

2024 IOWA TALENTED & GIFTED ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

October 13-15, 2024

West Des Moines Sheraton

HONORING THE PAST, INSPIRING THE FUTURE





The Iowa Talented and Gifted Association is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization which was organized 50 years ago with a vision that gifted and talented children in the State of Iowa should receive an education commensurate with their abilities and needs. ITAG is an affiliate of the National Association for Gifted Children.

ITAG promotes advocacy at the national, state and local levels, pre-service and in-service training in gifted education, and parent/community awareness, education and involvement. ITAG is comprised of parents, educators, other professionals, and community leaders who share an interest in the growth and development of gifted and talented individuals in Iowa.

Board of Directors

ITAG Officers

Michelle Anderson, President
Todd Hodgkinson, PhD, Past President
Michelle Hendricks, President Elect
Kahri Plein, Treasurer
Sara Newton, Secretary

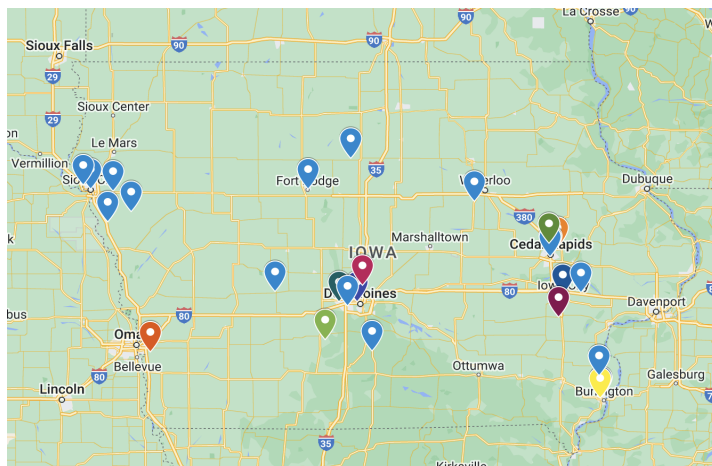
Jenny Clabaugh
Natasha Cooper
Bradi Darrah, PhD
Jordan Edgerly
Nicole Holman Lankelma
Adrienne Howard
Nick Johnson
Darcie Kress, EdD
Kristine Milburn, EdD
Felicia Murillo
Diana Nordstrom
Danielle Reagle
Denise Roth
Amy Ruhland
Christa Ruther
Eve Sanford
Brittany Schofield
Meagan Wagner
Monti Molzen

Liaison Members

Molly McConnell (Dept. of Education)
Jolene Teske, EdD (University of Iowa
Belin-Blank Center)

Volunteers

Christine Brunko Schultz
Lora Duffy-Danker
Claudia Koch
Kathy Paul
Diane Pratt



Presidential Welcome

When we long for life without difficulties, remind us that oaks grow strong in contrary winds and diamonds are made under pressure. – Peter Marshall

Our pioneers and trailblazers are the ones who braved the storm and rallied support to ensure that gifted education is recognized in the Iowa Code. Despite facing significant pressures in recent years, Iowans understand that investing in our talented and gifted children is crucial for shaping a brighter future. This year's conference is oriented around the theme of "Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future." As we celebrate the significant contributions of dedicated individuals to Iowa's gifted education, we also hope attendees will discover how to leverage their advocacy skills to drive empowerment and inspire change in their districts, schools, classrooms, and beyond.

Iowa Talented and Gifted Association encourages you to engage actively and question rigorously, continually seeking ways to improve and impact the field. Please use this conference as a valuable opportunity to learn, network, and advance our mission, as we work together to inspire a brighter future.

Mission

The Iowa Talented and Gifted Association recognizes, values, and supports the unique and diverse needs of all talented and gifted children and youth through...

ADVOCACY by encouraging informed educational professionals, parents, policy makers, and all other stakeholders to take appropriate action for the benefit of talented and gifted learners.

EDUCATION by offering direction in the design of evidence-based systems of identification and qualitatively-differentiated programming that addresses the academic, cognitive, affective, and social needs of talented and gifted learners.

NETWORKING by increasing opportunities for collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders with the goal of advancing the abilities and developing the potential of talented and gifted learners.

That said, our keynote speaker, Dr. Brian Housand, will be presenting many current tools to frame our thinking around gifted education. Given the rapid shifts in education over the last decade, having access to updated resources and fresh ideas can really make a difference in fostering an environment where gifted students thrive. I hope you enjoy this year's conference and use it as an opportunity to not only learn new strategies but also connect with others in the field who share the same passion for supporting gifted learners.

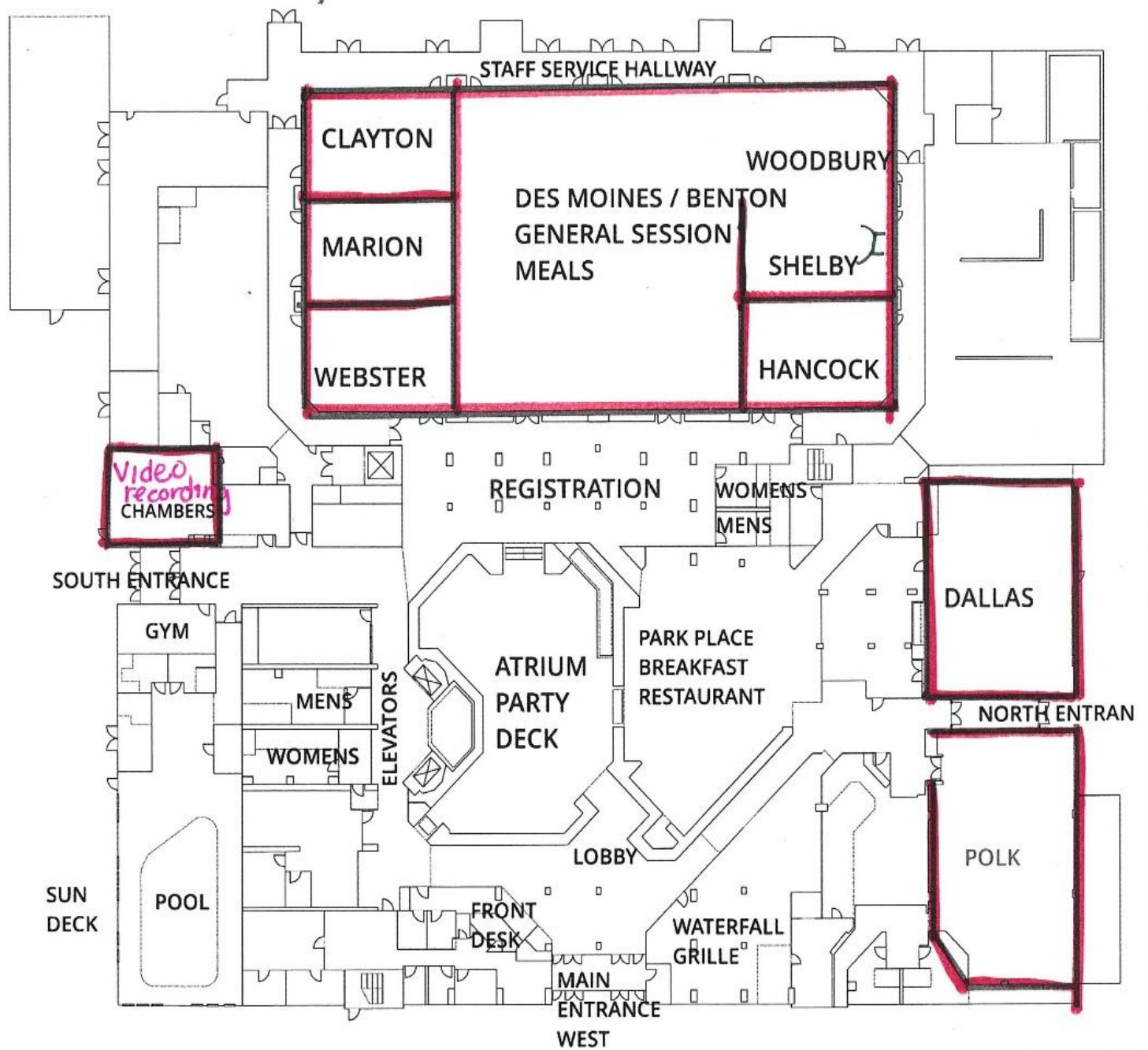
[Network, Educate, and Advocate](#) for talented and gifted learners.

Sincerely,

*Michelle Anderson
President, Iowa Talented and Gifted Association
October, 2024*

*2024 ITAG Annual Conference Planning Committee
Kristine Milburn, EdD, West Des Moines Community School District
Amy Ruhland, Adair-Casey and Guthrie Center School District
Felicia Murillo, West Des Moines Community School District
Michelle Hendricks, President-Elect, Lewis Central School District*

West Des Moines Sheraton MAP FIND YOUR WAY AROUND!



Be sure to visit our vendor booths located in the atrium and pre-conference area!





The Iowa Talented and Gifted Association is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization that depends on donations to increase our capacity to serve. Please consider becoming a Friend of ITAG today!

Laurie Croft
Andrea DeJong
Lora Duffy-Danker
Claudia Koch
Kristine Milburn
Kathy Paul
Denise Roth
Chris Schultz
Jolene Teske



Schedule @ a Glance

Sunday, October 13 ^h	
2:00 p.m.	Registration check-in table opens
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Meet & Greet with keynote speaker Brian Housand and selected conference presenters (hors d'oeuvres and cash bar)
5:00-7:00 p.m.	Dinner on your own
7:00 p.m.	Registration check-in table closes
Monday, October 14 th	
7:00-7:30 a.m.	Registration check-in table opens • Drake University Credit Session • University of Iowa Credit Session • Engage with ITAG: How can you be more involved?
7:30 - 8:00 a.m.	Presidential Welcome & Administrator of the Year Award
8:00 - 9:00 a.m.	Keynote Speaker: Dr. Brian Housand <i>"Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future"</i>
9:15 -10:15 a.m.	Breakout Sessions A
10:30 -11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions B
11:30 -12:30 p.m.	Lunch & <i>White Eagle 7th Gen Multicultural Pow Wow Performance</i>
12:30 - 1:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions C
1:45 - 2:45 p.m.	Breakout Sessions D
2:45 - 3:00 p.m.	Snack break (drink & a sweet)
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Session E: <i>"Covered Dish: The Gifted Lesson Exchange"</i> with Dr. Brian Housand
4:00 - 6:30 p.m.	Dinner on your own
7:00 - 9:00 pm	Game Night Social with The Dealt Hand in Dallas Room: <i>Hosted hobby board game event with a selection of current and favorite competitive and cooperative games. The Dealt Hand specializes in helping folks select and learn new and interesting games!</i>
Tuesday, October 15 th	
7:30 a.m.	Registration check-in table opens
7:45 - 8:45 a.m.	Breakfast & BBC Award Recipient Recognition
9:00 -10:00 a.m.	Breakout Sessions F
10:15 - 11:15 a.m.	Breakout Sessions G
11:30 -1:00 p.m.	Plated Lunch: Distinguished Service Award & 2024 Legacy Award Recipients
1:10 - 2:00 p.m.	Breakout Sessions H
2:10 - 3:00 p.m.	Breakout Sessions I
3:00 - 3:15 p.m.	Snack break (drink & a treat)
3:15 - 4:00 p.m.	Breakout Sessions J

Be sure to visit our vendor booths located in the atrium and pre-conference areas:



Welcome to our
2024 Annual Conference Vendors!

#2024ITAGAnnualConf

IOWA

College of Education
Belin-Blank Center



Home of Kane Miller & Usborne books



Kendall Hunt
publishing company

MIDLAND
UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE & ONLINE

Riverside
Insights®



AoPS **Beast**
ACADEMY

IOWA
BELIN-BLANK CENTER
Gifted Education & Talent Development
IOWA ONLINE AP ACADEMY



Buena Vista University
Graduate Programs

2024 ITAG Annual Conference

Day 1 | October 14, 2024

Schedule of Events

Time	Event	Location
7:00-8:00	Breakfast, Announcements, and Visit Vendors Welcome By ITAG President & NAGC John Segota Administrator of the Year Award	Convention Center
	Drake Conference for Credit Session <i>Todd Hodgkinson, PhD</i>	Marion Room
	University of Iowa Conference for Credit Session <i>Jolene Teske EdD</i>	Clayton Room
8:00-9:00	<i>Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future</i> Keynote Speaker: <i>Brian Housand, PhD</i>	Convention Center
9:15-10:15	Breakout Sessions A	

Concept-Based Curriculum: A How-To Session

Presenter: Todd Hodgkinson, PhD

Breakout A	By organizing learning around the exploration of “big ideas” and “big questions”, concept-based instruction challenges students to think beyond factual levels of knowledge and increases the rigor of student learning by promoting higher order thinking (e.g., application, evaluation, creation). The purpose of this session is to introduce concept-based curriculum and how this approach to teaching and learning can support the unique cognitive needs of gifted learners. Participants will also begin designing concept-based curriculum to increase rigor and relevance in participants' classrooms in a workshop style setting.	Marion Room
------------	---	-------------

Creating Space for Academic and Social/Emotional Goal Setting
for Gifted High School Students

Presenters: Chelsie Murphy, Johanna Mackenzie, Karen Sissel

Breakout A

A strong individualized goal-setting program benefits gifted learners when paired with a school's MTSS model and SEL framework. Our model will showcase best practices in how to build relationships, especially with students of special populations including 2e, LGBTQ+ and our marginalized gifted learners. Overcoming challenges with motivation, executive functioning, and perfectionism through collaborative conversations with students will be highlighted.

Clayton Room

P.E.T.S Curriculum in Third Grade

Presenter: Angie Christensen

Breakout A

Primary Education Thinking Skills (P.E.T.S) 3 can be a rich component of third grade TAG services. Get the teacher's experienced perspective of using the P.E.T.S 3 thinking skills program and related extension activities for small group instruction. Participants will leave the session with some easy-to-prepare activities and resources to use with students. Time for sharing extensions and ideas will also be provided.

Webster Room

Come Learn With Us: Professional Learning Through the
Belin-Blank Center

Presenter: Randolph Lange, PhD and Jolene Teske, EdD

Breakout A

The Belin-Blank Center started by offering a professional learning experience for practicing teachers over four decades ago. By building the capacity within teachers to meet the needs of advanced learners, the Center can be a catalyst of positive change. Because of COVID, the rising cost of tuition, and a staffing change, we have decided to put forth a concerted effort to better understand the current landscape of professional learning in Iowa. This session will be a chance to interact with us and provide feedback regarding professional learning.

Shelby Room

Essential Tips for Teachers of Twice-Exceptional Students

Presenters: Katherine Schabillon, PhD and Christopher Smith, PhD

Breakout A	High ability learners with disabilities ("twice-exceptional" students) have unique needs that impact their learning all day, every day. They require support and services that go beyond the "traditional" approaches for supporting talented and gifted students. Attendees will gain increased familiarity with the unique learning and social-emotional needs of 2e students, discuss how these needs have manifested in their teaching experiences, and walk away with "use-it-tomorrow" strategies for supporting 2e students in any classroom environment.	Hancock Room
------------	--	--------------

Micro:bit Makers: How to Embed Coding and Technology Into Your Classroom

Presenter: Jolie Pelds

Breakout A	Join the Science Center of Iowa to learn about coding with Micro:bits. Participants will experience a shortened version of our Micro:bit Makers workshop. Discussions of pedagogy and application to standards will be included.	Dallas Room
------------	--	-------------

Building Your Gifted Toolkit 2.0

Presenter: Felicia Murillo

Breakout A	I'm baaaaack! Another year, another round of resources to share. What does a day in the life of a GT teacher look like? In this session attendees will get an overview of resources used in the GT classroom as well as ones shared with classroom teachers to help differentiate instruction. Resources shared will revolve around warmups, math, reading, project ideas, writing, STEM and other great thinking games. We will save time at the end for you to share your favorites, so come with your ideas. Oh and don't forget - we will be raffling off prizes from some of the companies whose resources I am sharing.	Polk Room
------------	---	-----------

10:30-11:30

Breakout Sessions B

Breakout B	Welcoming Our Robot Overlords: Embracing the Ever Evolving world of AI <i>Presenter: Brian Housand, PhD</i> Gifted Education has long championed creative productivity and critical thinking, but what happens when our devices begin to think and create on their own? Rather than shying away from AI, let's examine how to boldly embrace its power and potential to leverage new possibilities and pathways with this collection of lessons incorporating ethical decision making, collaboration, design, and knowledge construction.	Convention Center
Breakout B	Research to Practice for Twice Exceptional Learners <i>Presenter: Megan Foley-Nicpon, PhD</i> Knowledge about twice-exceptional learners is rapidly growing outside the advanced education field. Yet not everything published on this topic is grounded in research, nor is the research conducted always accessible. In this presentation, I will summarize findings from five recent studies about twice-exceptionality, focusing on how the results can guide identification and intervention in schools. I also will review the research limitations and contextual factors that need to be considered when designing interventions for this talented and diverse group of students.	Marion Room
Breakout B	Stop, Collaborate, and Listen <i>Presenters: Kate Varner, Stephanie Zielke, Lyndee Heemstra</i> Stop, Collaborate, and Listen! Use this time to connect with other gifted education professionals in an informal and collaborative session. Participants can either choose from a list of topics or bring their own ideas to the table! Share your favorite ideas, discuss identification, ask questions, and use our greatest resource-each other! We're in this together!	Clayton Room

Breakout B	Using Future Problem Solving (FPS) Components to Meet the Needs of Your Gifted Students <i>Presenter: Linda Zillig</i> In 1974, E. Paul Torrance created Future Problem Solving as a tool for students to engage in creative problem-solving while addressing complex community issues and futuristic topics. At the beginning, Global Issues was the only component. Now there are additional options to meet the needs of your students—Community Projects, Creative Writing, and Storytelling! Some options are for teams and individuals both, and some options are for individuals only. All options use creative and critical thinking skills and address the future!	Shelby Room
Breakout B	Enhancing Science Content Courses <i>Presenter: Christopher Like</i> Enhancing a science offering to push students to their fullest potential can be a difficult endeavor. Come learn about various strategies that Iowa teachers are using to engage every student.	Webster Room
Breakout B	Leadership Challenge: Identification and Curriculum for Student Leadership <i>Presenter: Eric Lauer</i> The Student Leadership Practices Inventory (Student LPI) is a comprehensive leadership development tool designed to help young people measure their leadership behaviors and take action to improve their effectiveness as a leader. It is grounded in the same extensive research as the classic Leadership Practices Inventory, which is used in leadership training, executive development, and graduate-level programs around the world.	Hancock Room
Breakout B	Executive Function Unlocked: Building Key Life Skills <i>Presenter: Kristine Milburn, EdD</i> In this session, you will hear about how to advocate for students in your community and hear from the voices of teachers, parents, administrators and gifted students what has worked and how you can replicate this in your community. Exchange ideas with your colleagues and be ready to take away ideas that can become actions.	Polk Room

11:30-12:30	Lunch and 7th Generation White Eagle Pow Wow Performance <i>White Eagle 7th Generation Multicultural Pow Wow; seeking to mend the sacred hoop of life by bringing the community together and celebrating differences through music, dance, food and storytelling.</i>	Convention Center
12:30-1:30	Breakout Sessions C	

From A Certain Point of View: The Power of Perspective

Presenter: Brian Housand, PhD

Breakout C	Embark on a thought-provoking adventure and challenge your preconceived notions as you delve into the fascinating dynamics of perspectives. In a series of engaging experiments, we will begin to unravel some of the complexities of what we think we know and explore how our viewpoints can influence what we are seeing. These activities are designed to enhance critical thinking, foster empathy, and facilitate personal growth.	Convention Center
------------	---	-------------------

Overcoming Roadblocks to More Inclusive Identification and Programming

Presenter: Brian Adams

Breakout C	Current research in gifted education recommends providing highly individualized and precise interventions to a wider talent pool of students. While this sounds great in theory, what about in practice? How can we get around some of the perceived roadblocks to a more inclusive future? And how can we include more students without increasing our available resources and without decreasing services for others? This presentation will address these questions and more, with specific examples of how one local district is pushing forward into a more equitable future.	Marion Room
------------	---	-------------

Anxious and Overexcitable

Presenter: Bradi Darrah, PhD

Breakout C

John Haidt's book *The Anxious Generation* quickly became a #1 New York Times bestseller and has generated significant discussion among parents and educators. But what does Haidt's message mean for gifted students? This session will offer an overview of Haidt's findings and claims, and explore how they relate to key texts in the gifted field: *Living with Intensity* by Michael Piechowski and Susan Daniels, and *The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children* by Maureen Neihart. No need to have read any of these texts to join!

Clayton Room

Elementary Art Identification: Meeting the Needs of Gifted Elementary Art Students

Presenters: Sarah Backstrombaker, Andrew Wirtz

Breakout C

Des Moines Public Schools offers unique opportunities for gifted art students. Come learn about the portfolio review process, programming, and how to best modify it to meet the needs of your students and connect with the community you serve.

Webster Room

Gifted and High Achieving in High School: Supporting and Scaffolding the Secondary Learner in an ELA Classroom

Presenters: Molly Pettit, Michelle Hendricks

Breakout C

High school-gifted kids don't need support in challenging classes- just give them independent study and get out of their way, right? WRONG! In this session, we will share our experiences from 7 years of a collaborative push-in model that provides compacted subject accelerated curriculum while supporting/nagging/loving all the quirks that come with working with gifted teenagers (yes, even freshmen boys)! We will give real-world experiences and participants will walk away with strategies that address scaffolding rigorous formative/summative assessments, helping students with their executive function gaps, and providing a classroom environment that allows students to thrive and want to continue to take advanced classes.

Shelby Room

Breakout C	What Does It Mean to Be Rural and Gifted? <i>Presenter: Denise Roth</i> Rural students are unique; rural gifted learners are a special group. From their farm upbringing, they exhibit skills and talents that may not be exhibited on standardized tests. This session strives to help educators understand rural gifted students better through qualitative data, and support these learners using their backgrounds and interests.	Hancock Room
Breakout C	White Eagle 7th Generation Multicultural Pow Wow Join us to celebrate and be informed how the White Eagle 7th Gen Multicultural Pow Wow works and brings like-minded people together to celebrate diversity and support each other community-wide.	Dallas Room
Breakout C	MTSS: Serving Advanced Learners All Day, Every Day <i>Presenter: Kristine Milburn, EdD</i> MTSS is a “way of doing business,” requiring high quality evidence-based instruction, intervention, and assessment practices to ensure that every student receives the appropriate level of support to be successful. So how do we ensure advanced and gifted learners are included in MTSS plans? How do we ensure these learners receive complex and appropriately paced instruction to meet their needs? We will explore how we can leverage and align MTSS within our systems to help teachers collaborate and organize resources to enable every child to successfully reach his/her fullest potential.	Polk Room
1:30-1:45	Break	
1:45-2:45	Breakout Sessions D	
Breakout D	Engage with ITAG! Become a More Active Participant in YOUR Professional Organization <i>Presenter: Michelle Anderson</i> Interested in becoming more involved in ITAG and perhaps even becoming a board of director? Do you use our website as a resource? Learn about how you can become more engaged as a member in your professional organization.	Marion Room

In the Name of Equity: Understanding Your GT Program Demographics

Presenter: Kyra Wilcox-Conley

Breakout D

In order for gifted students to be served all day, every day, we first have to find them, and then design services to maximize their learning. Do you need access to your district's demographic data, both in the general population AND in your gifted and talented program? Knowledge is power, and this session aims to provide districts with demographic information upon which they can begin to have systems level conversations about equity in program identification.

Clayton Room

That's Genius! Genius Hour with Talented and Gifted Students

Presenter: Jenny Clabaugh

Breakout D

Learn about the genius of Genius Hour and learn how to implement it with your students! Ideal for upper elementary levels and beyond, this session explores the Genius Hour framework, highlighting its benefits for talented and gifted students. You'll see examples of student work from each of the six steps adapted from *Genius Hour in the Classroom* by Andi McNair, and participate in a condensed version of the first three steps. Walk away with practical strategies and tools to inspire student-driven learning and creativity in your classroom.

Webster Room

Gifted & Grown Ups: Empowering Gifted Children and Youth to Navigate Adult Life

Presenter: Dr. Sally Beisser

There is alarmingly limited research on gifted adults while there is much research on identification and needs of gifted children. This session will summarize three classic longitudinal studies on gifted grownups. Participants will receive a handout of 41 traits of gifted adults, learn about long term supports needed by gifted grown-ups, and discover knowledge and skills to empower gifted children to navigate adult life.

Shelby Room

Take Action Through Advocacy

Presenters: Kathy Paul, Valerie Thacker

Breakout D

Now, more than ever, it is vital to educate others regarding the need for gifted education. How can teachers, parents, and others be proactive in making the needs of our children understood by those who are making decisions? Let's explore strategies that have been successful in the past and those that are working right now. For example: Parent groups are often non-existent, but there is power in numbers. How do we ensure all staff see the value of differentiation and appropriate programming? What are some positive actions you can take to ensure that our advanced learners thrive? In this session, you will hear from the voices of teachers, parents, administrators and gifted students what has worked and how you can replicate this in your community. Exchange ideas with your colleagues and be ready to take away ideas that can become actions.

Hancock Room

Iowa STEM as a Resource for Your Classroom

Presenters: Felicia Murillo, Sarah Derry, PhD

Breakout D

Did you know Iowa STEM has a program to help educators meet learners' STEM needs in engaging and flexible settings? Come learn about this STEM resource: the Scale up Program available to educators in Iowa and see how these resources could be used in your GT classroom. We will show some examples of last year's materials that were awarded and see how they are being used to challenge students' thinking. The Scale Up awards, for free, hands-on STEM materials and training, revolves around developing real-world curriculum with Iowa industry partners, summer teacher externships and more. In this session, participants will have time to explore samples of hands-on STEM materials and leave with strategies to tap into the Iowa STEM menu of programs. Iowa STEM programs are available to TAG educators, classroom educators, librarians, out-of-school providers, teacher librarians, public librarians, and more, so that STEM engagement and differentiation is available to learners anywhere.

Convention
Center

Rock The CASA! Review of the Gifted and Talented Plan Submissions Through the Consolidated Accountability Support Platform

Presenter: Molly McConnell

Breakout D

This session focuses on district talented and gifted program plan submissions. This session will review Iowa's requirements for

Polk Room

gifted and talented programs and share the updated guidelines for submitting program plans using the Consolidated Accountability Support Application (CASA).

2:45-3:00	Snack Break and Door Prize Giveaway	Lobby Area
-----------	-------------------------------------	------------

3:00-4:00	Session E
-----------	-----------

Covered Dish: The Gifted Lesson Exchange

Presenter: Brian Housand, PhD

Session E	Are you looking for some new lesson ideas to “spice” up your students’ learning? In this dynamic and fast-paced session, each speaker has up to 6 minutes to “dish” a favorite ready-to-serve lesson. Get ready to fill your plate and your brains with a menu of brand new ideas that you can use when you get back to the classroom tomorrow!	Convention Center
-----------	---	-------------------

Game On! Hosted Board Game Social

7:00-9:00 pm	Join with colleagues and friends (and friends-not-yet-met) for a board game event. Locally owned business The Dealt Hand will be on hand with their game collection ready to teach a variety of modern, interesting, and beautiful competitive and cooperative board games. Explore a variety of games that are silly, or chill, or contemplative, or strategic, or...	Dallas Room
--------------	--	-------------



2024 ITAG Annual Conference

Day 2 | October 15, 2024

Schedule of Events

Time	Event	Location
7:45-9:00	Breakfast, Announcements, and Visit Vendors	Convention Center
	Welcome by NAGC John Segota, Executive Director Belin-Blank Center Award Recipient Recognition	Convention Center
9:00-10:00	Breakout Sessions F	

Curiouser & Curiouser: A Few New Adventures in Wonderland
Presenter: Brian Housand, PhD

Breakout F

Gifted kids are often very curious creatures. However, many lose sight of this playful nature and instead go in search of the one right answer. In this adventurous session, we will go down the rabbit hole and explore a wonderland of inquiry-infused and teacher-tested lessons designed to reconnect you and your students with a playful sense of wonder. To paraphrase Socrates, "wonder is the beginning of wisdom," and it is this wonder that can be a driver for creativity and innovation.

Convention Center

Breakout F	Gifted Program Review Using Gifted Self-Audit and Planner Tool <i>Presenters: Kyra Wilcox-Conley and Kate Boonstra</i> Review of gifted and talented programs is something we all know we <i>should</i> do, but may not know <i>how</i> to do. Using a Google Sheets-based set of rubrics, we will walk you through how the Gifted Self-Audit and planner can be used to assess the current state of your program and prioritize next steps for continuous improvement.	Marion Room
------------	--	-------------

Breakout F	Take Action Through Advocacy <i>Presenters: Kathy Paul, Valerie Thacker</i> Now, more than ever, it is vital to educate others regarding the need for gifted education. How can teachers, parents, and others be proactive in making the needs of our children understood by those who are making decisions? Let's explore strategies that have been successful in the past and those that are working right now. For example: Parent groups are often non-existent, but there is power in numbers. How do we ensure all staff see the value of differentiation and appropriate programming? What are some positive actions you can take to ensure that our advanced learners thrive? In this session, you will hear from the voices of teachers, parents, administrators and gifted students what has worked and how you can replicate this in your community. Exchange ideas with your colleagues and be ready to take away ideas that can become actions.	Clayton Room
------------	---	--------------

Breakout F	Gifted in the Arts: Recommendations for Implementation <i>Presenter: Andrew Wirtz</i> Based on recent research done in Iowa, this presentation examines how school districts in Iowa can implement the identification of, and programming for, students who may demonstrate gifts and talents in the visual and/or performing arts. We will discuss why this work is important, how to get over barriers to implementation, and practical steps for the inclusion of the visual and performing arts in gifted programming.	Webster Room
------------	---	--------------

Gifted and High Achieving in High School: Supporting and Scaffolding the Secondary Learner in an ELA Classroom

Presenters: Molly Pettit, Michelle Hendricks

Breakout F

High school-gifted kids don't need support in challenging classes- just give them independent study and get out of their way, right? WRONG! In this session, we will share our experiences from 7 years of a collaborative push-in model that provides compacted subject accelerated curriculum while supporting/nagging/loving all the quirks that come with working with gifted teenagers (yes, even freshmen boys)! We will give real-world experiences and participants will walk away with strategies that address scaffolding rigorous formative/summative assessments, helping students with their executive function gaps, and providing a classroom environment that allows students to thrive and want to continue to take advanced classes.

Hancock Room

Awesome Advanced Activities for Mentoring Mathematical Minds

Presenter: Felicia Murillo

Breakout F

Who are the mathematically gifted and how do we service these neurodivergent learners in a general education and GT classroom? If you are looking for a new and engaging math curriculum - this is it! This is also a great supplement for those GT teachers who are collaborating in the regular classroom. Project A3 is a supplementary math curriculum full of engaging tasks designed to help teachers navigate the complexities of math enrichment and get kids thinking. The activities encourage students to go beyond basic standards as they reason, question, justify, create, discuss, and write about their thinking. We will discuss successful strategies that allow teachers to offer enrichment tasks to all students (regular classroom and GT class) which provides opportunities for talent development and talent discovery. This session will highlight lessons from grades 3-6 with hands-on interaction of various activities from the books.

Dallas Room

Breakout F	Learning From the Belin-Blank Center Recognition Award Winners <i>Presenters: Randolph Lange, PhD; Mike Keller-Wilson</i> Help recognize and learn from the awardees of the Belin-Blank Center's Recognition Award as they discuss what led them to apply, their award-winning projects, and how their innovative efforts are expanding the field of talent development and impacting students. Additionally, presenters will share trends and takeaways from the full field of applications to illustrate the current state of talent development efforts in the state and offer insights for potential future applicants.	Polk Room
10:00-10:15	Break	
10:15-11:15	Breakout Sessions G	
Breakout G	Supporting General Education Teachers: Presenting Effective Professional Development <i>Presenter: Denise Roth</i> This session strives to provide take-away professional development TAG teachers can use in their own districts to work with gen ed teachers and support their own TAG students. Effective professional development throughout the year is crucial, and TAG teachers play a role in helping gen ed teachers understand and support TAG students in gen ed classrooms, especially when there isn't always a set time for a TAG teacher to meet with their students.	Marion Room
Breakout G	Defining and Designing a Role for a TAG Coordinator at the High School Level <i>Presenter: Danielle Raegle</i> Gifted students are gifted all day, every day. With this knowledge, it is imperative to advocate for the best outcomes for our students, especially as they grow into adulthood. By providing students with appropriate college and career readiness opportunities and aptly helping them navigate their own needs, we are continuing to serve our unique population. Just because our students are often not exhibiting problems and are	Clayton Room

quite apt at navigating most things, doesn't mean they don't need unique support to be successful.

The Power of Puzzles: Inspiring Mathematical Creativity and Confidence

Presenter: Alyssa Hanna

Breakout G

Discover new ways to challenge students and facilitate their problem solving, critical thinking, and creative reasoning! In this hands-on session, explore strategies for going deeper into elementary math topics, and try solving some engaging puzzles to use with your students! Beast Academy accelerates depth and complexity in non-routine problems – a research-based approach that shows improved math performance, increased confidence, and excitement about mathematics, for students from all backgrounds. Participants will walk away with new resources to use with students.

Webster Room

National History Day: Rights and Responsibilities

Presenter: Hanna Howard

Breakout G

Get to know your new favorite project-based learning framework, National History Day! This session will highlight Iowa's NHD program and explore the 2025 theme, "Rights and Responsibilities in History," in depth. Attendees will walk away with resources to help jump-start NHD at their schools and an adaptable classroom activity that's perfect for teaching topics in social studies, including Iowa history, politics, and civics.

Hancock Room

Evidence-Based Curriculum and Best Practices for Gifted and Talented Students

Presenter: Kate Boonstra

Breakout G

Be advised: this session will not be a sit-and-get! In this interactive session, you'll participate in a model lesson from a student's perspective. Experience evidence-based curriculum specifically designed for gifted students, and leave with ideas to foster growth in both your teaching practice and your students' learning.

Dallas Room

Breakout G	Taylor Swift, A Supermarket, & The Saguaro Cactus OR 13 Lessons About Talent Development <i>Presenter: Brian Housand, PhD</i> Yes, you read that right! Taylor Swift, a Supermarket, and the Saguaro Cactus! At first glance, this may seem like a random collection of nouns in a game of Mad Libs, but this person, place, and thing have a great deal to teach us about developing talent in our gifted learners. We will analyze the unique characteristics of each and discover some practical strategies to incorporate in your learning environment.	Polk Room
11:15-11:30	Break	
11:30-1:00	Plated Lunch Presentation of Distinguished Service and Legacy Awards, Legacy Award Speakers	Convention Center
1:10 - 2:00	Breakout Sessions H	
Breakout H	Using Strength-Based Ability Data to Ensure Equitable Identification and Guide Instruction For All Students <i>Presenter: Christina Jordan</i> Riverside Insights: By applying a strengths-based ability approach, educators are empowered to meet the educational needs of all students, including those who are gifted, emergent bilingual newcomers, and those in special and general education. This approach supports academic growth and leads to more meaningful and effective educational outcomes. Using a strengths-based method allows educators to determine individualized placements and educational plans that consider students' skills, such as complex problem-solving, critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning. This data-driven approach enhances equity in program placements and tiered instruction. Utilizing ability data supports instructional strategies that build on students' strengths while addressing areas for growth.	Marion Room

What *The Anxious Generation* Means for Gifted Education

Presenter: Bradi Darrah, PhD

Breakout H

John Haidt's book *The Anxious Generation* quickly became a #1 New York Times bestseller and has generated significant discussion among parents and educators. But what does Haidt's message mean for gifted students? This session will offer an overview of Haidt's findings and claims, and explore how they relate to key texts in the gifted field: *Living with Intensity* by Michael Piechowski and Susan Daniels, and *The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children* by Maureen Neihart. No need to have read any of these texts to join!

Clayton Room

Teaching Kids How to Think, Not What to Think, With the Help of Effective Problem-Solving Skills

Presenter: Linda Zillig

Breakout H

E. Paul Torrance developed Future Problem Solving (FPS) for students to practice creative problem-solving strategies that address complex community problems and futuristic topics. These creative problem-solving strategies are part of a process that students of all ages can use today (and tomorrow) to be more proactive and problem solve challenges of today and the future for a positive change. The goals of this session are to empower you (and your students) to actively use this six-step problem-solving process and to find ways you can apply this process as a part of the curriculum you already teach! Laughter and stories are also included!

Webster Room

Bright Vs. Gifted: What Can We Take into the Future?

Presenter: Laurie Croft, PhD

Breakout H

In 1989, Challenge Magazine published two columns of descriptors; the editor labeled one column "gifted" and the other "bright." The author hadn't provided the labels, nor had she done research to suggest that either list was more or less descriptive of gifted students. Nevertheless, the list has become very popular, and teachers sometimes admit they don't really want those kids who are "just" bright in their gifted programs. The words in the columns don't distinguish between "truly" gifted students; they seem correlated to personality types. This presentation will explain why our language from the past can confuse our programmatic goals. "Bright vs Gifted" hurts advanced learners, especially those who are well-adjusted and more autonomous, often girls. This presentation will consider better ways of understanding differences among gifted learners, as well as supporting their academic and socio-emotional development.

Shelby Room

High School Elective for Gifted and High-Achieving Students - Make It Work!

Presenter: Michelle Hendricks

Breakout H

Are you looking for a way to provide real gifted services to your gifted high school students? Advanced courses and optional meetings are not enough-consider adding a TAG elective course that focuses on high-quality independent study projects! Learn how you can easily align with an NAGC standard, create a routine that supports many types of learning, and see real examples of practice and performance (or formative and summative) assignments.

Hancock Room

Breakout H	Javits Grants at the Belin-Blank Center: Linking Talents with Career Options <i>Presenter: Dr. Megan Foley-Nicpon, Dr. Saba Ali, Dr. Duhita Mahatmya, Emily Ladendorf, Dr. Katie Schabilion</i> With the support of Jacob K. Javits funding, the Belin-Blank Center has developed a talent discovery and career exploration program for students typically underrepresented in advanced education programs. In this presentation, we will discuss some results from the first grant that ended in 2023 as well as details of the current grant, which has a focus on twice-exceptional learners.	Polk Room
Breakout H	Building Your Gifted Toolkit, 2.0 <i>Presenter: Felicia Murillo</i> I'm baaaaack! Another year, another round of resources to share. What does a day in the life of a GT teacher look like? In this session attendees will get an overview of resources used in the GT classroom as well as ones shared with classroom teachers to help differentiate instruction. Resources shared will revolve around warmups, math, reading, project ideas, writing, STEM and other great thinking games. We will save time at the end for you to share your favorites, so come with your ideas. Oh and don't forget - we will be raffling off prizes from some of the companies whose resources I am sharing.	Dallas Room
2:10 - 3:00 pm Breakout Sessions I		
Breakout I	Academic Decathlon: Best Decision Ever! <i>Presenter: Kerrie Michael, Matt Tracy</i> This is the program you and your students don't even know you need. We will introduce you to Academic Decathlon and provide information and strategies for you to take back to your school districts and administrators to begin your own successful program. The benefits for students (and teachers) go far beyond the competitions themselves. Academic Decathlon isn't just for those who have mastered the game of school, it is for everyone - even those hard-to-reach underachieving gifted students and complex twice-exceptional students. Come and see what it's all about - your students will thank you for years to come.	Marion Room

Breakout I	CRISPA: A Framework for Promoting Artistic Ways of Knowing with Talented and Gifted Learners <i>Presenter: Todd Hodgkinson, PhD</i> C.R.I.S.P.A is a research-based framework (Urmacher, McConnell, Conrad, 2022) that integrates the themes of Connections, Risk-Taking, Imagination, Sensory Experience, Perceptivity, and Active Engagement into teaching and learning with the intention of promoting artistic ways of knowing and doing. The purpose of this session is to introduce participants to this framework and illustrate how it can benefit talented and gifted learners.	Clayton Room
Breakout I	Empowering Educators: Partnering With Parents to Support Gifted Students <i>Presenters: Jenny Clabaugh, Jordan Edgerly</i> This breakout session will equip K-12 educators with the knowledge and strategies to effectively communicate and collaborate with parents of talented and gifted (TAG) students. Participants will engage in interactive discussions to understand what parents want and need to know about their TAG children, explore best practices for parent communication, and develop practical tools to support students' unique educational needs both at school and at home. By the end of the session, educators will gain insights into parental perspectives, learn effective communication techniques, and create a comprehensive "resource file" to educate and empower parents of TAG students.	Webster Room
Breakout I	ITAG Board of Directors: Hot Seat, AMA ("Ask Me Anything") <i>Presenters: Michelle Hendricks, Denise Roth, Kristine Milburn, EdD, Brittany Schofield, Nicole Holman Lankelma</i> We have assembled a panel of ITAG Board of Director members with a range of experiences and backgrounds in the field. Audience members are welcome to bring their challenges, questions, and goals to present as questions - sharing from the audience is welcome, too!	Shelby Room

Breakout I	Empowering Gifted Minds: The Power of Cross-Age Mentorship <i>Presenters: Michelle Anderson, Erin Hoffman</i> We will explore relationships where older gifted students guide younger gifted peers to foster learning, social skills, and personal growth for both mentors and mentees.	Hancock Room
Breakout I	Advanced Learners' Perceptions of Teacher Efficacy <i>Presenter: Laurie Croft, PhD</i> Teachers are catalysts for the development of talent. Research, both contemporary and from previous years, suggests that in general education, as well as in gifted education programs, "the teacher—more than any other factor—has the greatest influence on student achievement" (Flynt and Brozo, 2009, p. 536). "Good teachers literally save lives...by loving students, helping them imagine the future, and insisting that they meet high expectations and standards" (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996, p. iii), and advanced learners appear to be more profoundly impacted by their teachers' attitudes and actions than other students (Dworkin, 1987). What do students' perceptions of their most influential teachers help us understand about teacher efficacy, as well as what some of our learners with the greatest potential believe?	Dallas Room
Breakout I	Lore From Gifted Land: Part 1 <i>Presenters: Kate Boonstra, Molly McConnell, Kyra Wilcox-Conley</i> <i>lore, (noun): a body of traditions and knowledge on a subject or held by a particular group, typically passed from person to person by word of mouth.</i> Have you ever heard a piece of information about gifted education and wondered if it's really right, or it's just <i>lore</i> being handed down? Molly, Kyra, and Kate will help you set the record straight with common examples and the research-backed truth.	Polk Room
3:00 - 3:15 pm	Snack Break and Door Prize Giveaway	
3:15-4:00	Breakout Sessions J: Potpourri	

Hands-On, Hands-In

Presenters: Varied

Breakout J

Still interested in exploring how technology and hands-on activities can be integrated into your G/T program? The presenters will be available for you to try out the tools and technology they use in their programs. Turing Tumblers, Micro Bits, Dash, OzoBots, assorted visual-spatial puzzles and games will be available to test out.

Convention
Center

Graduate Credit Session

Presenters: Todd Hodgkinson, PhD & Jolene Teske, EdD

Breakout J

Missed Monday's session about receiving graduate credits for the ITAG annual conference? Stop by and get information and registration information from Drake University Professor Dr. Hodgkinson or University of Iowa Professor Jolene Teske, EdD.

Marion Room

Newbies: Now What? Mentors/Mentee Networking

Presenters: Consultation format

Breakout J

Mentors will connect with you to discuss potential next steps following your recent learning experiences. They will schedule virtual meetings, answer any questions, and provide personalized support tailored to your individual needs.

Clayton Room

Lore From Gifted Land: Part 2...The One We Have Q & A

Breakout J

*Presenters: Molly McConnell, Kyra Wilcox-C
Boonstra*

**Thank you for attending
the 2024 ITAG
Annual Conference!!!**

You've heard the Lore, now the floor will be audience questions.

**HONORING THE PAST,
INSPIRING THE FUTURE**





**50
YEARS**
of reflection



Thank you for celebrating
50 years of ITAG with us!



Please use
this QR code
to complete
our after-
event survey:



Distinguished Service Award

Dr. Laurie Croft

Dr. Laurie Croft joined the Belin-Blank Center in August 1998, focusing on the needs of educators committed to developing their understanding of advanced learners and to earning the State of Iowa Talented and Gifted Endorsement. Dr. Croft's academic background included a



BA in History (Honors), as well as a secondary social studies teaching certificate, from Oklahoma State University, followed by a MA in History from the University of Oklahoma. She taught history and cultural geography at both Tulsa Community College and the University of Tulsa School for Gifted Children. Energized by two gifted daughters, she pursued a Ph.D. at the University of Tulsa in Educational Leadership, with an emphasis in gifted education.

In addition to developing and scheduling coursework for the TAG Endorsement, Dr. Croft had the opportunity to coordinate the Invent Iowa program early in her career, as well as facilitate the Advanced Placement Teaching Training Institute for many years. For over 20 years, she was the Advisor for the College of Education Honors

Opportunity Program. For the last decade of her career at the University of Iowa, she was also a Clinical Professor of Gifted Education in the College of Education Department of Teaching and Learning, teaching classes and workshops each semester and supervising the practicum experience needed for the TAG endorsement.

Dr. Croft provided keynote presentations at conferences in Lithuania, India, and Chile. She provided over 100 refereed presentations at state, national, and international conferences, often co-presenting with colleagues. As well, she was invited to present an additional 40 times at a variety of events and conferences. She authored multiple book chapters and contributions to a variety of publications.

Professional honors include:

- The Audrey Qualls Commitment to Diversity Award (2005)
- State of Iowa Board of Regents Staff Excellence Award, University of Iowa/Board of Regents (2008)
- Outstanding Honors Teacher, University of Iowa Honors Program (2009)
- Distinguished Member, The National Society of Collegiate Scholars (2011)
- Distinguished Service Award, National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC 2019)

Legacy Award

Dr. Nicholas Colangelo

Dr. Nicholas Colangelo is the Dean Emeritus of the College of Education, University of Iowa and the Director Emeritus, Belin-Blank Center. With David and Connie Belin and Myron and Jacqueline Blank, Nick founded the Belin-Blank Center and served as first director and first Blank Endowed Chair in Gifted Education.



Dr. Colangelo's career interests focused on the social-emotional needs of gifted students, believing that it is not the talent but the child behind the talent that is most important. He has also been a strong proponent of acceleration as the key intervention to meeting the academic and social-emotional needs of high-ability students. As a co-author of *A Nation Deceived* (2004), he and his colleagues helped bring the positive issues of acceleration to the nation and Iowa. Simply stated, advanced learners do better when challenged. His observation has been that in many schools across the nation, educators are more comfortable with advanced learners being bored than being challenged. Dr. Colangelo is a firm believer that students of exceptional abilities and motivation come from all walks of life. It has been a commitment of the Belin-Blank Center that

geography, economic background, ethnicity, gender, language at home and special needs should not limit the discovery and development of talent. While the Belin-Blank Center has been a national and international resource, it has also paid close attention to home.

Programs such as the Belin-Blank Fellowship Program and the Iowa Online Advanced Placement Academy have focused on the teachers and students of Iowa.

Dr. Colangelo and his wife Kay (a former private-practice therapist in Iowa City) are retired and live in Iowa City, where they have more time to visit their son, his wife, and two wonderful (and energetic) grandchildren. Kay is from North Carolina and Dr. Colangelo is from New York. In every meaningful way, Iowa is their home.

Professional honors include:

- International Award for Research, World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, Inc. (WCGTC), 2013
- Myron & Jacqueline Blank Professor of Gifted Education (1988-2015), The University of Iowa
- [Outstanding Honors for selected publication](#)

Legacy Award

Dr. Susan Assouline

Dr. Susan Assouline is University of Iowa Emeritus Director of the Belin-Blank Center, Emeritus Blank Endowed Chair in Gifted Education, and Emeritus Distinguished Professor of School Psychology.

Dr. Assouline's early career included service as a middle-school science teacher and school psychologist. Her interest in talent discovery and acceleration was launched in 1988 at Johns



Hopkins University as a postdoctoral fellow under the mentorship of Professor Julian Stanley. Throughout her 50+ years in education, her practice and research included talent discovery, academic acceleration, and twice-exceptionality. Research in twice-exceptionality is conducted in collaboration with Belin-Blank Center Director Dr. Megan Foley-Nicpon.

She co-edited with Dr. Nicholas Colangelo, Dr. Joyce VanTassel-Baska, and Ann Lupkowski-Shoplik, *A Nation Empowered: Evidence Trumps the Excuses Holding Back America's Brightest Students* (2015). She led the collaboration with Belin-Blank Center colleagues to co-develop *The Integrated Acceleration System* (a decision-making tool for academic acceleration).

Dr. Assouline influenced the development of the Assessment and Counseling Clinic, the Institute for Research and Policy on Acceleration, along with the acquisition of funding for the Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy. She expanded STEM programming and research for gifted students and educators, and for high ability students with disabilities.

Dr. Assouline has contributed much to ITAG. She has volunteered frequently for ITAG's annual conferences as a keynote or breakout presenter. She has supported the Center staff's participation in the conference over the years through their presentations and registrations. Under her direction, the center has contributed to our vendor, sponsorship, raffles, and scholarship opportunities. Dr. Assouline is also a previous ITAG board member!

Professional honors include:

- Myron and Jacqueline Blank Endowed Chair in Gifted Education (2015 – 2022), The University of Iowa
- NAGC Distinguished Scholar Award (2016)
- The University of Iowa Award for Faculty Excellence (2018)
- The University of Iowa Leadership in Research Award (2019)
- [Outstanding Honors for selected publications](#)

Administrator of the Year

Dr. Dan Butler

Dr. Dan Butler serves as the superintendent of the Western Dubuque County Community School District (WDCCSD), a role he has passionately embraced since 2022. Previously, he was a principal in WDCCSD, focusing on positive relationships with all members of the learning



community, high impact instructional techniques, building leadership capacity in others, and establishing successful school cultures. Prior to serving as an administrator, Dr. Butler taught third and fifth grades, as well as serving as a baseball and football coach. In addition to his responsibilities as a superintendent, Dr. Butler works as an adjunct professor in the Educational Leadership department at the University of Northern Iowa where he earned his doctoral degree.

Dr. Butler has been recognized for his contributions to education with numerous awards, including the Outstanding Dissertation Award in 2021 and as a finalist for the School Administrators of Iowa Elementary Principal of the Year in 2019 and 2020. In 2018, he received the University of Northern Iowa Educational Leadership Legacy Award, and in 2017, he

was named a bizTimes.biz Rising Star in the Dubuque area. For over six years, Dr. Butler co-moderated Iowa Educational Chat (#IAedchat), a weekly Twitter forum focused on current trends in education.

He recently published his first book, *Permission to be Great*, and has contributed several articles to *Principal Magazine* on topics such as digital leadership, literacy, productivity, and educator engagement. Dr. Butler and his wife, Johna, live in Iowa with their sons, Mason and Nolan. Learn more about Dr. Butler at danpbutler.com or follow him on various social media platforms: @danpbutler.

Check Out the 2024 ITAG Store for Customizable Apparel!



[Click Here to View the 2024 ITAG Store](#)



BE A MENTOR



YOUR ROLE:

- **PAIRED WITH A MENTEE**
- **SCHEDULED CHECK-INS**
- **LISTEN & SUPPORT**



ARE YOU NEW ?



ITAG CAN PROVIDE:

- **AN EXPERIENCED MENTOR**
- **SCHEDULED CHECK-INS**
- **LISTENING & SUPPORT**

ITAG
IOWA TALENTED AND GIFTED ASSOCIATION





Save the Date!

VIRTUAL SPRING WORKSHOP

APRIL 16, 2025

**HONORING THE PAST,
INSPIRING THE FUTURE**



Thank you to our 2024 Annual Conference Sponsors!

#2024ITAGAnnualConf

Platinum Sponsors



College of Education
Belin-Blank Center



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors

