of a student's ability is a powerful influencer, but one cannot ignore the possible impact of implicit bias inherent in perceptions and may be evident in our society today. "Implicit biases have been invoked to explain heightened police violence against Black US citizens" (Beeghly & Madva, 2020, p. 1). And although there are criticisms of the concept of implicit bias and its effects on behaviors (Beeghly & Madva, 2020), there is evidence it has influence. Vega and Moore (2018) stressed that African American males are capable of demonstrating academic giftedness but claim that teacher bias and current testing methods do not capture their higher abilities. Matheis et al. (2019) concluded that implicit beliefs of teachers influenced how they perceived the socioemotional abilities of gifted male and female students. According to Fiske (2022), "people are often biased against others outside of their own social group" (p. 1) and may demonstrate stereotypical beliefs about a specific group of people whether true or not. Human beings are subject to in-group bias effect, the tendency to relate to, favor, and show preferential treatment to others within our own groups (Hattie & Yates, 2014). According to Van Bavel et al. (2008), in-group bias influences preferences, thoughts, and perceptions.

Grissom and Redding (2016) asserted that bureaucratic representation theory suggests that teachers of color are more likely than White teachers to exercise discretion on behalf of students from their same racial or ethnic background—and similarly for White teachers and White students—such that students' probabilities of being assigned (to a gifted program) are higher with own-race teachers (p. 2).

It should be no revelation to anyone that most elementary teachers in America today are White females who are charged with recognizing giftedness in children and nominating them as potential candidates to receive gifted services. If White teachers relate better to or prefer White students, in-group bias may be contributing to the underrepresentation of Black students in gifted programs. One could argue, however, that students in the same classroom would belong to the same social group as the teacher (i.e., we are all Mrs. East's students, therefore, we are treated just the same), but why then does underrepresentation of our Black students in gifted programs persist? Students outside of a teacher's racial group may have gifts that do not align to what teachers perceive as giftedness within their own racial group. Interestingly, while some studies do not support this finding others have demonstrated a link between the high achievement of Black students to their assignment to Black teachers, especially in elementary school where climate supports a relevant culture (Redding, 2019). Not only may culture and biases be considered variables here, but also stereotyping of racial groups. White teachers may have preconceived notions of Black students that perpetuate their underrepresentation in gifted programs; however, Johnson (2020) indicated that biases are not static but can change. "To change stereotypes, teachers need to understand the nature of giftedness, reflect on their beliefs to be aware of their own stereotypes, and know the possible effects of stereotypes on their behavior in class as well as on students' development" (Matheis et al., 2019, p. 226).

The Connection Between Race, SES, and Achievement

"Race and [SES] are highly related" (McBee, 2010, p. 285). Historically, Black families have exhibited the highest rates of poverty over any other race in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). In 2019, Black families in the United States represented 23.8% of the poverty population but only 13.2% of the overall population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). This indicates

that “the share of Blacks in poverty [is] 1.8 times greater than their share among the general population” with Hispanic families trailing behind at 1.5 in comparison to White and Asian families who are underrepresented by roughly half of their total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021, para. 16).

Low SES negatively affects school performance—one criterion that may determine nomination of students (McBee, 2010). Students coming from families with low socio-economic status are more likely to exhibit little academic growth when compared to their counterparts (i.e., students coming from families with higher SES; Siegle et al., 2016). This disparity appears in the early primary grades and are attributed to limited or no access to preschool programs or other resources that may positively affect a student’s academic knowledge (Siegle et al., 2016). Race is strongly correlated to low SES and poor academic achievement; students who do not academically perform are most often not identified as gifted (McBee, 2010). Students from wealthier homes are identified as gifted three to four times more often than students from limited means (Grissom & Redding, 2016; McBee, 2006, 2010).

The disproportionate identification of gifted students across racial groups is not solely due to SES, however; race is a big factor (McBee, 2010). Even when academically similar to their White counterparts, Black students are more often overlooked for gifted services (Siegle et al., 2016). There is no clear reason why race would affect academic scores when comparing academically similar students, but the effect a lack of resources has on any student, regardless of race, is evident (McBee, 2010).

Cultural Implications

Although a pervasive and consistent concern, little information is represented in the literature whether teachers can recognize giftedness in students who are typically

underrepresented (McBee, 2006). Teachers may miss giftedness in students if nomination is based only on values inherent in the cultures of those teachers (Babu, 2018; Peterson, 1999). Most educators in America today come from White, middle-class homes with cultural values dissimilar to some of their students and may not always recognize giftedness in them (McBee, 2010). There is a shred of evidence in the literature that cultural bias exists in relation to the gifted identification of Hispanic students where assimilation to dominate culture played a role (McBee, 2006); therefore, it stands to reason cultural bias exists as it relates to the gifted identification of Black students.

Individualism and competition are traditional values of the United States that have defined success (Bordas, 2007). Societies that value individualism are more focused on competition as a positive force to an individual's success (Bordas, 2007) whether academic, social, monetary, athletic and the like. Accordingly, White teachers often define giftedness as having high academic ability, verbal assertiveness, and a high SES (Peterson, 1999). Perhaps the differences in cultural values follow broader concepts of individualism versus collectivism. Teachers with a more individualist perspective may not nominate students that exhibit values related to a collective perspective. In contrast, collectivism is defined as the collaboration of all members in a society acting in the best interest of the whole (Bordas, 2007). Peterson (1999) found that Black families valued giftedness as selfless contribution to the neighborhood, concern for family, and wisdom that is handed down to assist others. Culturally rooted behaviors exhibited by Black students in the classroom (e.g., pointing out inconsistencies, emotional impulsivities, excitable movement, and interruptions) are often in misalignment with the behavioral expectations of their White teachers and sometimes misinterpreted as learning disabilities and not associated with giftedness (Boykin et al., 2005; Ford & Kea, 2009; Owens et

al., 2016). These traits and behaviors are directly related to the concept of collectivism. It is understood, then, that teachers who recognize giftedness in students tend to look through the lens of the values known to them, that is, their own cultural values. Unfortunately, teacher training in cultural competency does not seem to mitigate the issue. Even having been trained to recognize giftedness in underrepresented students, teacher nomination is not the best variable to indicate giftedness (McBee, 2006).

Gatekeepers to gifted education are vital, but the role is poorly misunderstood and there is little research on the topic (McBee, 2006). What is known, however, is that there are more White teachers in our schools who nominate Black students for gifted services less often than they nominate White students (McBee, 2006; Ricciardi, 2020). In fact, McBee (2006) found that of the total number of Black students nominated for gifted services only 1.96% were nominated by teachers whereas 5.83% of the total number of White students nominated for gifted services were nominated by teachers. Teachers are not the only gatekeepers, however. Parents play a key role in the nomination of their children. For unknown cause, White parents nominate their children much more often than Black parents (McBee, 2006). One factor may be the belief that Black parents are not as involved in their children's education; however, "culturally distinct behaviors of Black parents are not represented in the current parental involvement literature [and as] a result, the current literature may suggest that Black parents are less involved in their children's academic lives than they actually are" (Roberts, S., n.d., para. 1). One explanation to this phenomenon is that Black parents may take on a more protective role for their children when faced with racial issues or providing for the home that overrides academic involvement as it relates to checking homework, attending school events, or providing enrichment (Roberts, n.d.).

Whatever the case may be, nomination of Black students for gifted programs remains disproportionate to their White counterparts.

Summary

In short, there are issues inherent in the gifted identification process perhaps stemming from perceptions of ability, race, culture, and SES or from various conceptions of how intelligence and giftedness are defined or perceived by others; even experienced teachers of the gifted continue to hold “a narrow conception of giftedness and [are] not aware of how culture and environmental factors influence the expression of giftedness in minority...students” (Neumeister et al., 2007, p. 479). “School personnel must examine their definitions of giftedness, perceptions of what giftedness ‘looks like’ and the identification procedures used to assess for giftedness” (Vega & Moore, 2018, p. 244). Looking further into teacher perception of higher ability, that is, giftedness may provide an avenue to mitigate biases in an effort to serve all of our children with an educational program that challenges them to maximize their potential.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Description of Program Evaluation

This chapter presents a comparative descriptive study with a mixed methods design that provided a multi-faceted examination of teacher perception as it relates to giftedness, the gifted identification process, and other factors that may be impacting the gifted identification of Black students in a small, rural school district. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in this study through closed and open-ended items on surveys and interviews. Surveys are often used in descriptive research using a Likert scale that provides respondents options that vary in degrees of intensity (Lauer, 2006). Surveys in this research captured quantitative data to address research questions one through four as well as qualitative data using two open-ended items to gather perspectives of giftedness. Interviews obtained more in-depth data relating to gifted characteristics and other factors that may be affecting the gifted identification of Black students. Interviews are assumed to provide richer data that may include participant perceptions, beliefs, and feelings. It is expected that discussion in a one-to-one atmosphere will present deeper insight (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Initial interview questions were developed then revised using peer debriefing to reflect the need to clarify or expand upon survey data but also to increase credibility and trustworthiness of responses (Mertens & Wilson, 2018).

Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed by calculating the percentages of response per response category and compared through nonparametric statistics, a method of comparing data from two or more groups without expected parameters as displayed by a bell

curve (Lachin, 2020). Qualitative data from open-ended items on the survey and one-to-one interviews were analyzed through the development of codes using participant language (i.e., in vivo coding) and inductive thematic analysis based upon emergent themes derived by participant responses to interview questions (Saldaña, 2016). Through the lens of a pragmatic paradigm, the aim of this study was to provide recommendations for policy and practice to increase the number of Black students identified as gifted to school district leadership (Mertens & Wilson, 2018).

To mitigate researcher bias, colleagues provided impartial feedback and multi-faceted perspectives for data and coding interpretations via peer debriefing at various steps of the research (Mertens & Wilson, 2018). Colleagues were also involved in providing perspective of other aspects of the research. For example, the data analyst for the district provided insight into coding and survey analysis techniques and the Coordinator of Advanced Programs provided information about the gifted program and various related data. No colleague examined data associated with any particular participant.

Role of the Researcher

In this study, I analyzed information gathered by surveys and interviews to gain an understanding of why the disparity exists between Black and White students identified as gifted in a small, rural school district. In preparation for data collection, I obtained permission from district leaders to conduct the study, developed survey items and interview questions, obtained IRB approval, presented details about the study at school faculty meetings to solicit participation, sent out surveys, and conducted interviews.

Because I am one of the district leaders, there was a potential for unintended and/or implicit biases to be introduced into the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. To

mitigate biases, I employed the use of critical friends, probing questions during interviews to ensure clarity of interpretation, and multiple sources of data (Mertens & Wilson, 2018).

Research Population and Sampling Method

The population for this study was strategically chosen to include K-5 general education elementary teachers elementary gifted resource teachers (GRT), and principals from each elementary school in the district (see Appendix B for demographics). All applicable staff members were selected because the focus of this study involved gifted nomination and identification at the elementary level in a specific school district.

Because the population was readily available to me and the research was specific to one particular school district, I chose convenience sampling. Although this method of sampling is inexpensive, easy to collect, and increases the credibility of the research, there are cons to using it: increased sampling bias, low external validity (it cannot be repeated), and inability to generalize data across other districts (Qualtrics, 2023).

Privacy and Confidentiality

Research surveys were developed to provide an anonymous avenue to provide data and prior to completion of the survey, participants were asked to sign a consent form and reminded that their participation was voluntary and could be refused at any time throughout the process. Interviews began with the same—consent form and a reminder that their participation was voluntary. Because of the sensitive nature of interviews, I advised all participants that data would be maintained confidentially and reassured them that I would have sole access to data, which would be analyzed, reported out, and potentially used in the body of my research but would never be connected to any participant.

Research Questions, Data Sources, Data Collection, and Data Analysis

This study focused on the gifted identification process across three elementary schools in a small, rural school district to gain insight into what may be affecting the gifted identification of Black students. Important to the purpose of this study, teacher perception of giftedness, the gifted identification process, and other factors that may impact the gifted identification of Black students were measured. The following information provides a more detailed description of the data sources, data collection, and data analysis of each data source. The following questions guided the research.

Research Questions

1. Across three elementary schools, what do educators perceive to be the definition of giftedness?
2. Across three elementary schools, how do educators perceive the gifted identification process?
3. What factors do educators perceive to be negatively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted?
4. What factors do educators perceive to be positively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted?

Survey: Perceptions of Giftedness, the Gifted Identification Process, and Other Factors That May Impact the Gifted Identification of Black Students

A survey for each participant group (see Appendix C) was chosen to collect data from the total population for research questions one through four because surveys provide a quick and easy way to collect a large amount of information in a short time period. There is evidence of a handful of instruments that measure educator perceptions (Babu, 2018; Neumeister et al., 2007;

Tercan & Bıçakçı, 2022), but because the research is specific to educator perceptions of giftedness in a specific school district, a survey was developed in conjunction with an expert in the field of gifted education research to address research questions one through four. The survey was expected to take participants roughly seven to ten minutes to complete and included questions to be answered with Likert Scales in addition to two open-ended items.

To mitigate bias and increase the credibility and reliability of the survey used in this study, it was reviewed by three experts in the field of gifted education research. In addition, the survey was field tested by my colleagues prior to actual data collection. Based upon their feedback, the survey was revised to include demographic information pertinent to the gifted identification process. Because the total population of elementary educators in this school district was invited to participate, the survey was piloted again by colleagues from the district's high school. Although colleagues who participated from the high school field test did not provide much feedback, the survey was finalized.

Data Collection. An anonymous survey was sent to all potential participants via Google Forms. To increase the potential respondent rate and with the permission of the principal of each elementary school and the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, the research topic was presented to staff at each elementary school during a faculty meeting. After each faculty meeting, a follow up email was sent through Google Mail to all K-5 teachers as well as each GRT and principal from all three elementary schools. The follow up email included a brief description and purpose of the research as well as a copy of the consent form that each potential participant would be required to complete electronically through an anonymous check mark prior to beginning the survey. One week after the follow up email was sent, the survey was sent via

Google Forms to all potential participants and was resent at two and three weeks in an effort to increase the respondent rate.

Data Analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to determine the percentages of response per response category-on the survey indicating the trends of teacher perception of giftedness, the gifted identification process, and other factors that may be impacting the gifted identification of Black students. The mode of each survey item was calculated in percentages, overall and per respondent category, and plotted on divergent stacked bar charts (See Appendix D). Responses from each participant group was then compared using nonparametric statistics (i.e., Kruskal-Wallis H Test) to determine any significant differences in perceptions between the groups. The Kruskal-Wallis H Test is appropriate to use when data are ordinal (e.g., ranked data on a Likert scale), there are two or more participant groups, and the participants in each group are unique (Laerd Statistics, n.d.).

Qualitative, open-ended items on the survey were analyzed through in vivo coding using participants' exact language and approached through the lens of utility (Mertens & Wilson, 2018). Inductive coding was then used to assign labels to in vivo codes to "document and categorize the breadth of opinions stated by multiple participants" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 8). Coding was done manually to discover similar categories and emergent themes through an electronic spreadsheet to assist in the manipulation and analysis of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saldaña, 2016). Through in vivo coding and inductive thematic analysis, patterns of educator perceptions of giftedness were examined. A more in-depth description of the coding process used in this section appears in the following section under Data Analysis.

Interviews: Perception of Factors Impacting the Number of Black Students Identified as Gifted

Interviews were chosen to collect invaluable data but also to provide a non-judgmental atmosphere for those who chose to participate without the fear of offending or being judged by colleagues. Understanding these types of attributes may enhance the recommendations provided to the school district.

Data Collection. Because students are nominated and identified for gifted services in second grade, second grade teachers, GRTs, and principals from each elementary school were asked to participate in interviews. Participants were polled via Google Form to electronically sign the consent form and finalize a meeting date, time, and location. To increase participation, potential participants were advised that they would be entered in a drawing for a \$100 gift card. The Google Form was sent once per week for 3 weeks, but the response rate remained low. Direct meetings aimed to solicit participation were set with GRTs and principals who had not responded after three weeks and the response rate increased to an acceptable percentage.

A Google Calendar invitation was sent to each participant to confirm the interview. Each interview was conducted at the agreed upon date, time, and location to discuss questions aligned to research questions three and four. Interviews began with a reminder that the session would be recorded and that their participation was voluntary; therefore, stopping at any time was acceptable and would not result in a consequence of any type. Each interview lasted roughly twenty to thirty minutes and was recorded using Otter, a purchased application that records and transcribes responses in real time to ensure exact words and voice tone of each participant were captured to interpret bias or attitude toward a particular subject (Walden University, n.d.). Probing questions were used during the interview to enhance credibility of the research by

ensuring interview responses were interpreted correctly (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) and notes were taken to provide any necessary insight into potentially confusing responses during analysis. To compare overall group responses, recorded interviews and notes were labeled by the role of the participant then numbered (e.g., GRT-1, GRT-2). At the end of the interview, participants were thanked verbally, thank you notes were sent, and a name was chosen as winner of the \$100 gift card.

Data Analysis. To begin data analysis, interview transcriptions were downloaded into separate Google Documents that were labeled exactly as the recordings were, that is, by the role of the participant then numbered. To ensure accuracy of transcriptions, each recording was listened to, and corrections were made directly on the transcriptions themselves. Notes made during interviews were available as references to assist in interpretation. After transcriptions were corrected, they were entered manually onto an electronic spreadsheet (i.e., Excel) under appropriate interview questions. Each response was read several times to detect similar responses or patterns in the data which were then color coded as initial codes (i.e., in vivo codes) using respondent's own words (Saldaña, 2016). To clarify a few initial codes, recordings were played as needed to understand the intent behind a participant's response. On several occasions, ensuring participant names were kept confidential, critical friends (e.g., a few trusted and respected colleagues) assisted in interpreting an anonymous response or building a code. To minimize the numerous amounts of in vivo codes, responses were read through again to aggregate similar codes together to develop themes. Often, recordings were played, survey data was examined, transcriptions read through, and critical friends were employed to assist in the development of themes. After themes were finalized, transcriptions were examined to determine the mode of each response per respondent category and overall. Modes were then calculated into

percentages to analyze overall data. Data were also disaggregated and analyzed per respondent category. Table 2 summarizes the data sources, data collection, and the data analysis process for each research question.

Table 2

Methodology in Brief

Research Questions	Data Sources	Data Analysis
RQ1. Across three elementary schools, what do educators perceive to be the definition of giftedness?	Survey: Likert Scale Open-ended survey questions & 1:1 Interview	Quantitative Data – descriptive statistics & nonparametric statistics (Kruskal-Wallis H Test) Qualitative Data – In Vivo Coding and Inductive thematic analysis
RQ2. Across three elementary schools, how do educators perceive the gifted identification process?	Survey: Likert Scale 1:1 Interview	Quantitative Data – descriptive statistics & nonparametric statistics (Kruskal-Wallis H Test) Qualitative Data – In Vivo Coding and Inductive thematic analysis
RQ3. What factors do educators perceive to be negatively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted?	Survey: Likert Scale 1:1 Interview	Quantitative Data – descriptive statistics & nonparametric statistics (Kruskal-Wallis H Test) Qualitative Data – In Vivo Coding and Inductive thematic analysis
RQ4. What factors do educators perceive to be positively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted?	Survey: Likert Scale 1:1 Interview	Quantitative Data – descriptive statistics & nonparametric statistics (Kruskal-Wallis H Test) Qualitative Data – In Vivo Coding and Inductive thematic analysis

Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions

Delimitations

Neither administrators, students, nor parents were purposefully included in this study to target insight of teacher values and perceptions related to the gifted identification of Black students. This aspect of the gifted identification process was chosen to be studied over other variables that may impact the gifted identification of Black students such as homelife barriers and the focus on students with special needs instead of high-achieving students in terms of funding priorities and K-12 teacher preparation (Subotnik et al., 2011).

Limitations

Because the study was limited to a single school district, unintended bias could have been introduced into the study, therefore, the generalizability of the study may be limited to just this district (Mertens & Wilson, 2018). Generalizability of this research to other school districts is limited and should not be assumed due to the specificity of the research designed with only one school district in mind.

In addition, participants are colleagues of mine which may have introduced bias into the research. Because I am a leader in the district, it is plausible that some teachers who participated in interviews were cautious when responding to questions. In fact, during one interview, a teacher followed up her response with, “I don’t think that’s what you wanted to hear.”

Because of the small number of K-1 and 3-5 participants in the study and their demographic make-up per school, those who chose to be interviewed may not be representative of the general population; however, it is important to note that the gender and racial demographics of the elementary staff in the district are not very diverse and the potential to have a representative sample is high.

The COVID-19 pandemic acts as a limitation as it may have had an impact on the gifted program for the past 2 years as well as teacher retention. Longitudinal data from 2009 to 2019 related to the number of gifted students identified per racial group were examined and used as evidence of an issue when turnover was low. Perceptions of research participants new to the district may not align with the perceptions of teachers who have left the district.

Another limitation to the research is the piloted gifted program at one of the elementary schools that includes a collaborative approach to gifted education where the gifted resource teacher pushes into several third-grade classrooms to co-teach with the general education teacher. This approach serves all third-grade students in the classroom setting, not just those who were identified as gifted. This approach is much different than the traditional pull-out approach the two other elementary schools have continued and may have skewed interview responses in some way.

Assumptions

This research was conducted under the following assumptions:

- Demographic data of the district were accurate in PowerSchool, the longitudinal data system used by the district.
- Data relevant to this research obtained by the Virginia Department of Education were accurate.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to performing research involving human subjects and requesting Human Subjects Committee approval of the research via the Protocol and Compliance Management system, I obtained a certificate of training by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). Once this requirement was met, the project proposal was submitted under the William & Mary

School of Education. The research was found to comply with appropriate ethical standards and was exempted from the need for formal review by the William & Mary protection of human subjects committee. As stated previously, participants were advised of their option to participate in the study, asked to sign a consent form, and were reassured that names would be kept confidential and unaffiliated with any data used for research, housed in a confidential database, and destroyed once analyzed.

Permissions

It is important to note that I am a leader in the district and have direct access to pertinent colleagues to request permission to access any and all data relevant to the study as well as contacting participants. Permission to conduct this research was granted by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and the district Superintendent.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Underrepresentation of Black students identified as gifted is a national issue (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.) and local school districts are not immune. As previously mentioned, data over the past 10 years have provided evidence that the issue also exists in the small, rural school district of this study. Using surveys, open-ended survey items, and interviews, this study examined teacher perception relating to several variables that may be impacting the gifted identification of Black students. This chapter begins with summaries of both survey and interview response rates and participant demographics of each. Findings and data analysis are presented in following sections beginning with each research question.

To ensure trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, triangulation of quantitative survey data, qualitative survey data, and interview data were employed to ensure interpretation of the data resulted in themes based on real perceptions of participants. Further, probing questions were asked during interviews to ensure clarity of interpretation (Mertens & Wilson, 2018) and colleagues provided alternative interpretations of qualitative data.

Response Rate

Surveys. Surveys were sent electronically to 70 staff members: 55 teachers from grades K-1 and 3-5, nine second-grade teachers, three elementary gifted resource teachers (GRTs), and three elementary principals. After three separate attempts to solicit participation over the course of 4 weeks, 12 teachers from Grades K-1 and 3-5 and three second-grade teachers responded to the survey, resulting in response rates of 21.8% and 33.3%, respectively. An overall response

rate from teachers K-5 was 23.4%. All elementary GRTs ($n = 3$) and elementary principals ($n = 3$) responded to the survey resulting in a 100% response rate per group. Overall, the combined response rate for the survey was 30%. With low participation from K-5 teachers (i.e., 23.4%), data collected may not be representative of the whole and generalizability across the division will be limited.

Survey Demographics. Only female teachers in three participant categories (i.e., K-1 and 3-5, Grade 2, and GRTs) responded to the survey (see Appendices H, I, and J for demographic data). It is important to note, however, that there are two male teachers total in Grades K-5 and no male GRTs across all three elementary schools in the division. All principals (i.e., one male, two females) participated. Females comprise roughly 95.52% across the three elementary schools in the division as indicated in Appendix B. Not surprisingly, 98.4% of all survey respondents were female.

Most K-1 and 3-5 and Grade 2 teacher respondents (i.e., 83.3%) have 6 years or more teaching experience and 66.7% of teachers in these two categories fall into the age group of 35+ years. Two of the three GRTs have 11 or more years of teaching experience in the general education classroom, but each has held the role of GRT for various amounts of time: the low range being 0-5 years and at the high end 11-15. Principals indicated varied amounts of teaching experience as well as varied amounts of time in their current roles.

Of all K-1 and 3-5 respondents ($n = 12$), 58.5% indicated that they had received no training in gifted education, 33.3% had taken one or more classes in gifted education, and 41.7% had attended at least one professional learning opportunity related to gifted education (see Appendix I). One teacher in this category who reported having no training in gifted education stated that gifted education was covered in a college course she had taken under the special

education umbrella. Interesting to note, the largest percentages of teachers in Grades K-1 and 3-5 who responded that they had not received training in gifted education (i.e., 25% and 16.7%) fall into the 6-10 years and 21-30 years of teaching experience, respectively. This may be evidence of the ebb and flow of societal interest in gifted education or perhaps the nuances of teacher prep programs at certain universities.

Grade 2 respondents ($n = 3$) were evenly distributed (at 33.3% each) with one respondent indicating that no training in gifted education was received, one had taken at least one or more classes in gifted education, and one had attended at least one professional learning opportunity related to gifted education.

Principal respondents ($n = 3$) were also evenly distributed (at 33.3% each) with one having taken at least one or more classes in gifted education, one having attended at least one professional learning opportunity related to gifted education, and one having obtained a gifted endorsement. All GRTs ($n = 3$) hold gifted endorsements. In contrast, however, no teachers in grades K-5 ($n = 15$) have obtained their gifted endorsement.

Respondents were asked whether they were the parent of a gifted child or not (see Appendix J). Overall, 33.3% of all respondents indicated that they were the parent of a gifted child: 28.6% indicated that their gifted child was identified whereas 4.8% indicated that their gifted child was not identified. Of all K-5 teachers, 75% indicated that they were not the parent of a gifted child, whereas both principals and second-grade teachers separately reported that 66.7% were not the parents of a gifted child. Incidentally, Grade 2 is when initial gifted nomination and identification occurs in this district.

Interviews. Fifteen staff members were invited to participate in an interview to expand upon answers gathered from surveys: four second-grade teachers, three GRTs, and three

principals. Due to the qualitative nature of this research, this population sample was large enough to deem findings credible (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), but generalization of the data is not possible and only describes those who participated (Qualtrics, 2023).

Interview Demographics. Appendix K indicates that there is only one male in the total number of interview participants across three elementary schools. A majority (i.e., 53.3%) of all participants have 11 years or more teaching experience and 75% of second grade teachers indicated that they fall into the 35-44 years age group. No second-grade teacher was younger than 35 years old and had less than 11 years of teaching experience. Each GRT has varied experience in their positions ranging from 0-15 years. Principals also had varied experience in their positions ranging from 6-30 years.

Findings

Both surveys and interviews were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Most items on the survey provided a quantitative evaluation of the perceptions of instructional staff as they related to the gifted identification of Black students in a small, rural school district. Quantitative items on the survey were divided into three different categories: Characteristics of Gifted Students, Gifted Identification, and Other Factors that May Impact the Gifted Identification of Black Students. Figures 2, 3, and 4 present the overall data collected per survey category. Appendices H, I, and J disaggregate the overall data into each survey category: (a) Gifted Characteristics (14 items on the survey), (b) Gifted Identification (9 items on the survey), and (c) Other Factors Impacting the Gifted Identification of Students (10 items on the survey). Data from each survey category were then disaggregated into four respondent categories: (a) K-1 and 3-5 Teachers, (b) Second Grade Teachers, (c) Gifted Resource Teachers, and (d) Principals (see Appendices H, I, and J). This section analyzes survey data into percentages of response per

response category on the survey and compares the groups using the Kruskal-Wallis H Test to determine any significant differences in perceptions between the groups. In addition to the quantitative items, the survey included two open-ended questions to further assess perceptions related to the typical characteristics of gifted students. Analysis of these items are also presented in this section.

Six interview questions (see Appendix G) were designed to gather data enriched with the values and beliefs of educators in the district and to delve deeper into survey data. During interviews, many participants inadvertently expanded upon an answer to one question by including answers to several others. Themes were developed through analysis of the data from all questions, therefore, some data overlapped from question to question. In addition, because of their close relation, interview data from Research Questions 3 and 4 often were inverts of one another. Thematic analysis of both open-ended survey items and interview questions are presented in this section.

Figure 2

Overall Perceptions of the Characteristics of Gifted Students

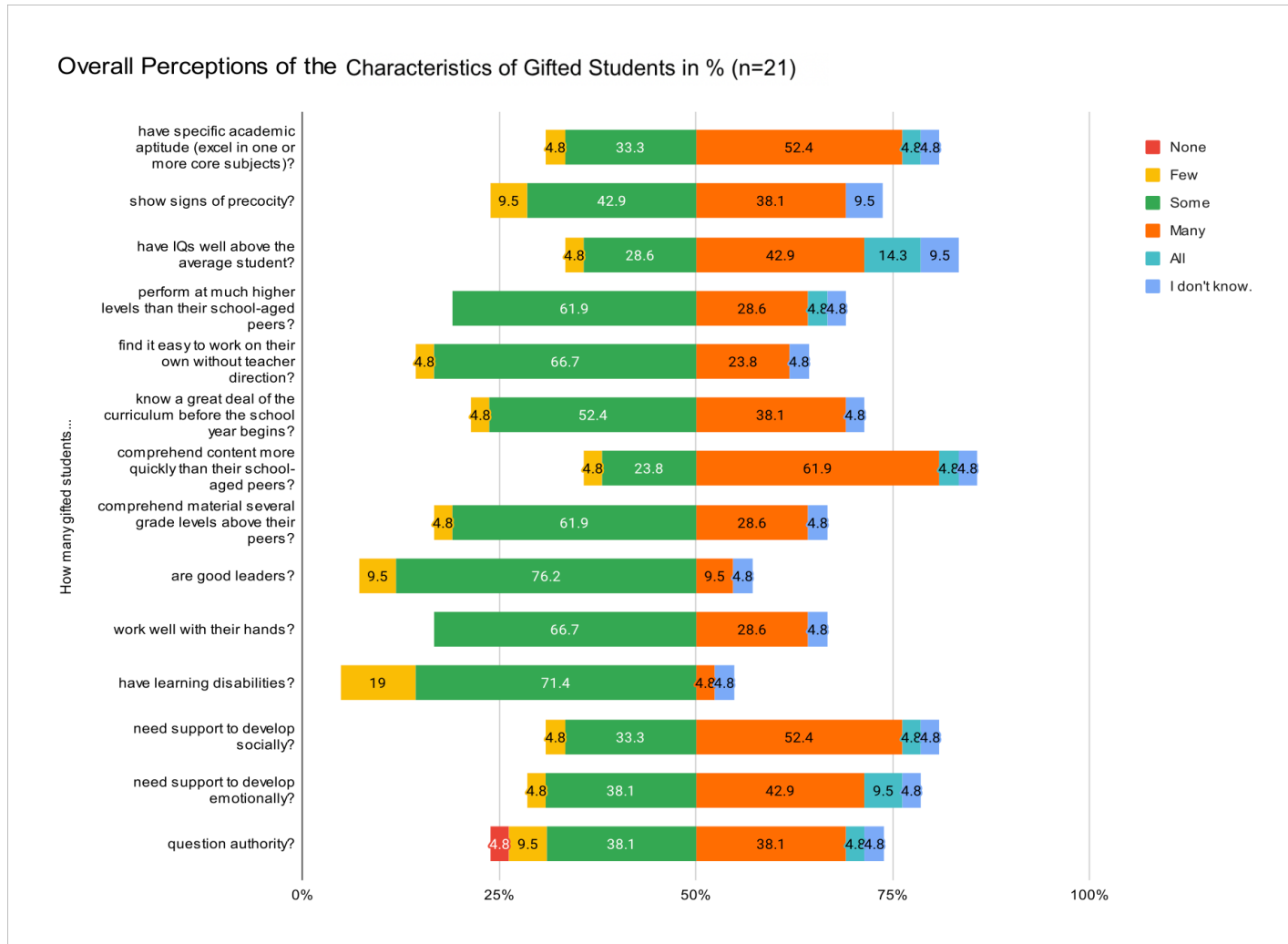


Figure 3

Overall Perceptions of the Gifted Identification Process

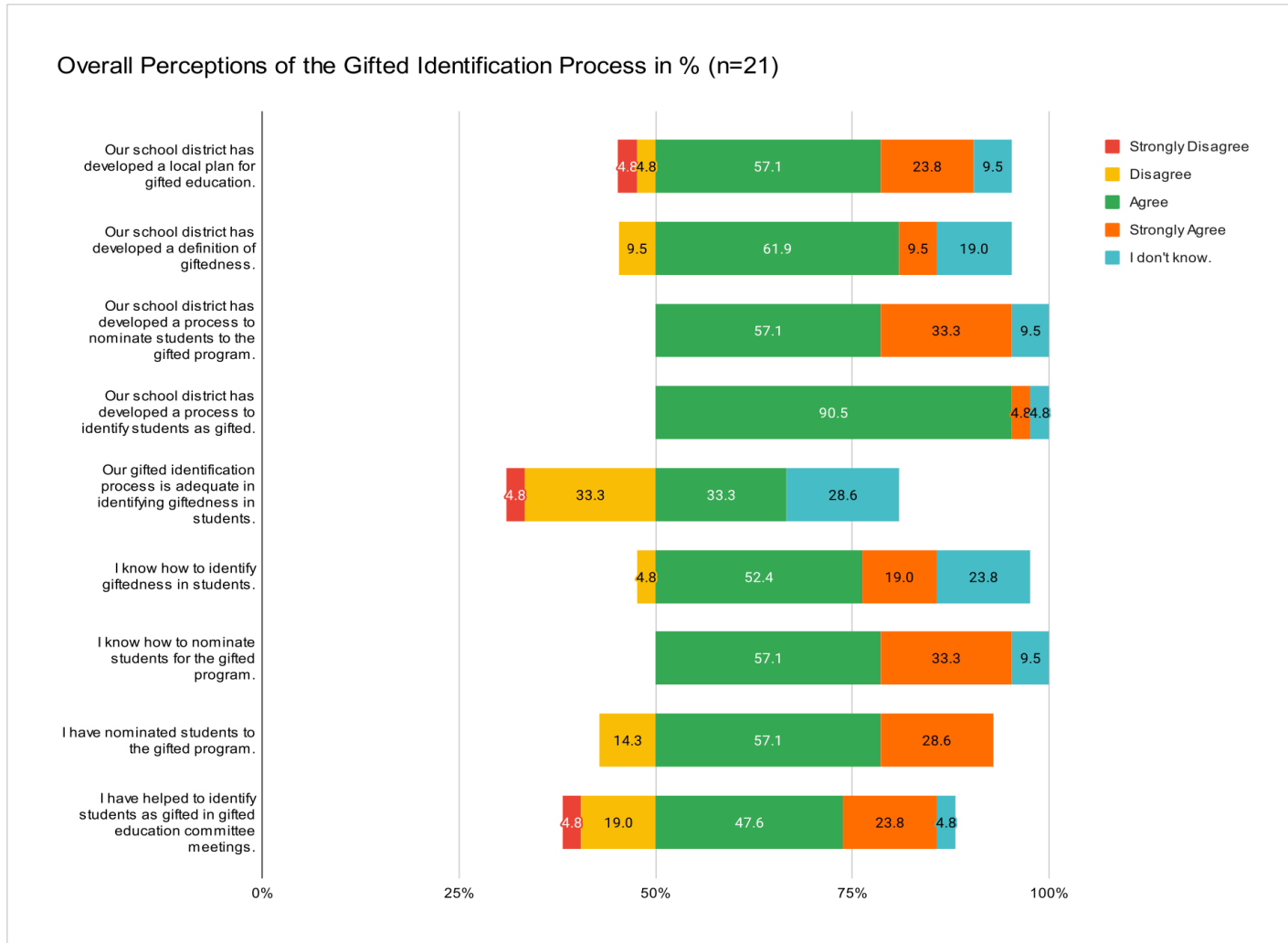
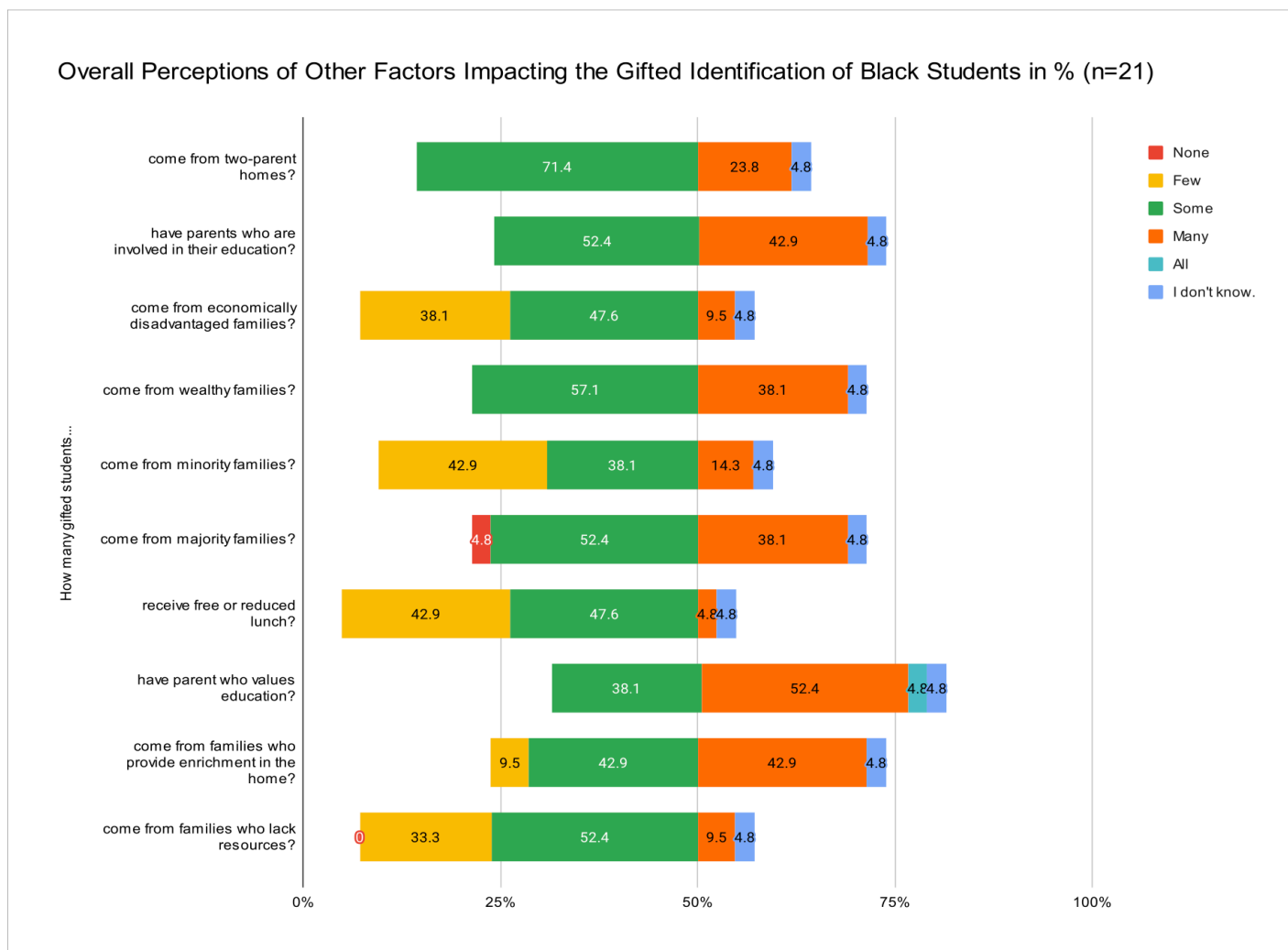


Figure 4

Overall Perceptions of Other Factors Impacting the Gifted Identification of Black Students



Research Question 1. Across three elementary schools, what do educators perceive to be the definition of giftedness?

Although there is no consensus of the definition of giftedness in this school district, most participants across the division held similar perceptions of giftedness that related to both federal and state definitions; across three elementary schools, giftedness is perceived to reflect high intellect, high ability in academics and creativity, and high performance.

Research Question 1 Qualitative Evidence. Interviews resulted in emergent themes that were clearly the perceptions of most interview participants. Most interview participants (i.e., 90%) perceived gifted students as having high ability, far above their peers, and 80% perceived creativity as being another prominent characteristic of gifted students. Three other characteristics of gifted students emerged through interviews but are considered minor when compared to the number of participants who perceive high ability and creativity as being highly characteristic of giftedness.

Using in vivo coding and inductive thematic analysis, five themes emerged from interview responses to the question *What does a typical gifted student look like to you?*: Theme 1 – High Ability, Theme 2 – Creative, Theme 3 – Absent-Minded Professor, Theme 4 – Twice Exceptional, and Theme 5 – Curious.

High Ability. High Ability was the most prominent theme where 90% of interviewees and 62% of open-ended survey responses indicate perceptions of gifted students exhibiting this characteristic. This theme was derived through participant statements such as the following.

Gifted students were perceived to:

- have “lots of information in that head” (IR1²)

² “IR” represents interview respondents. The number behind the code represents a unique respondent.

- have a “high level of background knowledge” (IR2)
- use “higher order thinking, have a high aptitude and Iqs” (IR4)
- have a “weird wonderful toolbox of background knowledge” and the ability to “apply knowledge and make connections when engaged” (IR8)
- be “so far ahead of their developmental age that, as long as it is within their interest, I mean, the conversation can get so deep beyond what I can even conceive conceptually” (IR9)
- be inherently gifted because “giftedness is not learned...it’s something a child has in them – it’s the way their brain is wired” and “giftedness is giftedness – it should not be much of a question, you know, they should really stand out – giftedness goes beyond smart” (IR10)
- “have keen memor[ies]” (OSR1³)
- have a “complex thought process, strong comprehension, and strong vocabulary” (OSR2)
- can “solve a [problem] and explain it to others” (OSR5)
- “[use] words correctly that are beyond grade level and are intelligent” (OSR7)
- “can apply new skills, are two grade levels ahead, [and have] high test scores.” (OSR8)
- be “above grade level” (OSR14)

Creative. Gifted students were perceived to be creative; another prominent theme with 80% of the interviewees and 47.6% of open-ended survey questions indicate that gifted students:

- “see things outside of the box” (IR1)

³ “OSR” represents open-ended survey respondents. The number behind the code represents a unique respondent.

- “are often the most creative” (IR3)
- “most of the time...are very creative” and ““come up with ideas all the time” (IR4)
- “a lot of times, they’re the ones who kind of do an extra thing and their extra thing might be different than somebody else’s” (IR7)
- are “creative thinkers” (IR8)
- exhibit “out of the box thinking” (IR10)
- have “vivid imaginations” (OSR1)
- exhibit “intense creativity” (OSR2)
- are “able to think creatively and problem solve in different ways” (OSR5)
- are “creative and [can] come up with ideas that others didn’t think of” (OSR6)
- “think outside the box” (OSR7)
- “have the ability to solve problems in innovative ways” (OSR8)
- “generate thoughtful questions” and “deep thinker[s]” (OSR13)
- “give well thought out answers to questions” and are “creative, ha[ve] a broad range of interests, frequently [think] outside the box” (OSR17)

Twice Exceptional. Some gifted students also exhibit a disability that may not allow teachers to recognize giftedness in those students (National Association of Gifted Children, n.d.).

Twice-exceptional children may be described as

highly creative, verbal, imaginative, curious, with strong problem-solving ability, and a wide range of interests or a single, all-consuming expertise. However, at school, they may have difficulty keeping up with course rigor, volume, and demands—resulting in inconsistent academic performance, frustration, difficulties with written expression, and

labels such as lazy, unmotivated, and underachiever. (National Association of Gifted Children, n.d., para. 3)

Twice-exceptionality as it relates specifically to Black students may be culturally related and interpreted as misbehavior, frustration, hyperactivity, and other behavioral characteristics typically undesirable in the classroom and disassociated with a student's gifts or talents (Boykin et al., 2005; Ford & Kea, 2009; Owens et al., 2016). These traits are often misinterpreted by teachers as special needs, not associated with giftedness; leading to Black students being referred to special education, not gifted education (Boykin et al., 2005; Ford & Kea, 2009; Owens et al., 2016).

This theme emerged with 50% of interview participants and 14.6% of open-ended survey responses indicate the perception that gifted students:

- have a “brain [that] is all over the place” and are “sometimes um very disorganized” (IR1)
- are “twice exceptional...who I think have been more gifted than any student I’ve ever known” and “resistant to prove knowledge or are underachievers” (IR2)
- “can’t focus or...they need medicine, or they need this but like they just haven’t been tapped into where their brain is going. Like I think about little girls who have inattentive ADHD they’ll look like they’re people-pleasing. They do pretty well, but they’re so creative, like why isn’t creativity part of our criteria for gifted?” (IR3)
- “have so many different views [that] they cannot focus on one or two [views]” and “have so many great thoughts that they cannot...file them and finish with one and then move onto another” (IR4)

- “[have] the answers mixed up and jumbled up somewhere inside of them and [struggle] to put that out into the world” (IR9)
- have “messy writing...and are often all over the place” and “lose focus on that task at hand, but able to articulate her writing process and eloquently explain her rationale” (OSR4)
- have an “[Individualized Educational Plan] or autism and struggled to interact with others...and articulate their thinking” (OSR10)
- have “behavioral problems” (OSR11)

Curious. This theme emerged with 40% of all interviewees and 23.8% of open-ended survey participants responding that their perceptions of gifted students were that they:

- “[have] a lot of curiosity” (IR1)
- “have a real thirst for knowledge” and “are curious, they will not take any answer or a fact, at face value, they’re gonna want to know the why, and the how, and related to different you know, outside of the school, and also different fields for lack of a better word. So they’re always asking questions.” (IR5)
- are “constantly asking questions,” and “always want[s] to know more” (IR6)
- “look for opportunities to extend learning and enjoy research” (OSR1)
- have the “drive to explore” (OSR3)
- “research things on their own” (OSR6)
- “wants to know and inquires about many different things” (OSR7)

Absent-Minded Professor. Half of all interviewees responded that gifted students had Absent-Minded Professor qualities. Although none of the open-ended survey responses

supported this theme, it was worth mentioning. These perceptions of gifted students were that they:

- have “social cues [that] may be a little off” and “appear almost like an oddball” and are “too old for their time” (IR1)
- “in my opinion, that gifted kid is the absent-minded professor whose desk is a mess” (IR2)
- are “kind of a little bit unfocused and kind of a mess” (IR3)
- “can be quiet” and “socially, can be very awkward” (IR6)

Research Question 1 Quantitative Evidence. To answer Research Question 1, survey respondents were asked to indicate how prevalent they believed gifted characteristics to be among gifted students by choosing *none, few (a small amount), some (at least a small amount), many (a large amount),* or *all*. In addition, respondents had the option to choose “I don’t know.” (See Appendix L for data.)

To analyze the data from such a small sample size, a nonparametric analysis (i.e., Kruskal-Wallis H Test) was conducted to determine differences between respondent groups on how each perceived giftedness. Most survey items were perceived similarly by all respondent groups; however, the Kruskal-Wallis H Test determined that one survey item (i.e., How many gifted students question authority?) emerged as significantly different between the GRTs and the K-1 and 3-5 teachers ($\chi^2[3] = 10.12, p < .05$); GRTs ($M = 2, SD = 1$) and K-1 & 3-5 teachers ($M = 3.82, SD = 0.603$). Because GRTs have obtained formal gifted education and are deemed experts in this field, this significance indicates that K-1 and 3-5 teachers are lacking in that knowledge area and in need of gifted education.

Interview data supported this finding. One participant referred to the need to educate staff about gifted characteristics and suggested that the gifted resource teacher could “send out a newsletter every month for the staff and kind of just some tips that’s cool, things to look for.” Another respondent stated that staff “should be train[ed] to look for giftedness while meeting a student’s academic, physical, and psychological needs.” Both statements could be the result of the lack of communication about the gifted program, the ignorance of teachers new to the division about the gifted program, or perhaps the societal ebb and flow of interest in gifted education. In any case, it could be surmised that the instructional priority in this school district may be something other than gifted education.

Interesting to note, one teacher with 5 or fewer years teaching experience and no training in gifted education answered 78.4% of the survey questions with *I don’t know*. In addition, 13 of the 15 K-1 and 3-5 and second-grade teacher respondents have 6 years or more teaching experience and fall into the age group of 35+ years. This may indicate that those with more teaching experience have more background knowledge of gifted education and were more comfortable answering the survey.

Research Question 2. Across three elementary schools, how do educators perceive the gifted identification process?

Overall, educators perceived the gifted identification process as inadequate, in need of revision, or simply do not know. In addition, most survey respondents have general knowledge of the gifted identification process but many of the district’s elementary educators are not prepared to recognize giftedness or participate in the identification process.

Research Question 2 Qualitative Evidence. Interview respondents were somewhat split on this question with 50% indicating that the gifted identification process should be revised, 40%

indicating that the gifted identification process should not be revised, and 10% indicating that they did not know if it should be revised. Respondents who indicated that the gifted identification process should be changed ($n = 5$) were split into two categories: 80% believed the gifted program itself should also be revised to capture other areas of giftedness whereas 60% percent perceived that the identification process should be revised to exclude any subjective criteria. It is important to note that there were overlapping responses where some respondents indicated that they believed both (a) the program itself should be revised in some way and (b) subjective criteria should be eliminated from the identification process.

Using in vivo coding and inductive thematic analysis, three themes emerged from interview respondents to the question *Would you change the gifted identification process? Why or why not?*: Theme 1 – Yes, I Would Change the Process, But the Program Itself Also Needs to be Revised; Theme 2 – Yes, Get Rid of Subjective Criteria; and Theme 3 – No, the Process Now Includes Various Criteria that Captures Giftedness.

Yes, I Would Change the Process, but the Program Itself Also Needs to be Revised.

This was the most prominent theme, where 50% of all interview respondents indicated that the identification process should be changed. Of the total number of respondents in this category ($n=5$), 80% indicated that the elementary gifted program itself should be broadened to serve students who are gifted in other areas. This theme was derived through participant responses such as:

- “[The gifted program] leans a little bit towards math so definitely, we need more language arts, which, you know what? What about the sciences and even the social sciences?” and “I would love to see [the gifted program] be more equal and also more diversified with other subjects.” (IR1)

- “It needs to be changed. 100%. It needs to. It’s...not just here. It’s very similar in other places, and it just makes the haves and have nots, and it just perpetuates that at such a young age. Like who wants to feel like a have not in third grade? Like it’s just not right” and “There is such a focus on math that when there isn’t a focus on poetry and language arts and those other things and deepening that learning that we don’t catch those kids, because they’re...probably not going to shine as much. I mean, some are great in both, but you know what I mean? I think that’s where we start to lose kids” and “We need to tighten up what we truly believe because if we’re hearing like guys we’re underrepresenting these students like great but look at the criteria. Like that’s all I really have to say, because the criteria is awful.” (IR3)
- “I would change it and this is a very difficult question because I don’t know how or what I would do to make it better or to make it equitable.” And “I definitely think that we are missing some of our students, because of the limitations of our process currently. So definitely change it.” (IR4)
- “Yes, because [students going through the gifted identification process] have to do a writing activity and a math activity. I’m not really fond of those...because it is a one-time deal. I was in gifted meetings last year and someone completely bombed it but she bombed it because it was a bad day for her.” (IR6)
- “if we had a gifted in athleticism...like...their ability to like see routes and do plays and like know all these things about sports at the age of seven like if that is a thing.” (IR7)
- “Yes, we need a creative assessment” and “I do not personally feel like second grade is the right time to do a screening. I think it’s too early uh fifth grade is a good time to

do the screening. [Students] understand that it's important and you can see the difference between those second grade and fifth grade CogAT scores just based on their maturity and um their understanding of ya know I'm going to take this seriously and not just click through and play" (IR8)

- "In a perfect world, we would expand our gifted program to focus on all of the areas of giftedness because we do know that students can be gifted in one specific area and not considered gifted in another. So I feel that we do a disservice by not identifying those students." (IR9)

Yes, get rid of Subjective Criteria. This theme emerged as the second most prominent where 60% of all interview respondents who indicated that the identification process should be changed ($n=5$) also believed that some of the identification criteria is too subjective and dependent upon the discretion or perception of the teacher (e.g., grades, feelings). This theme was derived through participant responses such as:

- "Remove grading criteria." (IR1)
- "Sometimes teachers give you this like addition sheet [as evidence of giftedness]. It's like, that's why you nominated them? I would love to see something a little more standard." (IR2)
- "Half of the criteria already in our minds is so subjective and not applicable to giftedness." (IR3)
- "I feel like what the teacher has to say is the biggest bulk of it and I'm not necessarily fond of that." (IR6)

No, the Process now Includes Various Criteria That Capture Giftedness. Another prominent theme emerged as supportive of the gifted identification process where 40% of all

interview respondents indicated that the gifted identification process should not be changed. Of the total number of respondents in this category ($n = 4$), 75% indicated that the gifted identification process should not be changed because there is a wide array of data collected to identify students. This theme was derived through participant responses such as:

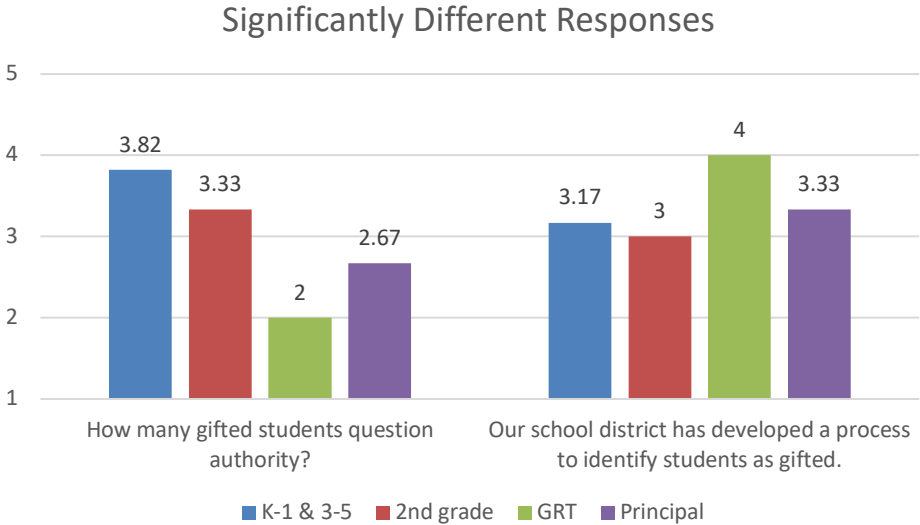
- “It’s not just a glimpse of a student from one day. It’s data collected you know in all different types of forms.” (IR5)
- “I think the current process is pretty good at least as far as like on the teacher end is concerned. It does look at kind of a variety of things. And I like that it’s not just based on your CogAT score or based on your performance in this. There’s also just like teacher feeling like, yeah, I know this child doesn’t look or didn’t test well here or there. But there are still things I see that I think this child deserves a second look or a closer look to see. Yeah, yeah, I like that” and “[The gifted identification process] involves monitoring, identification track – That’s one of the things I think that makes it more inclusive.” (IR7)
- “For what we have and the resources that we have, no I wouldn’t [change the identification process].” (IR9)
- “No, I feel that I feel that they’ve changed it recently. Okay, but it’s it really has teacher input, parent input, testing input, you have work samples.” (IR10)

Research Question 2 Quantitative Evidence. To answer research question 2, survey respondents were asked whether they “strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree” with specific statements about the gifted identification process. In addition, respondents had the option to choose “I don’t know.” (See Appendix M for data.)

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted to examine the differences between respondent groups on how each perceived the gifted identification process. Although almost all survey items were perceived similarly by all respondent groups, the Kruskal-Wallis H Test determined that one survey item (i.e., Our school district has developed a process to identify students as gifted.) emerged as significantly different between the GRTs and Grade 2 teachers ($\chi^2[3] = 10.12, p < .05$); GRTs ($M = 4, SD = 0$) and Grade 2 teachers ($M = 3, SD = 0$). See Figure 5. This is an interesting find because nomination and identification of gifted students occur in the second grade. It is presumed that second grade teachers understand that there is a process to determine giftedness in students, but this data clearly demonstrates otherwise.

Figure 5

Significantly Different Responses



Research Question 3. What factors do educators perceive to be negatively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted?

Factors acting as limitations to the gifted identification of students are (a) being of minority status, (b) receiving free or reduced-price lunches, and (c) lacking access to resources and opportunities. Overall data indicate that if a student is Black, poor, and potentially gifted in areas other than academics, the student will most likely not be identified as gifted.

Research Question 3 Qualitative Evidence. During interviews, the lack of exposure to resources and opportunities was perceived by 66.7% of all principals and 100% of all GRTs and second grade teachers to be the number one factor limiting the gifted identification of Black students. Of all interview respondents, 60% perceive low SES to be the second most limiting factor in the gifted identification of Black students. Three other factors emerged as negatively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted.

Using in vivo coding and inductive thematic analysis, four themes emerged from interview responses to the question *What Factors Might be Limiting the Gifted Identification of Black Students?:* Theme 1 – Lack of Exposure; Theme 2 – Low SES; Theme 3 – Lack of Knowledge of the Gifted Program; Theme 4 – Narrow Scope of the Gifted Program, and Theme 5 – Lack of Demographic Diversity.

Lack of Exposure. The lack of exposure to opportunities is an overwhelming perception of interview respondents; 90% perceived this factor to be the number one factor limiting the gifted identification of Black students. Closely related is low SES of families. A large percentage of respondents believe low SES is negatively impacting the gifted identification of Black students. Because 60% of all interview respondents mentioned low SES in conjunction with lack of exposure, there is overlapping evidence presented in support of both themes. Participant responses that relate to this theme are listed below:

- “But I’d say the number one thing is that the exposure outside of school time or lack thereof. I’d say more than anything, [parents] are just unaware because once again, the dynamics of the environment where the location we’re at and the lower socioeconomic is just the way it is up here” (IR1)
- “I feel like it’s not just Black. I feel like it’s also socioeconomic. I feel like experiences because if you’re poor, you can’t go to the museum. If you’re poor, you know you stay home. You just don’t have the experiences that some of our upper middle class kids have.” (IR2)
- “limited experiences they come to Kindergarten without the background knowledge that their classmates have and so it takes longer to get them to where they need to be” (IR3)
- “I think experiences play a big part like I have like I often when I’m we’re doing ID meetings, I ask the committee is this student getting these checks in the *meets criteria* column because their parents can take them to these experiences and field trips, but you know, not a field trip, to give them exposure to activities and knowledge?” (IR5)
- “Exposure to everything, I mean, out in their world.” (IR6)
- “Things that are done at home or not done at home like reading to kids or having different experiences and that can be not just Black but like lower income families as well. They just don’t have as much of the background knowledge of things so they don’t excel quite as quickly as some of their peers” (IR7)
- “A limiting factor in my opinion is lack of exposure. I think gifted education should be differentiating and meeting those kids’ needs with quality enriching experiences.” (IR8)

- “access to both resources and experiences it’s things like that it’s experiences and lack thereof due to family factors and things like that” (IR9)
- “I think just maybe like financial or financial maybe opportunity. Just in even just where they live in the county extracurriculars are harder to get to, distance to resources” and “Having no one to read to them at a young age lack of exposure at a young age” (IR10)

Low SES. As previously mentioned, 60% of all interview respondents mentioned low SES in conjunction with lack of exposure resulting in overlapping evidence presented in support of both themes. Respondents equated the lack of financial security with parents’ inability to provide enriching resources and experiences to their children. Respondents see both factors playing roles in the gifted identification of Black students. Some participant responses are listed below:

- “But I’d say the number one thing is that the exposure outside of school time or lack thereof. I’d say more than anything, [parents] are just unaware because once again, the dynamics of the environment where the location we’re and the lower socioeconomic is...just the way it is up here” (IR1)
- “I feel like it’s not just black. I feel like it’s also socioeconomic. I feel like experiences because if you’re poor, you can’t go the museum. If you’re poor,...you know, you stay home. You just don’t have the experiences that some of our upper middle class kids have.” (IR2)
- “Things that are done at home or not done at home, like reading to kids or having different experiences. And that can be not just Black, but like lower income families

as well. They just don't have as much of the background knowledge of things so they don't excel quite as quickly as some of their peers" (IR7)

- "affordability is a huge factor for enrichment within our communities" and "[lack of] access to both resources, and experiences it's things like that it's experiences and lack thereof due to family factors and things like that" (IR9)
- "I think just maybe like, financial or financial, maybe opportunity. Just in even just where they live in the county extracurriculars are harder to get to. Distance to resources." (IR10)

Lack of Knowledge of the Gifted Program. Half of all interview respondents have a perception that communication and education of the gifted program may be limitations of the gifted program impacting the gifted identification of Black students. Respondents perceive that both teachers and parents alike are uneducated about the program. The statements below resulted in the development of this theme:

- "I'd say there's a greater majority [of parents] that's unaware of quite what giftedness is and what's going on here." (IR1)
- "if you're...underrepresented population, parents aren't informed of the gifted program or the process" (IR5)
- "not all teachers may know what to look for regarding giftedness" and "parents who aren't at the school as much and don't even know that the [gifted] program was an option just kind of trust in the teachers to know or to nominate their child in that way" (IR7)
- "I don't think [parents] know what it means to be gifted. I feel like we could we could do a better job of communication of the communication piece." (IR9)

- “If parents don’t know what to look for” (IR10)

Narrow Scope of the Gifted Program. The elementary gifted program in the district is heavily math driven. One third of all interview respondents mentioned the program’s focus on math, but 40% of all interview respondents stated that the gifted program was academically driven leaving students gifted in arts, sports, and other areas underserved thus, potentially, limiting the gifted identification of Black students. Interesting to note, this theme relates directly to a theme that emerged from a previous interview question (i.e., Yes, I Would Change the Process, But the Program Itself Also Needs to be Revised). Below are responses in support of this theme:

- “We’ve been taught certain traits to look for and maybe those traits are not the same for all children.” (IR1)
- “Limited identification criteria, I think our criteria limits us to pigeonholing kids into a check the box yes they are or don’t check the box no they’re not” and “there is such a focus on math that when there isn’t a focus on poetry and language arts and those other things and deepening that learning that we don’t catch those kids, because they’re just not going to they’re probably not going to shine as much. I mean, some are great in both, but you know what I mean? I think that’s where we start to lose kids” and “we’re trained to look for a very black and white fit in the box. Straight sitting up raising hands all the time never talking like the student who conforms I feel like that’s more of what the checklist looks for.” (IR3)
- “our identification process is possibly it is leaving out part of a population and it’s because our identification criteria are so narrow that it focuses on this certain type of child” (IR8)

- “I mean we do have all those students who are incredibly gifted within other aspects or you know so it’s really difficult to I feel for those parents where it’s like where does my child fall into the gifted program? And how do I support my student who I know may be gifted in the performing arts or in the other fields that we don’t have those resources for right now.” (IR9)

Lack of Demographic Diversity. Of all interview respondents, 40% explained that the population of Black students at their schools was very low resulting in a group of students too small to include gifted students. This theme emerged as the fourth most limiting factor impacting the gifted identification of Black students as perceived by interview respondents, in stiff competition with the theme Narrow Scope of the Gifted Program. The following quotes support this theme:

- “When you don’t have as many [Black students] even though you would think we would have more like 50/50 we don’t at this school so I do think that affects the number.” (IR1)
- “the fact that we don’t have as many [Black students] now is hard” (IR6)
- “smaller pool of Black students might be limiting identification” (IR7)
- “I just don’t think that our school is extremely diverse to begin with so the pool of diversity is limited.” (IR9)

Research Question 3 Quantitative Evidence. To answer Research Question 3, survey respondents were asked whether *none*, *few (a small amount)*, *some (at least a small amount)*, *many (a large amount)*, or *all* students were impacted by specific factors that could be inferred to negatively impact the number of Black students identified as gifted. In addition, respondents had the option to choose “I don’t know.” It is important to note that the topic of race was societally

divisive at the time the survey was written, thus questions on the survey did not specifically ask about Black students. Based upon data gathered from the survey that was applied to interview data, descriptions related to Black students were inferred. (See Appendix N for data.)

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted to examine the differences between respondent groups on how each perceived factors that may limit the number of Black students identified as gifted. No significant differences were found among all respondent groups.

Survey data indicated that gifted students (a) come from minority families and (b) receive free or reduced-price lunch. Furthermore, almost one third of all respondents indicated that few gifted students (a) come from economically disadvantaged families and (b) come from families who lack resources. Information gleaned from interviews supports the perception of survey participants; 90% of all interview participants perceive the lack of exposure to opportunities and 60% perceive low SES as the most limiting factors impacting the gifted identification of Black students. One interview respondent stated that “giftedness is attributed to the resources and experiences of the students.” It appears from the survey data that factors acting as limitations to the gifted identification of students are (a) being of minority status, (b) receiving free or reduced-price lunches, and (c) lacking access to resources and opportunities.

Perceptions of three interview respondents are worth mentioning due to the potential impact they have on the gifted identification of Black students. These perceptions relate to cultural perspective and bias in individuals charged with recognizing potential and identifying giftedness in students. Research related to cultural perceptions of giftedness is minimal, yet this respondent reported that years of experience with parents in a previous district led to this conclusion:

“There’s also this cultural element where giftedness is not exactly seen as a positive light in some cultures. And so when you have specifically parents of say African descent something like that there is a big push to be normal. There’s a struggle to put students in gifted programs of African descent. There is a struggle to get parents on board with special education programs. They just want their students to be seen as normal. Some of that comes I feel from being a Black individual in America they would just like our students to kind of blend in. It was not we don’t want any...extra eyes on you and not because of anything negative. But there’s just such a struggle to be accepted that we just like our students to be normal.”

Perceptions of two other respondents lead to the issue of bias and the potential impact it has on the gifted identification of Black students. One respondent, referring to limiting factors impacting the gifted identification of Black students, stated,

I feel like it’s not just Black. I feel like it’s also socioeconomic. They are that the triple hitters is what I call them when we’re looking at data, because they are either mixed race or they’re African American. They are poor and sometimes [special education]. And when there’s this disparity in the identification, we have certain families we just know that they’re going right into [special education]. We know that when a sibling is coming we just know that they’re going to be [in special education]; they’re going to be a low achiever.

Another stated, when referring to identifying students with traumatic backgrounds as gifted,

And I just think when you’ve got these basic needs not being met or there’s violence in the home like you’re just trying you’re in survival mode so when your brain’s in survival mode you’re not ready to engage in any kind of learning let alone deeper learning so I

think that that's the first thing that comes to mind when I think of our African American students or low socioeconomic students. I just I think and that's not everyone that's of course not a blanket statement for all African American students. But when we look at the data at suspensions and crime and you know the prison pipeline like it's right there and it's just it's it just continues and continues, and I don't know as educators that we are armed with how to do that.

Research Question 4. What do educators perceive to be factors that may increase the number of Black students identified as gifted?

Exposure to enrichment and educating teachers and parents about the gifted program were equally perceived as the most impactful factors that would increase the number of Black students identified as gifted in addition to being White and wealthy, factors not explicitly stated but gathered through data.

Research Question 4 Qualitative Evidence. Interview questions were important to answer research question four because the same survey category was used to collect data for both research questions three and four (i.e., Overall Perceptions of Other Factors Impacting the Gifted Identification of Students). Further, thematic analysis of interview data indicated that some factors, when increased or decreased, could either limit or facilitate the gifted identification of Black students. For example, the lack of exposure of enriching opportunities may limit the number of Black students identified as gifted whereas it's inverse, that is, more exposure to enriching opportunities may increase the gifted identification of Black students. In addition to the inverse themes, a few nuances between the perceptions of limiting and facilitating factors will be presented in this section.

Using in vivo coding and inductive thematic analysis, four themes emerged from interview responses to the question *What factors might increase the number of Black students identified as gifted?*: Theme 1 – Exposure to Enriching Opportunities; Theme 2 – Education About Giftedness and the Gifted Program; Theme 3 – Broader Gifted Program; and Theme 4 – Monitoring Status.

Exposure to Enriching Opportunities. Although 90% of interview respondents perceived that a lack of exposure limited the number of Black students identified as gifted, only 70% explicitly mentioned exposure to enrichment as a factor that would increase the gifted identification of Black students. Data from interviews overlapped from both this interview question and the previous interview question (i.e., What factors might be limiting the gifted identification of Black students?) and also included the following:

- “I’d like to see the opportunity for enrichment become like a consistent thing. Regardless of having the gifted teacher in here, we can pull it off.” (IR1)
- “expose them to those trips and knowledge...interest-based learning experiences to students who may not get that otherwise that maybe they did get it at home, and maybe they didn’t, and kind of seeing are they how they’re gonna do” (IR5)
- “I would always tell my first-grade parents it’s like expose your kids to as many things as you can do you know within your reach whatever you can do. And I mean I feel like exposure is big.” (IR6)
- “I definitely think looking at these kids earlier as far as like do I not see them excelling because of lower income or their home life or things like that and making sure we’ve got books and opportunities for them to kind of get exposure to different kinds of things“ and “if you are kind of elevating your curriculum you can kind of see

who can keep up with that elevated pace and be like okay well maybe you weren't noticed that first time around, but you are rocking it with these guys now" (IR7)

- "they need to be exposed to that higher level thinking and also be required and accountable to write about their thinking and that needs to be modeled for them" (IR8)

Education About Giftedness and the Gifted Program. Another prominent theme, with 70% of interview respondents perceiving the education of teachers and parents about giftedness and the gifted program as positively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted. This theme is an inverse of a theme that emerged from 50% of all interview respondents perceiving that the lack of knowledge about the gifted program was a factor that negatively impacted the number of Black students identified as gifted. Data overlapped from both this interview question and the previous interview question (i.e., What factors might be limiting the gifted identification of Black students?) and also included the following:

- "I think we start as educators with changing our identification process, broadening it, and then educating teachers on what to look for." (IR3)
- "bringing awareness to people that aren't getting the information" (IR5)
- "And even just parents knowing like that they can say I think my child is gifted or whatnot. If you know about the program and then know that you are able to nominate." (IR7)
- "I think more not marketing but more exposure of what giftedness looks like to our parents would be good." (IR10)

Broader Gifted Program. Thematic analysis from an earlier interview question (i.e., *Would you change the gifted identification process? Why or why not?*) resulted in a theme

related to facilitating factors that positively impact the gifted identification of Black students. This theme is also an inverse of a theme that emerged from 40% of all interview respondents perceiving that the narrow scope of the district's gifted program was a factor that negatively impacted the number of Black students identified as gifted. Broadening the gifted program to include other areas of giftedness was perceived as a factor that may positively impact the number of Black students identified as gifted by 40% of all interview respondents. Data overlapped from previous interview questions to include the following:

- “[The gifted program] leans a little bit towards math so definitely, we need more language arts, which, you know what? What about the sciences and even the social sciences?” and “I would love to see [the gifted program] be more equal and also more diversified with other subjects.” (IR1)
- “There is such a focus on math that when there isn't a focus on poetry and language arts and those other things and deepening that learning that we don't catch those kids, because they're just not going to they're probably not going to shine as much. I mean, some are great in both, but you know what I mean? I think that's where we start to lose kids.” (IR3)
- “if we had a gifted in athleticism...like the ability their ability to like see routes and do plays and like know all these things about sports at the age of seven like if that is a thing.” (IR7)
- “we need a creative assessment.” (IR8)
- “In a perfect world, we would expand our gifted program to focus on all of the areas of giftedness because we do know that students can be gifted in one specific area and

not considered gifted in another. So I feel that we do a disservice by not identifying those students.” (IR9)

Monitoring Status With Support. If a student is not found eligible during the gifted identification process but shows potential, the student remains on monitoring status with supports in place. This means students receive gifted services for a year or two, dependent upon an annual reevaluation of ability, to determine whether or not the student will be found eligible. Although not a prominent perception, 30% of all interview respondents perceive monitoring status to be a facilitating factor positively impacting the number of Black students identified as gifted. Respondents stated:

- “I have to give credit to the monitor program we’ve been doing because we have identified some low socioeconomic kids some African American kids some girls you know because they’re underserved as well” and “I like that we’re still monitoring yeah we are getting some kids who could possibly not have been identified.” (IR2)
- “If a student doesn’t meet criteria, they still can fall into this strong potential category where they can receive similar or the exact same services as a gifted student and kind of seeing are they how they’re gonna do. You know and then after that that one two year period they’re reevaluated. But I’ve seen more diversity from that the underrepresented student will come in [to the gifted program] as a monitor status.” (IR5)
- “[the current process] involves monitoring identification track that’s one of the things I think that makes it more inclusive” (IR7)

Research Question 4 Quantitative Evidence. To answer research question 4, survey respondents were asked whether “none, few (a small amount), some (at least a small amount),

many (a large amount), or all” students were impacted by specific factors that could be inferred to positively impact the number of Black students identified as gifted. In addition, respondents had the option to choose “I don’t know.” It is important to note that the topic of race was societally divisive at the time the survey was written, thus questions on the survey did not specifically ask about Black students. Based upon data gathered from the survey that was applied to interview data, descriptions related to Black students were inferred (see Appendix N for data).

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted to examine the differences between respondent groups on how each perceived factors that may increase the number of Black students identified as gifted. No significant differences were found among respondent groups.

Overall survey data in Figure 4 indicate overarching perceptions of factors that may be positively impacting the gifted identification of students. These factors are: (a) gifted students have parents who value education, (b) gifted students have parents who are involved in their education and come from families who provide enrichment, and (c) gifted students come from wealthy, majority families. It appears from the data that students who are white, wealthy, and have access to resources and opportunities are most likely to be identified as gifted. This perception is reiterated in each respondent category on the survey and during interviews.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of educators in a small, rural school district as they related to the gifted identification of Black students. Because underrepresentation of Black students in the gifted program exists, it was important to research to ensure the mission of the district, maximizing the potential of all learners, was met. Educators have a moral imperative to enrich the lives of every student; to inspire and encourage academic greatness. If students are not being challenged appropriately, growth may not occur. Implications of that may certainly result in a stagnant society.

In this section, research findings are briefly summarized based upon quantitative data analysis of surveys taken by K-5 teachers, gifted resource teachers, and principals of the only three elementary schools in the district. Qualitative data analysis of open-ended survey questions and interviews with second grade teachers, gifted resources teachers, and principals is also summarized. An in-depth discussion of pertinent findings synthesized with related literature follows. Because the intention of this study was utilitarian in nature, recommendations of the improvement of the gifted program targeting the increase of Black students identified as gifted are provided. In addition, recommendations for further study closes the section.

Summary of the Findings

Perceptions of Giftedness. Most participants across the division held similar perceptions of giftedness that related to both federal and state definitions; across three elementary schools,

giftedness is perceived to reflect high intellect, high ability in academics and creativity, and high performance. A smaller percentage of participants also indicated that giftedness included characteristics such as twice exceptionality (e.g., exhibiting Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, struggled to articulate thinking); curiosity; and an absent-minded professor like quality (e.g., messy desk, oddball, socially awkward, quiet), in addition to high intellect, high ability, and high performance.

Not all participants held those perceptions of giftedness, however, and deemed it as undefinable or solely related to IQ scores. For example, one participant stated that giftedness was a unique phenomenon (i.e., the uniquely talented 2% of the general population) and explained that most children identified gifted in this district did not display that uniqueness. Although there were anomalies, data across three elementary schools indicate a narrow perspective of giftedness that relates directly to the elementary gifted program offered in the district.

Perceptions of the Gifted Identification Process. Data relevant to the gifted identification process indicated many participants had general knowledge of it; however, roughly a quarter knew nothing of the local plan for the education of the gifted, the district's definition of giftedness, and how to identify giftedness. Moreover, a little more than half indicated that they had never nominated or helped to identify a student for the gifted program and, perhaps most tellingly, did not know how to.

Many respondents perceived the gifted identification process as inadequate and in need of revision or did not know if it was adequate. Interestingly, most participants who *did not know* fell into the K-1 and 3-5 category.

There was an almost even split between the number of participants indicating that the gifted identification process needed revision and the number of those who did not. Of those who

perceived a necessary revision, most believed that subjective criteria should be removed from the process or the gifted program itself should be broadened to include other areas of giftedness in addition to academics. Some believed both. Of those who did not feel that the process should be revised, almost all indicated the process was adequate because it included a myriad of criteria used to identify giftedness. The data tells the story. As previously stated, it is possible that too many of the district's educators are not prepared to recognize giftedness or participate in the nomination and identification process.

Perceptions of Other Factors Impacting the Gifted Identification of Black Students.

This section includes limiting factors that are perceived to impede the gifted identification of Black students and facilitating factors that are perceived to encourage the gifted identification of Black students. Limiting and facilitating factors were often inverses of one another and each are expanded upon in the sections following.

Limiting Factors. Many factors were perceived to be limiting the gifted identification of Black students: lack of exposure, low SES, minority status, parents and teachers uneducated about the gifted program, narrow scope of the program, and a lack of demographic diversity in the district. Two barriers overwhelmingly perceived as limiting the gifted identification of Black students were lack of exposure to resources and opportunities and students who come from families of low SES. The two most often were mentioned together by participants as each has an impact on the other. Exposure, as a limiting factor, was perceived as multi-faceted to include differentiating in the classroom to meet a student's needs, visiting museums, and attending or participating in extracurricular activities. Exposure also included having parents read a nighttime story to younger children and experiences or trips their wealthier peers are provided. Low SES was closely tied to lack of exposure for obvious reasons; during interviews respondents

explained cause and effect scenarios between the two. For example, parents who are struggling financially cannot take family trips to the Grand Canyon or make time to attend school functions if they are the sole providers. Some work long hours and are not home to read to their children or help with homework.

Lack of knowledge about the gifted program is another limiting factor. Parents and teachers who know nothing about the program or how to recognize signs of giftedness in children cannot assist in the nomination of them.

Further, many respondents perceived the elementary gifted program as narrow; leaving many areas of giftedness out of the services provided by the school district. Two of the three elementary schools in the district only serve gifted students in math; one elementary school recently piloted a gifted language arts program and a gifted push-in, collaborative model in addition to providing math services. Elementary students who are gifted in other areas such as fine arts are not provided services and may not be identified as gifted. Lastly, many respondents perceive the Black population as too small in their schools to include gifted individuals.

Anomalies worthy of mention as limiting factors were given by three different district educators. One respondent stated that giftedness is not seen as positive in Black culture because Black parents want their students to appear normal. This belief could be related to the implicit bias of societal perspectives of Black citizens or the cultural value of collectivism where no one stands out and everyone is to viewed as the same (Beeghly & Madva, 2020; Bordas, 2007). Two others alluded to bias of (a) a staff member who assumes siblings of students eligible for special education services will also be found eligible for special education services and not considered for gifted services and (b) a staff member's initial thought that some Black students suffer from traumatic experiences and are not ready to learn in addition to how the disproportionality of

school discipline and crime impacts an educator's perception of student ability of Black students. According to the data, many factors negatively impact the gifted identification of Black students. Generally, however, overall data indicate that if a student is Black, poor, and potentially gifted in areas other than academics, the student will most likely not be identified as gifted.

Facilitating Factors. Factors facilitating the gifted identification of Black students were often times the inverse of limiting factors, but not always. Exposure to enrichment and educating teachers and parents about the gifted program were equally perceived as the most impactful factors that would increase the number of Black students identified as gifted in addition to being white and wealthy, factors not explicitly stated but gathered through data.

Another factor was the perception that a broader gifted program would provide Black students the recognition of giftedness unrelated to excellence in math.

Not surprising, yet a nuance to the inverse factors mentioned previously, was monitoring the status of students who demonstrated potential after nomination and initial identification. This facilitating factor was perceived by 40% of interview participants who felt it positively impacted the gifted identification of Black students. Many described *monitoring status* with academic supports as a factor that increased the percentage of all minority students in the district's gifted program.

Discussion

Giftedness. Most participants across the division held similar perceptions of giftedness that related to both federal and state definitions; however, similar to the differing opinions of the experts in the gifted community over the last century (Subotnik et al., 2011), there is no consensus of the definition of giftedness in this school district. Most perceptions included high intellect, high ability in academics and creativity, and high performance. High intellect and

ability are also included in many definitions offered by scholars in gifted education (Gagné, 1985; Renzulli, 2005; Spearman, 1927; Sternberg, 1997). These two groups possessing similar views of giftedness is not an outrageous revelation. The operational definition in the district's gifted education plan defines giftedness through a higher General Intellect Ability or Specific Aptitude Ability. It also is reasonable to assume that scholars in gifted education produced literature that was taught in educational programs at higher education institutions or passed down from educator to educator. Historical paradigms are certainly hard to combat.

Although limited in scope, another perception in the district appeared in the data describing gifted students as solely having high IQs and belonging to a very unique 2% of the population. The notion that a very small percentage of the population is gifted is outdated and stems from a misinterpretation of the Marland Report where a definition of giftedness was introduced with the caveat that any local education agency adopting the definition must understand that “a minimum of 3% to 5% of the school population would be found to be gifted (note the use of the word minimum)” (Borland, 2009, p. 236). The term *minimum* may have gone unnoticed or perhaps forgotten; however, the belief that giftedness was found only within an IQ range of 3% to 5% of the population was retained and passed on (Borland, 2009). This outdated belief may have an impact on many students not being nominated for gifted services, even when there is potential, simply because they are not meeting the academic benchmark.

The local plan for the education of the gifted in this district indicates that one criterion alone would not keep a student from receiving gifted services; however, even if one educator in the district currently holds the perception that IQ outweighs all other characteristics of giftedness, some gifted students and those who have potential are being missed. And although Grissom and Redding (2016) argue that academic achievement is not a factor that impacts the

gifted identification of Black students, Borland (2009) blames the perception of giftedness equating to a high IQ in educational practices for the underrepresentation of minority students in gifted programs.

Perceptions of gifted students described as absent-minded professors appeared in the data and may be related to the false perception that only 2% of the population is truly gifted. An absent-minded professor is defined as a person who is hyper-focused on a topic of interest that results in forgetfulness, mistakes, and unfocused behavior caused by an unawareness of details and goings-on in the person's surroundings (Martin, n.d.). Educators perceiving these characteristics in gifted students described them as exhibiting social ineptitude, unfocused behaviors (related to task commitment?), and asynchronous development. Asynchronous development may contribute to the perception of social ineptitude, but research has proven that gifted students are no more socially inept than their nonidentified peers (Wiley, 2020).

In addition to high intelligence, ability, and performance, surprisingly, some perceptions of educators in the district described gifted students as twice exceptional. Some gifted students may exhibit characteristics such as the inability to keep up “with course rigor, volume, and demands—resulting in inconsistent academic performance, frustration, difficulties with written expression, and labels such as lazy, unmotivated, and underachiever” (National Association of Gifted Children, n.d., para. 3). Twice exceptionality was not explicitly stated as a limiting factor to the identification of Black students but educators who are not aware that this duality exists, might not think to nominate students for gifted services who do not fit neatly into the identification criteria currently provided by the district. Unfortunately, a student who has a disability that overshadows their giftedness is not a concept that is typically known or understood (National Association of Gifted Children, n.d.). Black students who are twice exceptional are

often overlooked and identified solely as a student in need of special education services because current educational practice focuses on the needs of the disability of which may be masking a student's talent instead of associating the manifestations of the disability to the student's talents (Boykin et al., 2005; Ford & Kea, 2009; Owens et al., 2016).

The theoretical framework of the district's local plan for the education of the gifted is based on Renzulli's (2005) Three-Ring Conception of Giftedness and intends to capture many forms of giftedness. However, the operational definitions of giftedness at the elementary level indicate that the elementary program is academically based and not inclusive of students whose gifts relate to the visual and performing arts or leadership. The overall perception of giftedness in this district is related to Renzulli's conception in the sense that giftedness is associated with high intellect, high ability in academics and creativity, and high performance; however, there are other perceptions that relate to outdated philosophies of giftedness and still others that reflect twice exceptionality.

To conclude, there are various perceptions of giftedness in this district; mostly related to the narrow scope of the gifted program of which may be impacting the gifted identification of Black students who do not fit the larger belief that gifted students come from majority families with the means to access educational resources. *It is recommended that the district build consensus of the definition of giftedness based upon a talent development paradigm as it relates to community beliefs and values.*

Gifted Identification Process. The identification process is an important component to the gifted program and must be aligned to the definition of giftedness. If both the definition and the identification process is aligned to the program itself, then the program is appropriately developed (Peters et al., 2020). However, to be accessible to all students, both must be developed

with a lens on equity (Hodges et al., 2018). For some in this district, the identification process is believed to be aligned to the program offered. The identification process is focused heavily on General Intellectual Aptitude and Specific Academic Aptitude and the related program offers services in math in all three elementary schools and reading in one elementary school. Half of the research participants in this district perceived the identification process as inadequate to identify giftedness in Black students and indicated a need to revise it.

Grading, non-standardized student work samples, teacher checklists or rating scales, and teacher nomination were perceived as too subjective to use in the identification process. The subjectivity in the evidence brought forth to the identification committee in addition to teacher nominations may be underpinned by implicit bias which may be contributing to the underrepresentation of Black students in gifted programming (Crawford et al., 2019; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Ricciardi et al., 2020). Incidentally, subjectivity of grades, etc. is not the only factor impacting the identification of Black students; even when achievement scores are similar, White students are identified more often than Black students (Siegle et al., 2016). Biases must be mitigated to increase the number of Black students identified as gifted.

Broadening identification to include problem solving, in addition to objective assessment scores, would be less subjective and is vital to the identification of historically underrepresented students (Sternberg, 1997). Hodges et al. (2018) described the importance of using nonverbal assessments to identify students who may not have had the opportunity to develop their verbal abilities. CogAT is used in this district as a non-verbal assessment that includes problem-solving. Automatic referrals from a CogAT score of 90% was perceived to be an important component of the identification process that provided Black students a better chance to be identified for gifted

Services or to remain on monitoring status, a perceived factor that facilitates the gifted identification of Black students, for future reevaluation.

Additionally, using local norms in the identification process will mitigate the disproportionality of Black students in the district's gifted program. Borland's (2005) conception of gifted education without gifted children provides a framework for local norms as both create pathways to achieve the goal of gifted education, that is, to provide an appropriate education to all students. As previously stated, local norms rank students from the same grade level within the same school to compare students who are similar in age, experience, and environment to focus on higher-ability students (not necessarily deemed gifted) who may be in need of more challenging work (Peters & Engerrand, 2016; Peters, Rambo-Hernandez, et al., 2019). The use of local norms in the gifted identification process specific to each school makes more sense. Disproportionality occurs when students are compared only against national norms (a largely used strategy in the gifted identification process), especially in schools where student ability is lower than average. Studies have shown that the use of local norms in the gifted identification process have proven to increase the gifted identification of African American students (Peters, Rambo-Hernandez, et al., 2019). *It is recommended that the district incorporate a local norms approach to its identification process.*

Gifted Program. Aside from the identification process, this question remains: Is the program itself appropriate to serve Black students? Many cited the need to revise the identification process in addition to the program itself in an effort to afford Black students an opportunity to receive gifted services as they relate to their talents. An identification process must begin with a clear goal, say, *who* the program will serve, then the program must be built around the needs of those students (Peters et al., 2020). Gifted programs should relate directly to

students' needs and talents as they develop and evolve from year to year (Peters et al., 2020). A stagnant program will end up serving only a select few. Perhaps there was a time when the district was deliberate about the objective of the program to focus solely on math; perhaps the program was built reactively to the scores most easily obtained (e.g., SOL, MAP, PALS scores). Instead of thinking who should be served and why, the district may simply have used academic data related to high ability and achievement to determine what the program should be. Whatever the case, the goal of the district is to maximize the potential of all students. Given that the program in this district has remained academically driven for many years without consideration of student needs outside of academics, reconsideration of the program is paramount to maximize the potential of all students.

Talent development may foster the unique cultural values of our Black students and define those values as gifts. Prioritizing harmony between individuals, helping others, and collaboration are deemed valuable characteristics in a collective culture (Bordas, 2007; Boykin et al., 2005; Ford & Kea, 2009; Owens et al., 2016). The implications of broadening the gifted program to afford Black students the opportunity to grow in these areas, may increase the number of students appropriately served. *It is recommended that the district move from the gifted child to a talent development paradigm reflective of Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent 2.0 framework; ensuring alignment of the definition of giftedness and its identification process.*

Other Factors Impacting the Gifted Identification of Black Students.

Many factors were perceived to impact the gifted identification of Black students. The sections below describe factors most perceived by educators and how each relates to a

recommendation for the school district to increase the number of Black students identified as gifted.

No Knowledge. Interestingly, too many participants in the district had no knowledge of the gifted nomination and identification process nor did they know how to recognize giftedness. Most of these participants fell into the K-1 and 3-5 category; those who have little to do with the gifted identification process other than remain alert for signs of giftedness and provide appropriately differentiated lessons. Identification procedures in this district begin with observations of students in Kindergarten throughout a student's second-grade year. If the district's teachers in grades K-2 have no idea how to recognize giftedness or nominate students for the gifted program, there is a strong possibility that some students who have potential are being overlooked. If teachers in the early elementary grades know nothing of the process, it may be safe to assume that the district may not be too strategic in its mission to maximize the potential of all students. *It is recommended that the district provide professional learning opportunities relating to giftedness and the gifted identification process.*

Exposure. The perceptions of giftedness and its related identification process are not the only factors that limit or facilitate an increase in the number of Black students nominated and identified for gifted services. Research in the literature has shown that multiple factors can impact the gifted identification of underrepresented students (Carman, 2011; Crawford et al., 2019; Gagné, 2011; Gentry, 2021; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Maker, 1996; Michelmore & Dynarski, 2017; Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2017; Ricciardi et al., 2020; Wright & Ford, 2017). Exposure was a factor perceived to be the most limiting related to an absence of it, yet the most facilitating when it occurs. Exposure was also perceived to be directly related to the low SES of families in this district but not always related to race; however, McBee (2010) purported

that race is highly connected to SES. Interesting to note, the percentage of Black students in this district receiving free and reduced-price lunch is 63.8%, whereas the percentage of White students receiving free and reduced-price lunch is 24.0%. There may be an anecdotal perception at play in the district, but poverty is statistically proven to impact Black families more than White (Duncan & Murnane, 2011; Kornrich & Furstenberg, 2012; McBee, 2010; Michelmore & Dynarski, 2017; U.S. Census Bureau, 2021) and, more often than not, White boys from families of low SES are more likely to be identified than their Black counterparts (McBee, 2010; Ricciardi et al., 2020).

Often parents with little to no means cannot expose their children to enriching opportunities like trips to the museum and must choose working a late shift over reading a bedtime story just to provide for Maslow's needs. Families with low SES spend less on educational resources which may lead to underperformance (McBee, 2010; Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2017). Academic differences due to SES are evident between the haves and have-nots as early as a student's first-grade year; perhaps stemming from a lack of enrichment designed to cause academic growth (Siegle et al., 2016). Consequently, teachers may not nominate these children for gifted services even if they recognize giftedness in them simply because they do not excel academically (Wright & Ford, 2017).

Surprisingly, too many participants perceived the small pool of Black students at their school as impacting the number identified as gifted. With almost 64% of the Black students in the district receiving free or reduced-price lunch, it stands to reason that this perception exists, but this cannot be further from the truth. The in-group bias of teachers with high SES regarding the performance of impoverished students could be underpinning this perception (Van Bavel et al., 2008). Because poverty limits a student's opportunity to grow academically (McBee, 2010,

Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2017; Siegle et al., 2016), teachers may be perceiving a lack of giftedness in their Black population simply because they have not yet been exposed to enrichment. Bronfenbrenner's (1981) ecological system theory suggests that teachers play a big part in a student's academic growth. Teacher perceptions of student ability is related to how confidently a student performs (Hattie & Yates, 2014) but also has an impact on a student's self-efficacy (Bandura & Schunk, 1981). If a teacher perceives a student with low SES has no potential for giftedness, the student may not experience the proper environment to grow as Gagné (2010) suggests in his Differentiated Model of Giftedness 2.0 framework. It is then reasonable to assume that the small pool of Black students is not an underlying cause of underrepresentation. *It is recommended that the district provide professional learning opportunities relating to the implications of low SES on giftedness and gifted identification.*

Communication. The data suggested an overwhelming need for improved communication to ensure all teachers and parents knew about the gifted program, how to recognize signs of giftedness, and how to nominate a student for gifted services. Without communication, teachers rely on their own perceptions of giftedness, possibly shaped by their own experiences. Peterson (1999) purported that White teachers often equate giftedness with high academic ability, verbal assertiveness, and a high SES. Most of the teachers in this district are White. Little research has shown whether teachers can recognize giftedness in underrepresented students (McBee, 2010) and without a strong foundation of what they should look for regardless of SES, inevitably, some gifted Black students will be missed. *It is recommended that the district provide various modes of effective communication about the gifted program on a regular basis ensuring the focus is on equitable access to the program.*

Conclusion

Gifted identification begins with the *who* (Peters et al., 2020). School districts must be deliberate about choosing the students they want to serve and who they do not want to serve. Once the *who* is agreed upon, a gifted identification process must be developed to reflect the gifted characteristics of those students. The district in this study boasts a mission of maximizing the potential of all students, thus the *who* has already been decided—*all students*, including those historically underrepresented. If the district strives to maximize the potential of all students, then the gifted program must reflect that mission. This calls for a revamp of both the program, its identification process, and the definition of giftedness. Because classes of students change every year and their needs evolve, the program must shift to meet those needs.

Communication and training is key to the success of the operations and instructional needs of a school district. If parents do not know the school has a gifted program or how to recognize giftedness or how to nominate their own children, some students will slip through the cracks. In addition, if teachers do not have comprehensive knowledge of the gifted program and do not have open lines of communication with parents, again, some students will slip through the cracks. Training for teachers must be ongoing, especially if the program evolves over time. Effective professional learning practices such as collaboration with a colleague or active learning allow for teachers to change their practice to improve outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). A shift in strategies may increase the number of Black students identified as gifted. But a one-and-done approach to professional learning will not suffice. If teachers are charged with recognizing giftedness, they should be trained periodically to ensure a deep understanding of what giftedness is, what potential looks like in students, and how it is identified (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Practical Recommendations

This research study was designed with a utilitarian lens in an effort to increase the number of Black students identified as gifted. The following recommendations as previously stated are suggested for implementation by the district to improve the gifted identification of Black students in this district; the district should:

- Build consensus of the definition of giftedness based upon a talent development paradigm and as it relates to community beliefs and values.
- Incorporate a local norms approach to its identification process.
- Move from the gifted child to a talent development paradigm reflective of Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent 2.0 framework, ensuring alignment of the definition of giftedness and its identification process.
- Provide professional learning opportunities relating to giftedness and the gifted identification process.
- Provide professional learning opportunities relating to the implications of low SES on giftedness and gifted identification.
- Provide various modes of effective communication about the gifted program on a regular basis ensuring the focus is on equitable access to the program.

Further Study

One participant in this study mentioned a cultural component as a limitation to the gifted identification of Black students. According to this participant's experience in a highly diverse school district, Black parents did not necessarily want their children to appear different at school and shunned any potential of their children being anything but *normal*. Obviously, this

perspective was based on one person's experience, but little research in the literature describes the perspectives of individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds relating to what giftedness means to them or how they view the gifted program. Further study of the cultural perspectives of giftedness would benefit the gifted field and proponents of gifted education. Having a better and deeper understanding of what is deemed gifted or important to particular cultures would help to develop an appropriate gifted program.

Many participants perceived the monitoring status used in the gifted identification process as a facilitating factor that provided an opportunity for students who did not make the initial cut to demonstrate their potential. This perception was anecdotal. Further study to gather data that describes the impact of monitoring status on the gifted identification of Black students may be important to the district. If the belief of participants aligns with the data, monitoring status would be a valuable practice to continue.

Because I am a division leader in the district, interview data might not reflect true perspectives of colleagues who fear retaliation. As mentioned previously, a teacher being interviewed responded with, "I don't think that's what you wanted to hear." This speaks volumes. How many others felt that way but did not say anything? For further study, an objective co-researcher unaffiliated with the school district should be employed to interview staff. This way, more staff members may elect to be interviewed and data collected may reflect honest perspectives void of constraint and inhibitions.

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APPENDIX A

REPRESENTATION INDEX OF GIFTED STUDENTS IN VIRGINIA

To calculate the representation index of students by race in gifted programs, divide the percentage of students of a specific race represented in the gifted program by the total percentage of students of that same specific race in the general population (Peters, 2019). If the resulting answer is 1, there is a perfect representation of that population in the gifted program (Peters, 2019). A number smaller than 1 indicates an underrepresentation whereas a larger percentage indicates an overrepresentation (Peters, 2019).

Race of Student	Percentage of Student Make Up	Percentage Identified as Gifted	Representation Index (%gifted/%population = 1.0 perfect representation)
African American	21.30%	11.50%	.54 (underrepresented)
White	47.11%	58.30%	1.24 (overrepresented)

APPENDIX B

2022-2023 ELEMENTARY EDUCATOR DEMOGRAPHICS IN GRADES K-5

Elementary School	Grade Level	Number of Educators per Race & Gender	Total Percentage of Teachers & GRTs (only) by Race & Gender
Haxton Elementary	K	4 WF	3.70% WM
	1	3 WF, 1 BF	7.41% BF
	2	4 WF	96.43% WF
	3	4 WF, 1 BF	
	4	4 WF, 1 WM	
	5	5 WF	
	**GRT	1 WF	
	Principal	1 WF	
	Total #	29	
Stirling Elementary	K	4 WF	100% WF
	1	3 WF	
	2	3 WF	
	3	3 WF	
	4	3 WF	
	5	4 WF	
	**GRT	1 WF	
	Principal	1 WF	
	Total #	22	
Robb Elementary (Title I School)	K	4 WF	5.56% WM
	1	3 WF	5.56% BF
	2	2 WF	88.89% WF
	3	2 WF, 1 WM	
	4	1 WF, 1 BF	
	5	3 WF	
	**GRT	1 WF	
	Principal	1 BM	
	Total #	19	
Overall Teacher & GRT Racial Breakdown (N=67)			
White 95.52%	Black 4.48%	Hispanic 0%	Asian 0%
Overall Gender & Racial Breakdown (N=70) (4.3% Male and 95.7% Female)			
White Male 2.9%	Black Male 1.4%	White Female 91.4%	Black Female 4.3%

*Note. *B = Black, W=White, M=Male, F=Female; **Gifted Resource Teacher*

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT GROUP SURVEYS

KG-1st & 3rd – 5th Grade Teacher Survey PART A – Respondent Demographics

1. Please select your gender.

- A. Male
- B. Female
- C. Prefer not to say

2. Please select your age.

- A. 21-24 E. 40-44
- B. 25-29 F. 45-49
- C. 30-34 G. 50+
- D. 35-39

3. Years of teaching experience.

- A. 0-5 D. 16-20
- B. 6-10 E. 21-30
- C. 11-15 F. 31+

4. Select all that apply.

- A. I have no training in gifted education.
- B. I have attended at least one professional learning opportunity in gifted education.
- C. I have taken one or more classes in gifted education.
- D. I have my gifted endorsement.
- E. Other: _____

5. Are you the parent of a gifted child?

- A. Yes, but my child was never identified.
- B. Yes, and my child was identified.
- C. No

6. What is your position at your school?

- A. General Education Teacher
- B. Special Education Teacher
- C. Other _____

7. What grade levels do you/have you teach/taught? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Kindergarten D. Third Grade
- B. First Grade E. Fourth Grade
- C. Second Grade F. Fifth Grade

PART B – School Information

8. How long have you been at your current school?

- A. 0-5 years D. 15-20 years
- B. 6-10 years E. 21-30 years
- C. 11-15 years F. 31+ years

9. Does your school use any system to identify gifted students?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. I do not know

10. If yes, which of the following measures and/or checklists does your school use to identify gifted students? (Select all that apply.)

- A. IQ tests
- B. Achievement Tests
- C. Creativity tests
- D. Grades
- E. Teacher Rating Scales
- F. Student Products/Portfolios
- G. Teacher Nomination
- H. Parent Nomination
- I. Self-Nomination
- J. Peer Nomination
- K. Student Interview
- L. I do not know
- M. Aptitude Tests
- N. Other, specify: _____

PART C – Characteristics of Gifted Students

GIFTEDNESS						
DIRECTIONS:						
Please indicate how prevalent you believe these characteristics to be among gifted students. Circle the answer that most relates to your thoughts or knowledge.						
How many gifted students...						
1	have specific academic aptitude (excel in one or more core subjects)?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
2	show signs of precocity?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
3	have IQs well above the average student?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
4	perform at much higher levels than their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
5	find it easy to work on their own without teacher direction?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
6	know a great deal of the curriculum before the school year begins?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
7	comprehend content more quickly than their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
8	comprehend material several grade levels above their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
9	are good leaders?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
10	work well with their hands?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
11	have learning disabilities?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
12	need support to develop socially?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
13	need support to develop emotionally?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
14	question authority?	All	Many	Some	Few	None

GIFTED IDENTIFICATION						
DIRECTIONS: Read each statement and circle the response that best describes your related belief. Circle SA if you strongly agree, A if you agree, D if you disagree, SD if you strongly disagree, and DK if you don't know how you feel about the statement.						
1	Our school district has developed a local plan for gifted education.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
2	Our school district has developed a definition of giftedness.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
3	Our school district has developed a process to nominate students to the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
4	Our school district has developed a process to identify students as gifted.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
5	Our gifted identification process is adequate in identifying giftedness in students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
6	I know how to identify giftedness in students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
7	I know how to nominate students for the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
8	I have nominated students to the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
9	I have helped to identify students as gifted in gifted identification committee meetings.	SA	A	D	SD	DK

OTHER FACTORS						
DIRECTIONS: Please indicate how prevalent you believe these characteristics to be among gifted students. Circle the answer that most relates to your thoughts.						
How many gifted students...						
1	come from two-parent homes?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
2	have parents who are involved in their education?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
3	come from economically disadvantaged families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
4	come from wealthy families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
5	come from minority families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
6	come from majority families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
7	receive free or reduced lunch?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
8	have parents who value education?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
9	come from families who provide enrichment in the home?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
10	come from families who lack resources?	All	Many	Some	Few	None

DIRECTIONS:

If applicable, please describe a student that you have nominated for gifted services who exemplified your perception of giftedness. List all factors that played a role in your nomination of each student.

Typical Nominated Student

DIRECTIONS:

If applicable, please describe a student that you have nominated for gifted services who did not reflect your perception of giftedness. List all factors that played a role in your nomination of each student.

Atypical Nominated Student

2nd Grade Teacher Survey PART A – Respondent Demographics

1. Please select your gender.

- A. Male
- B. Female
- C. Prefer not to say

2. Please select your age.

- A. 21-24 E. 40-44
- B. 25-29 F. 45-49
- C. 30-34 G. 50+
- D. 35-39

3. Year of teaching experience.

- A. 0-5 D. 16-20
- B. 6-10 E. 21-30
- C. 11-15 F. 31+

4. Select all that apply.

- A. I have no training in gifted education.
- B. I have attended at least one professional learning opportunity in gifted education.
- C. I have taken one or more classes in gifted education.
- D. I have my gifted endorsement.
- E. Other: _____

5. Are you the parent of a gifted child?

- A. Yes, but my child was never identified.
- B. Yes, and my child was identified.
- C. No

6. What is your position at your school?

- A. General Education Teacher
- B. Special Education Teacher
- C. Other _____

7. What grade levels do you/have you teach/taught? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Kindergarten D. Third Grade
- B. First Grade E. Fourth Grade
- C. Second Grade F. Fifth Grade

PART B – School Information

8. How long have you been at your current school?

- A. 0-5 years D. 15-20 years
- B. 6-10 years E. 21-30 years
- C. 11-15 years F. 31+ years

9. Does your school use any system to identify gifted students?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. I do not know

10. If yes, which of the following measures and/or checklists does your school use to identify gifted students? (Select all that apply.)

- A. IQ tests
- B. Achievement Tests
- C. Creativity tests
- D. Grades
- E. Teacher Rating Scales
- F. Student Products/Portfolios
- G. Teacher Nomination
- H. Parent Nomination
- I. Self-Nomination
- J. Peer Nomination
- K. Student Interview
- L. I do not know
- M. Aptitude Tests
- N. Other, specify: _____

PART C – Characteristics of Gifted Students

GIFTEDNESS						
DIRECTIONS:						
Please indicate how prevalent you believe these characteristics to be among gifted students. Circle the answer that most relates to your thoughts or knowledge.						
How many gifted students...						
1	have specific academic aptitude (excel in one or more core subjects)?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
2	show signs of precocity?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
3	have IQs well above the average student?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
4	perform at much higher levels than their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
5	find it easy to work on their own without teacher direction?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
6	know a great deal of the curriculum before the school year begins?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
7	comprehend content more quickly than their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
8	comprehend material several grade levels above their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
9	are good leaders?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
10	work well with their hands?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
11	have learning disabilities?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
12	need support to develop socially?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
13	need support to develop emotionally?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
14	question authority?	All	Many	Some	Few	None

GIFTED IDENTIFICATION						
DIRECTIONS: Read each statement and circle the response that best describes your related belief. Circle SA if you strongly agree, A if you agree, D if you disagree, SD if you strongly disagree, and DK if you don't know how you feel about the statement.						
1	Our school district has developed a local plan for gifted education.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
2	Our school district has developed a definition of giftedness.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
3	Our school district has developed a process to nominate students to the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
4	Our school district has developed a process to identify students as gifted.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
5	Our gifted identification process is adequate in identifying giftedness in students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
6	I know how to identify giftedness in students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
7	I know how to nominate students for the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
8	I have nominated students to the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
9	I have helped to identify students as gifted in gifted identification committee meetings.	SA	A	D	SD	DK

OTHER FACTORS						
DIRECTIONS: Please indicate how prevalent you believe these characteristics to be among gifted students. Circle the answer that most relates to your thoughts.						
How many gifted students...						
1	come from two-parent homes?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
2	have parents who are involved in their education?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
3	come from economically disadvantaged families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
4	come from wealthy families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
5	come from minority families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
6	come from majority families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
7	receive free or reduced lunch?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
8	have parents who value education?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
9	come from families who provide enrichment in the home?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
10	come from families who lack resources?	All	Many	Some	Few	None

DIRECTIONS:

If applicable, please describe a student that you have nominated for gifted services who exemplified your perception of giftedness. List all factors that played a role in your nomination of each student.

Typical Nominated Student

DIRECTIONS:

If applicable, please describe a student that you have nominated for gifted services who did not reflect your perception of giftedness. List all factors that played a role in your nomination of each student.

Atypical Nominated Student

Gifted Resource Teacher Survey PART A – Respondent Demographics

1. Are you the parent of a gifted child?

- A. Yes, but my child was never identified.
- B. Yes, and my child was identified.
- C. No

2. Select all that apply.

- A. I have no training in gifted education.
- B. I have attended at least one professional learning opportunity in gifted education.
- C. I have taken one or more classes in gifted education.
- D. I have obtained a gifted endorsement.
- E. Other: _____

3. What grade levels do you/have you teach/taught? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Kindergarten
- B. First Grade
- C. Second Grade
- D. Third Grade
- E. Fourth Grade
- F. Fifth Grade

4. Years of teaching experience.

- A. 0-5
- B. 6-10
- C. 11-15
- D. 16-20
- E. 21-30
- F. 31+

5. Years in current role.

- A. 0-5
- B. 6-10
- C. 11-15
- D. 16-20
- E. 21-30
- F. 31+

PART B – School Information

6. How long have you been at your current school?

- A. 0-5 years
- B. 6-10 years
- C. 11-15 years
- D. 15-20 years
- E. 21-30 years
- F. 31+ years

7. Are you involved in the annual revision of GCPS Local Plan for the Gifted?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Other _____

8. Which of the following measures does your school use to identify gifted students? (Select all that apply.)

- A. IQ tests
- B. Achievement Tests
- C. Creativity tests
- D. Grades
- E. Teacher Rating Scales
- F. Student Products/Portfolios
- G. Teacher Nomination
- H. Parent Nomination
- I. Self-Nomination
- J. Peer Nomination
- K. Student Interview
- L. I do not know
- M. Aptitude Tests
- N. Other, specify: _____

PART C – Characteristics of Gifted Students

GIFTEDNESS						
DIRECTIONS:						
Please indicate how prevalent you believe these characteristics to be among gifted students. Circle the answer that most relates to your thoughts or knowledge.						
How many gifted students...						
1	have specific academic aptitude (excel in one or more core subjects)?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
2	show signs of precocity?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
3	have IQs well above the average student?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
4	perform at much higher levels than their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
5	find it easy to work on their own without teacher direction?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
6	know a great deal of the curriculum before the school year begins?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
7	comprehend content more quickly than their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
8	comprehend material several grade levels above their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
9	are good leaders?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
10	work well with their hands?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
11	have learning disabilities?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
12	need support to develop socially?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
13	need support to develop emotionally?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
14	question authority?	All	Many	Some	Few	None

GIFTED IDENTIFICATION						
DIRECTIONS: Read each statement and circle the response that best describes your related belief. Circle SA if you strongly agree, A if you agree, D if you disagree, SD if you strongly disagree, and DK if you don't know how you feel about the statement.						
1	Our school district has developed a local plan for gifted education.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
2	Our school district has developed a definition of giftedness.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
3	Our school district has developed a process to nominate students to the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
4	Our school district has developed a process to identify students as gifted.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
5	Our gifted identification process is adequate in identifying giftedness in students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
6	I know how to identify giftedness in students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
7	I know how to nominate students for the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
8	I have nominated students to the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
9	I have helped to identify students as gifted in gifted identification committee meetings.	SA	A	D	SD	DK

OTHER FACTORS						
DIRECTIONS: Please indicate how prevalent you believe these characteristics to be among gifted students. Circle the answer that most relates to your thoughts.						
How many gifted students...						
1	come from two-parent homes?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
2	have parents who are involved in their education?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
3	come from economically disadvantaged families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
4	come from wealthy families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
5	come from minority families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
6	come from majority families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
7	receive free or reduced lunch?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
8	have parents who value education?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
9	come from families who provide enrichment in the home?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
10	come from families who lack resources?	All	Many	Some	Few	None

DIRECTIONS:

If applicable, please describe a student that you have nominated for gifted services who exemplified your perception of giftedness. List all factors that played a role in your nomination of each student.

Typical Nominated Student

DIRECTIONS:

If applicable, please describe a student that you have nominated for gifted services who did not reflect your perception of giftedness. List all factors that played a role in your nomination of each student.

Atypical Nominated Student

Principal Survey *PART A – Respondent Demographics*

1. Are you the parent of a gifted child?

- A. Yes, but my child was never identified.
- B. Yes, and my child was identified.
- C. No

2. Please select your gender.

- A. Male
- B. Female
- C. Prefer not to say

3. Please select your age.

- A. 21-24 E. 40-44
- B. 25-29 F. 45-49
- C. 30-34 G. 50+
- D. 35-39

4. Years in education.

- A. 0-5 D. 16-20
- B. 6-10 E. 21-30
- C. 11-15 F. 31+

5. Select all that apply.

- A. I have no training in gifted education.
- B. I have attended at least one professional learning opportunity in gifted education.
- C. I have taken one or more classes in gifted education.
- D. I have obtained a gifted endorsement.
- E. Other: _____

6. What grade levels have you taught? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Kindergarten & First Grade
- B. Second Grade
- D. Third Grade – Fifth Grade
- E. Grades 6-12

PART B – Characteristics of Gifted Students

GIFTEDNESS						
DIRECTIONS:						
Please indicate how prevalent you believe these characteristics to be among gifted students. Circle the answer that most relates to your thoughts or knowledge.						
How many gifted students...						
1	have specific academic aptitude (excel in one or more core subjects)?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
2	show signs of precocity?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
3	have IQs well above the average student?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
4	perform at much higher levels than their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
5	find it easy to work on their own without teacher direction?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
6	know a great deal of the curriculum before the school year begins?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
7	comprehend content more quickly than their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
8	comprehend material several grade levels above their peers?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
9	are good leaders?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
10	work well with their hands?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
11	have learning disabilities?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
12	need support to develop socially?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
13	need support to develop emotionally?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
14	question authority?	All	Many	Some	Few	None

GIFTED IDENTIFICATION						
DIRECTIONS: Read each statement and circle the response that best describes your related belief. Circle SA if you strongly agree, A if you agree, D if you disagree, SD if you strongly disagree, and DK if you don't know how you feel about the statement.						
1	Our school district has developed a local plan for gifted education.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
2	Our school district has developed a definition of giftedness.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
3	Our school district has developed a process to nominate students to the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
4	Our school district has developed a process to identify students as gifted.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
5	Our gifted identification process is adequate in identifying giftedness in students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
6	I know how to identify giftedness in students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
7	I know how to nominate students for the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
8	I have nominated students to the gifted program.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
9	I have helped to identify students as gifted in gifted identification committee meetings.	SA	A	D	SD	DK

OTHER FACTORS						
DIRECTIONS: Please indicate how prevalent you believe these characteristics to be among gifted students. Circle the answer that most relates to your thoughts.						
How many gifted students...						
1	come from two-parent homes?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
2	have parents who are involved in their education?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
3	come from economically disadvantaged families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
4	come from wealthy families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
5	come from minority families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
6	come from majority families?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
7	receive free or reduced lunch?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
8	have parents who value education?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
9	come from families who provide enrichment in the home?	All	Many	Some	Few	None
10	come from families who lack resources?	All	Many	Some	Few	None

DIRECTIONS:

If applicable, please describe a student that you have nominated for gifted services who exemplified your perception of giftedness. List all factors that played a role in your nomination of each student.

Typical Nominated Student

DIRECTIONS:

If applicable, please describe a student that you have nominated for gifted services who did not reflect your perception of giftedness. List all factors that played a role in your nomination of each student.

Atypical Nominated Student

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Rationale for the use of interviews: The researcher chose interviews to provide a non-judgmental atmosphere for those who choose to share insight without the fear of offending or being judged by colleagues. Interviews are assumed to provide richer data that may include participant perceptions, beliefs, and feelings. Understanding these types of attributes may enhance the recommendations provided to the school district (Krueger, 2002).

Location – the preferred location of each participant (date/time and exact location coordinated by the researcher and participant via Google Form)

Facilitator – the researcher will record the discussion, ask probing questions for clarification, guide the discussion, take notes, and send thank you notes to participants

The researcher will welcome the participant, hand the participant an index card, and ask the participant to have a seat. Once seated, the researcher will explain the research and the purpose of the interview, inform the participant that the session will be recorded, and remind the participant of consent and the option to participate. The researcher will then ask the participant to add personal demographic information to the index card to include:

Name

Role

Home School

Length of Time Teaching

Prior to asking questions, the researcher will set the stage with data and a brief introduction and explain that there will be no judgement during the interview and that all discussion will be anonymous and only used for the purpose of the study.

Questions:

- 1) What does a typical gifted student look like to you?
- 2) Describe the diversity of the gifted program at your school.
- 3) What factors might be limiting the gifted identification of Black students?
- 4) What factors might increase the number of Black students identified as gifted?
- 5) How do parents of all racial and ethnic groups support the gifted program?
- 6) Would you change the gifted identification process? Why or why not?

APPENDIX E

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Teacher Survey Respondent Demographics

Respondent Number	Years of Teaching Experience		Age Group	
K-1 and 3-5 Teachers <i>n</i> =12	0-5	2 (16.7%)	21-24	0
	6-10	4 (33.3%)	25-29	1 (8.3%)
	11-15	2 (16.7%)	30-34	1 (8.3%)
	16-20	1 (8.3%)	35-39	4 (33.3%)
	21-30	3 (25%)	40-44	3 (25%)
	30+	0	45-49	0
			50+	3 (25%)
Grade 2 Teachers <i>n</i> =3	0-5	0	21-24	0
	6-10	0	25-29	0
	11-15	1 (33.3%)	30-34	0
	16-20	1 (33.3%)	35-39	1 (33.3%)
	21-30	1 (33.3%)	40-44	2 (66.7%)
	30+	0	45-49	0
			50+	0

Gifted Resource Teacher Survey Respondent Demographics

Respondent Number	Years of Teaching Experience		Years of GRT Experience	
K-1 and 3-5 Teachers <i>n</i> =12	0-5	0	0-5	1 (33.3%)
	6-10	0	6-10	1 (33.3%)
	11-15	2 (66.7%)	11-15	1 (33.3%)
	16-20	0	16-20	0
	21-30	1 (33.3%)	21-30	0
	30+	0	30+	0

Principal Survey Respondent Demographics

Respondent Number	Years of Teaching Experience		Years Serving as Principal	
K-1 and 3-5 Teachers <i>n</i> =12	0-5	0	0-5	0
	6-10	1 (33.3%)	6-10	1 (33.3%)
	11-15	0	11-15	1 (33.3%)
	16-20	0	16-20	0
	21-30	1 (33.3%)	21-30	1 (33.3%)
	30+	1 (33.3%)	30+	0

APPENDIX F

SURVEY RESPONDENT YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE VS. GIFTED

EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Respondent Type & Respondent Number	Years of Teaching Experience			Gifted Education Background			
	Years	Participant Percentage	No Training	One or More Gifted Classes	At Least One PL Opportunity	Hold a Gifted Endorsement	
Teachers Grades K-1 and 3-5	<i>n</i> =12	0-5	2 (16.7)	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)*	1 (8.3%)*	0
		6-10	4 (33.3%)	3 (25%)	0	1 (8.3%)	0
		11-15	2 (16.7%)	0	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	0
		16-20	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	0	0
		21-30	3 (25%)	2 (16.7%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (16.7%)	0
		30+	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 2	<i>n</i> =3	0-5	0	0	0	0	0
		6-10	0	0	0	0	0
		11-15	1 (33.3%)	0	0	1 (33.3%)	0
		16-20	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0	0	0
		21-30	1 (33.3%)	0	1 (33.3%)	0	0
		30+	0	0	0	0	0
Gifted Resource Teachers	<i>n</i> =3	0-5	0	0	0	0	1 (33.3%)
		6-10	0	0	0	0	1 (33.3%)
		11-15	2 (66.7%)	0	0	0	1 (33.3%)
		16-20	0	0	0	0	0
		21-30	1 (33.3%)	0	0	0	0
		30+	0	0	0	0	0
Principals	<i>n</i> =3	0-5	0	0	0	0	0
		6-10	1 (33.3%)	0	0	1 (33.3%)	0
		11-15	0	0	0	0	0
		16-20	0	0	0	0	0
		21-30	1 (33.3%)	0	1 (33.3%)	0	1 (33.3%)
		30+	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX G

SURVEY RESPONDENTS' CHILDREN IDENTIFICATION

Respondent Type & Respondent Number	Years of Teaching Experience		Are you the parent of a gifted child?			
	Years	Participant Percentage	No	Yes, child not identified	Yes, child identified	
Grades K-1/3-5	<i>n</i> =12	0-5	2 (16.7%)	2 (16.7%)	0	0
		6-10	4 (33.3%)	3 (25%)	1 (8.3%)	0
		11-15	2 (16.7%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	0
		16-20	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	0	0
		21-30	3 (25%)	2 (16.7%)	0	1 (8.3%)
		30+	0	0	0	0
Grade 2	<i>n</i> =3	0-5	0	0	0	0
		6-10	0	0	0	0
		11-15	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0	0
		16-20	1 (33.3%)	0	1 (33.3%)	0
		21-30	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0	0
		30+	0	0	0	0
Gifted Resource Teachers	<i>N</i> =3	0-5	0	0	0	0
		6-10	0	0	0	0
		11-15	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)	0
		16-20	0	0	0	0
		21-30	1 (33.3%)	0	0	0
		30+	0	0	0	0
Principals	<i>N</i> =3	0-5	0	0	0	0
		6-10	1 (33.3%)	0	0	1 (33.3%)
		11-15	0	0	0	0
		16-20	0	0	0	0
		21-30	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0	0
		30+	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0	0

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Grade 2 Interview Participant Demographics

Respondent Type & Respondent Number	Gender		Years of Teaching Experience			Age Group		
	Male	Female	Years	Male	Female	Years	Male	Female
Grade 2 <i>n</i> =4	0	3	0-5	N/A	0	21-24	0	0
			6-10	N/A	0	25-29	0	0
			11-15	N/A	2 (50%)	30-34	0	0
			16-20	N/A	0	35-39	0	1 (25%)
			21-30	N/A	1 (25%)	40-44	0	2 (50%)
			30+	N/A	1 (25%)	45-49	0	0
						50+	0	1 (25%)

Gifted Resource Teacher Interview Participant Demographics

Respondent Type & Respondent Number	Gender		Years of Teaching Experience			Years of GRT Experience		
	Male	Female	Years	Male	Female	Years	Male	Female
Gifted Resource Teachers <i>N</i> =3	0	3	0-5	N/A	0	0-5	N/A	1 (33.3%)
			6-10	N/A	0	6-10	N/A	1 (33.3%)
			11-15	N/A	2 (66.7%)	11-15	N/A	1 (33.3%)
			16-20	N/A	0	16-20	N/A	0
			21-30	N/A	1 (33.3%)	21-30	N/A	0
			30+	N/A	0	30+	N/A	0

Principal Interview Participant Demographics

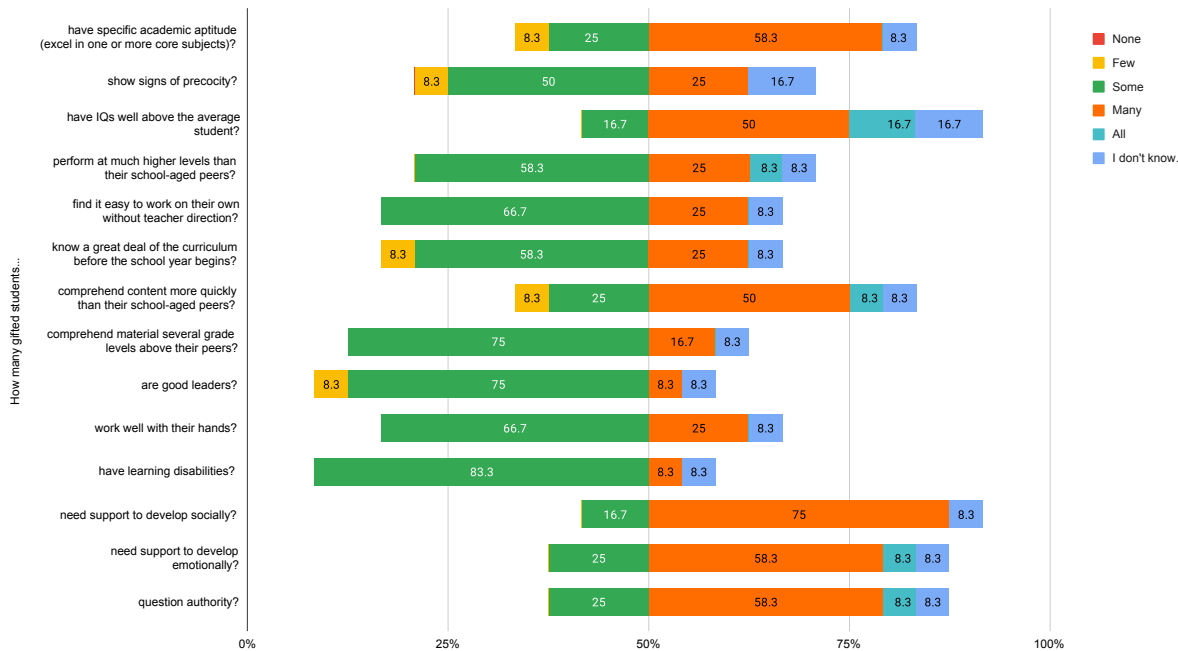
Respondent Type & Respondent Number	Gender		Years of Teaching Experience			Years Serving as Principal		
	Male	Female	Years	Male	Female	Years	Male	Female
Principals <i>N</i> =3	1	2	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
			6-10	0	1 (33.3%)	6-10	0	1 (33.3%)
			11-15	0	0	11-15	0	1 (33.3%)
			16-20	0	0	16-20	0	0
			21-30	0	1 (33.3%)	21-30	1 (33.3%)	0
			30+	1 (33.3%)	0	30+	0	0

APPENDIX I

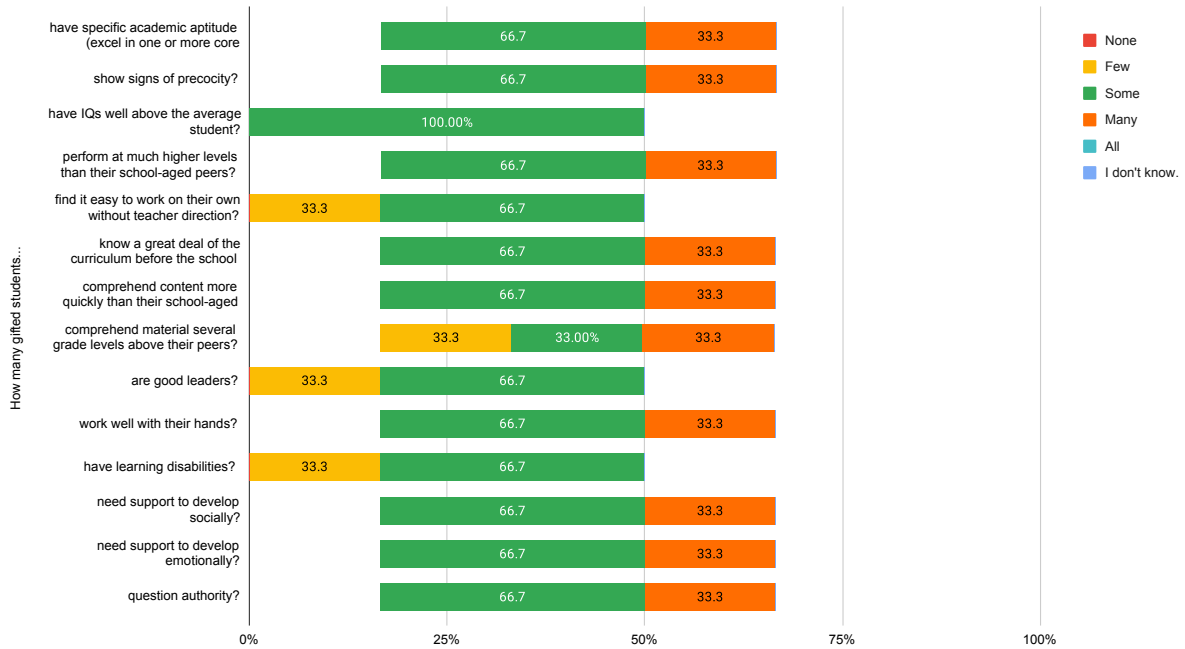
SURVEY DATA OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED STUDENTS

STUDENTS

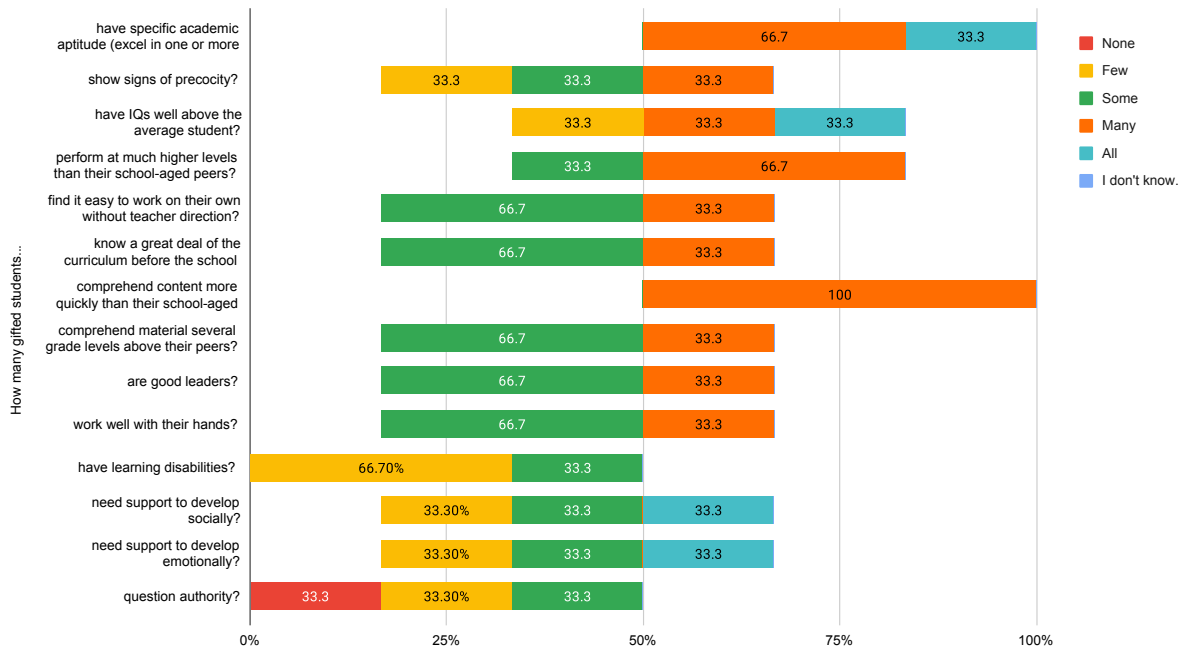
K-1 & 3-5 Characteristics of Gifted Students in % (n=12)



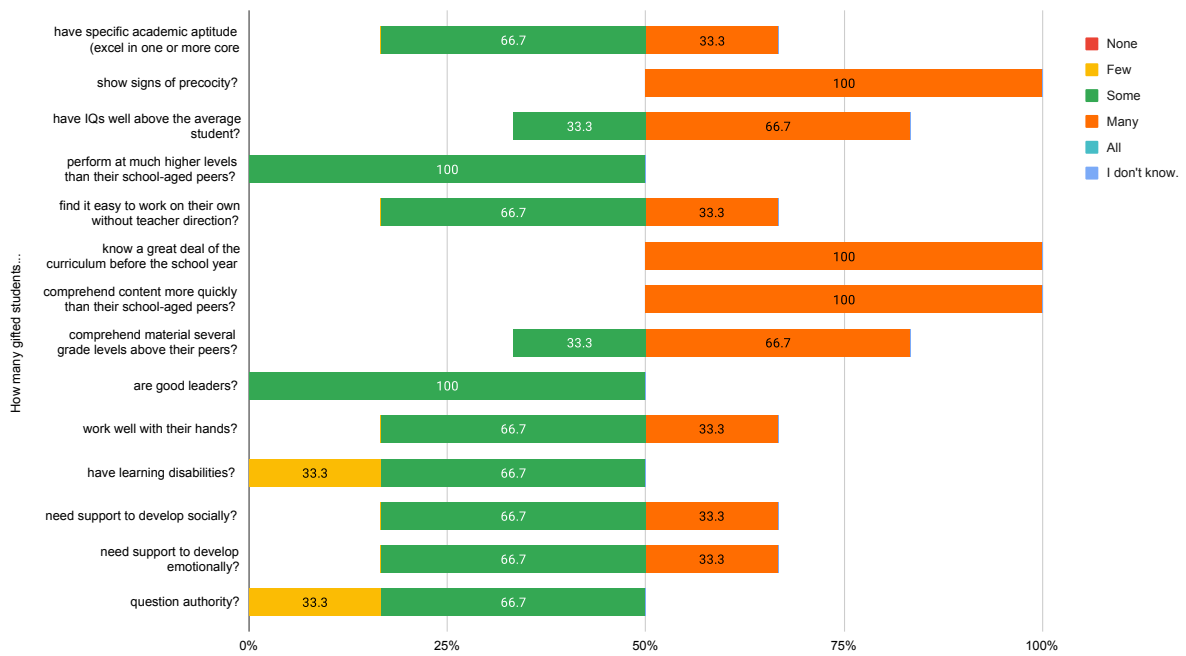
Grade 2 Characteristics of Gifted Students in % (n=3)



GRT Characteristics of Gifted Students in % (n=3)



Principals Characteristics of Gifted Students in % (n=3)

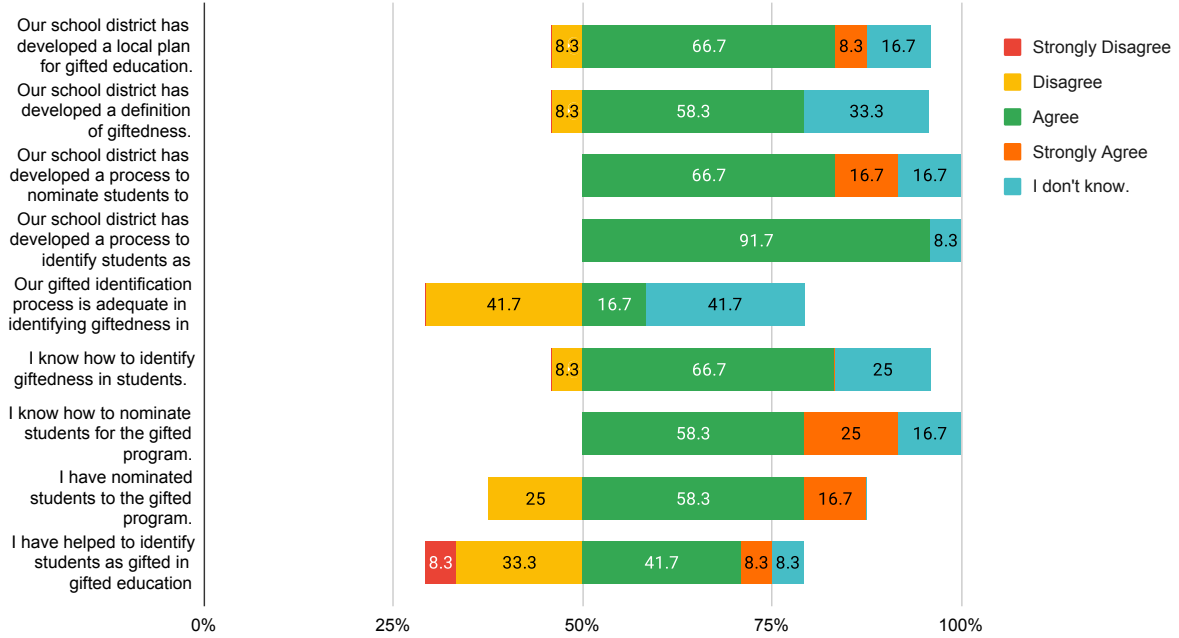


APPENDIX J

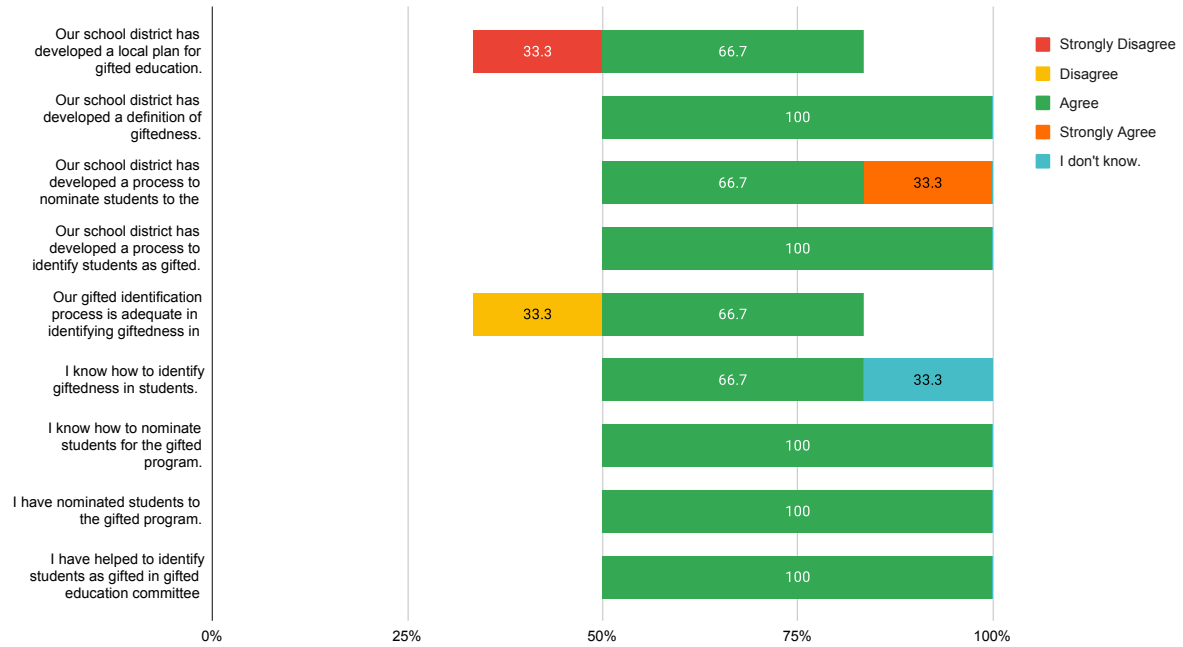
SURVEY DATA OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE GIFTED IDENTIFICATION

PROCESS

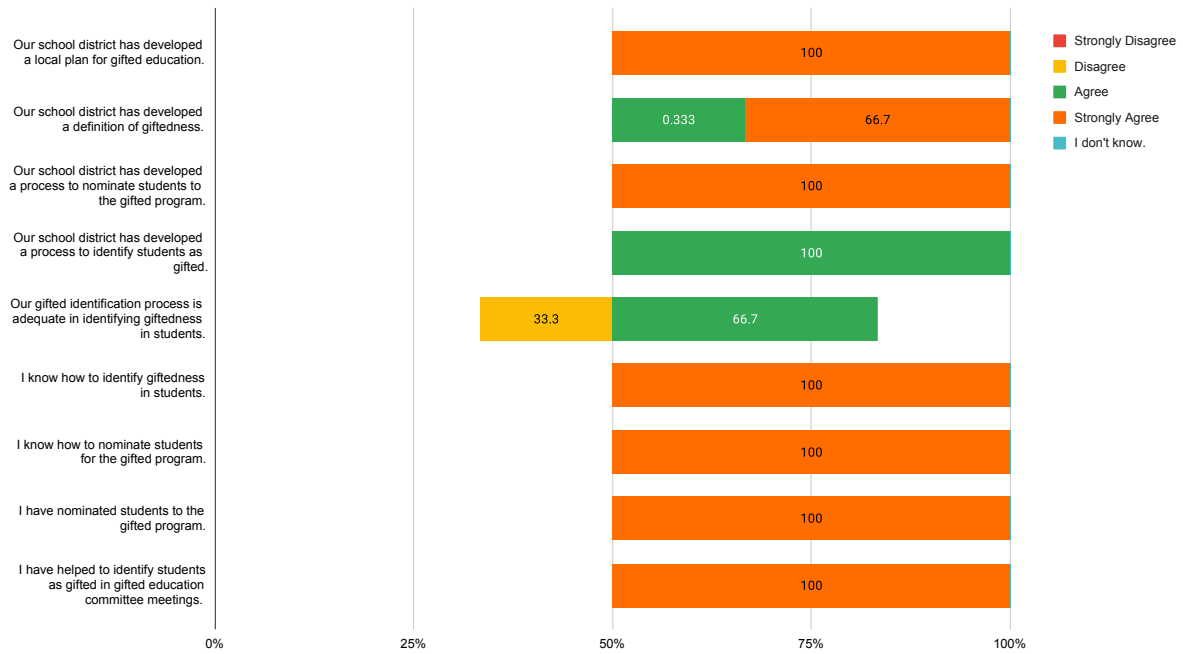
K-1 & 3-5 Gifted Identification in % (n=12)



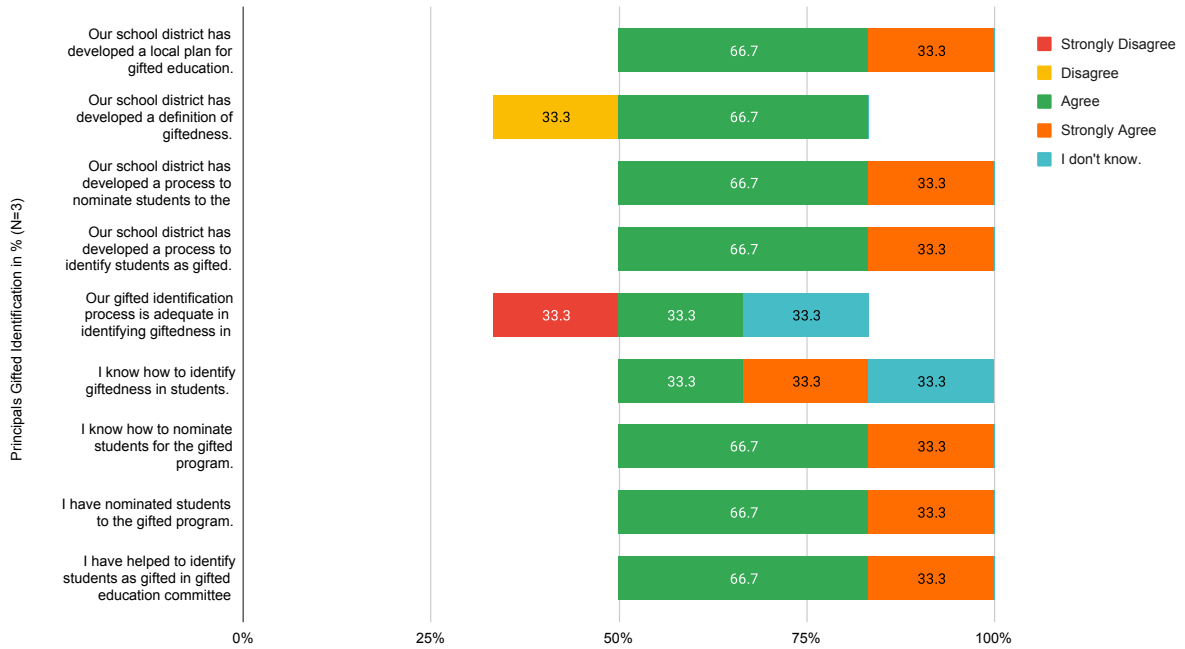
Grade 2 Gifted Identification in % (n=3)



GRT Gifted Identification in % (n=3)



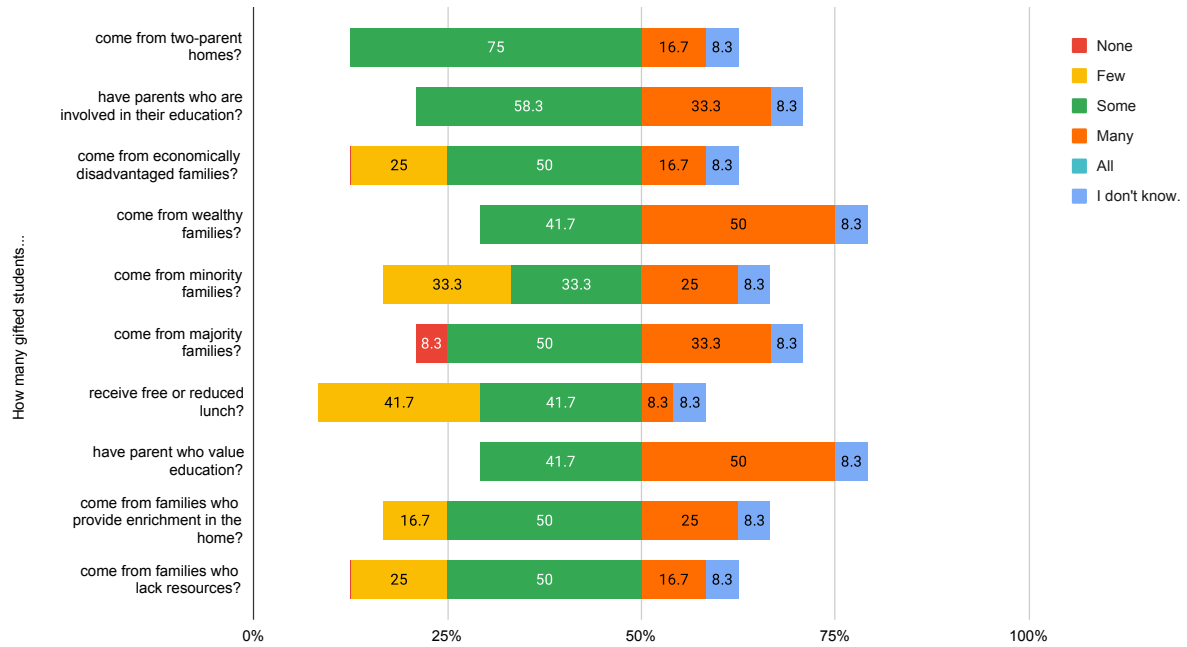
Principals Gifted Identification in % (n=3)



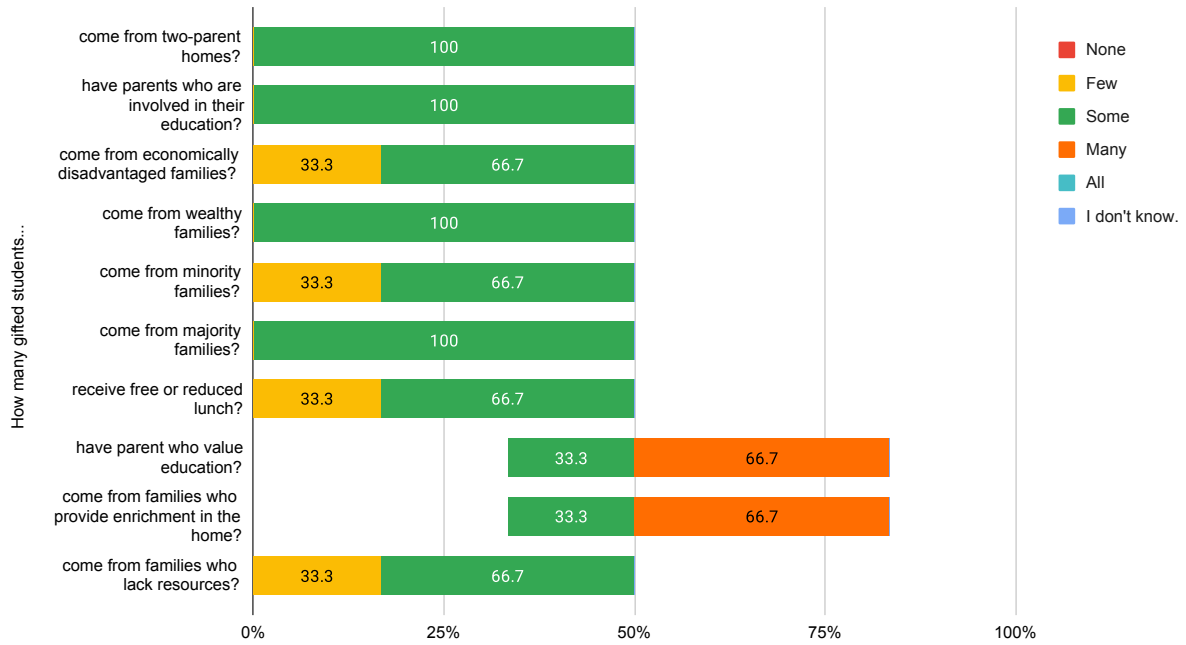
APPENDIX K

SURVEY DATA OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF OTHER FACTORS IMPACTING THE GIFTED IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS

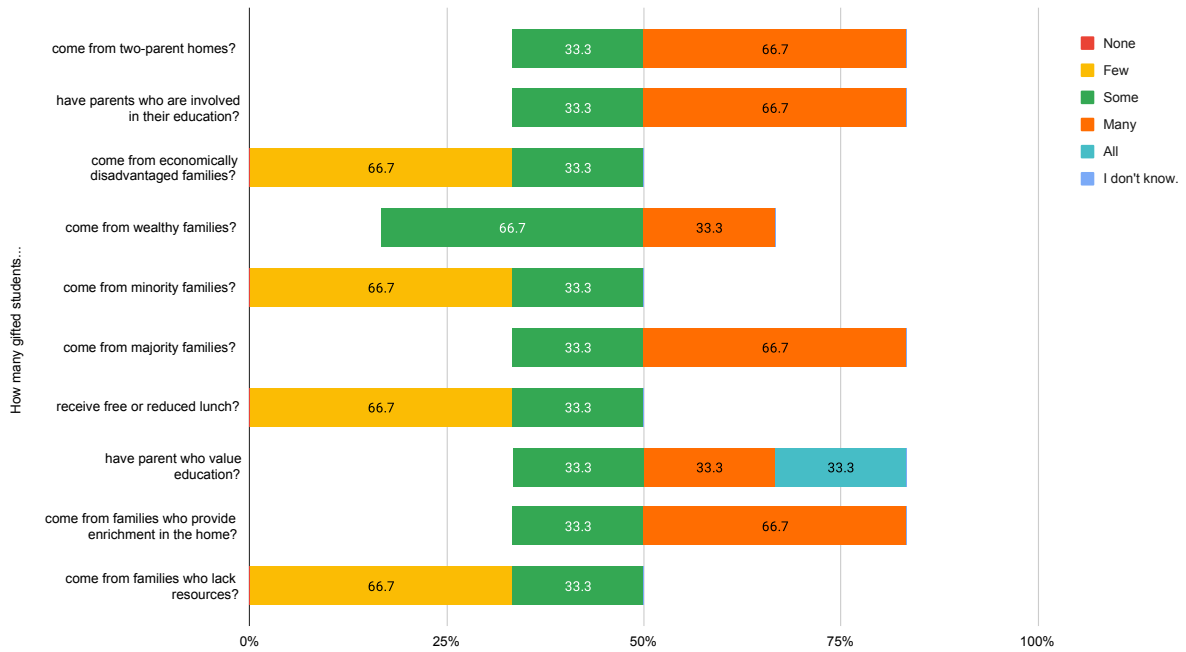
K-1 & 3-5 Other Factors in % (n=12)



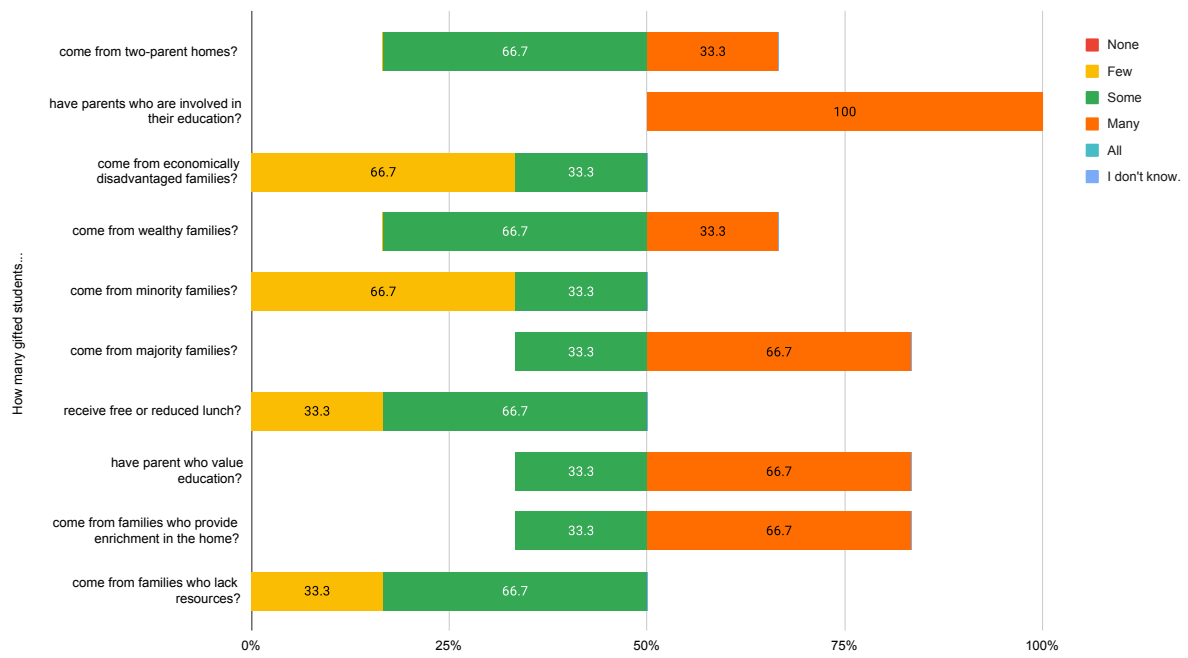
Grade 2 Other Factors in % (n=3)



GRT Other Factors in % (n=3)



Principals Other Factors in % (n=3)



VITA

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Ed.D. in Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership – Executive Gifted Administration: The College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA, August 2023

M. Ed. in K-12 Administration and Supervision: The George Washington University, Washington D.C., 2007

TEDU-651 C94: Teaching the Gifted and Curriculum Design, VCU, 2001

TEDU-651 C92: Modifications and Strategies for Teaching the Gifted, VCU, 2001

TEDU-500 Teaching Secondary Science Investigations, VCU, 1999

B.S. in Geology: Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA, 1997

High School Diploma: Green Run High School, Virginia Beach, VA, 1988

Experience

Division Coordinator of Student Programming (Central Office), Goochland, VA, 2016-present

Principal (Elementary Virtual)/Central Office Staff (split role), Goochland, VA, 2020-2021

Assistant Principal (Elementary)/Central Office Staff (split role), Goochland, VA, 2016-2020

Principal, Summer School (Middle), Goochland, VA, 2007-2013

Assistant Principal (Middle, Alternative Education, High School), Goochland, VA, 2007-2016

Earth Science Teacher (collaborative, general education, gifted), Goochland, VA, 1998-2007

Earth Science Teacher (collaborative, general education, honors), Norfolk, VA, 1997-1998