

NJ's Piece in the Puzzle

- The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted (CSDPG) released the 2018-2019 [State of the States in Gifted Education](#) in December 2020. This report is a snapshot of how each state regulates and supports programs for gifted students. Without a federal mandate, the responsibility to identify and serve gifted and talented students falls on the state and local education agencies. New Jersey has made significant steps forward in 2020 by passing the Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act (SGTEA) into law and we are hopeful that as the incoming data is reviewed we will be able to assess progress and outcomes more accurately. There is still much work to be done as the new law does not address the need for teacher training/certification and funding remains a constant struggle for many school districts.
- The United States Department of Education provides data through the [Civil Rights Data Collection](#) which was most recently updated for with data from the 2017-18 school year in October 2020. Statistics on gifted and talented students and other advanced coursework enrollment is provided at the federal, state, and local school district level. Student population is disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, English language learners status (LEP) and students with disabilities status (IDEA).
- The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation funded a report titled [Equal Talents. Unequal Opportunities: A Report Card on State Support for Academically Talented Low Income Students](#) (Plucker et al., 2015). Every state is reviewed and receives a letter grade A-F. Notably, New Jersey earned a solid D-, emphasizing our need to do more to ensure equal access to gifted and talented programming and provide students and educators with the necessary support required for successful outcomes. With the passing of the SGTEA in 2020, we have taken the first of many steps required to address excellence gaps in New Jersey.
- If you would like to learn more about how other states address the needs of gifted and talented students, NAGC provides a summary of [Gifted by State](#) which includes contact information (both government and state affiliate organizations) with background statistics and policies. Until the federal government provides guidance or requirements for gifted services, each state, and many times each school district, is left to address the needs of gifted and talented students on their own. It is one of NJAGC's goals that New Jersey will become a leader for other states to follow and to assist nationally in making gifted education a priority through policy backed by funding at the federal level.