Twice-Exceptional
2e Students

Director’s Meeting
March 2018
Presentation Objectives

- What is 2e?
- How do we support 2e students?
- How can I help my Districts/AU’s/BOCES expand their understanding to support 2e students?
So what is 2e?
What comes to mind when you hear the word GIFTED?

- High-achiever?
- Motivated?
- Perfect?
- Self-directed learner?
- Successful?
- Up for a challenge?
- Lead learner?
- Expert?
But what about all the gifted students who aren’t that….

From the work of Dr. George Betts there are 6 types of gifted:

The **SUCCESSFUL** (90% of identified GT population) and **AUTONOMOUS LEARNER** will be successful in school as they can play the game, perform, and even seek out opportunities for growth.

However, for the **CHALLENGING** (divergently gifted), the **UNDERGROUND** (wants to hide abilities), the **DROPOUTS** (who are angry, ignored), and the **2e** (double-labeled) school success if often a difficult thing to obtain.
2e (Twice-Exceptional)
CDE’s Definition of Twice-Exceptional

2e students are those who are:

- Identified as gifted according to state criteria in one or more of the categories of giftedness (cognitive, academic, creativity, leadership, psychomotor, or the arts)

AND

- Identified with a disability according to federal/state criteria and the disability qualifies them for either an IEP or a 504 plan.
Twice-exceptional students feel as if they are part of two worlds: one as a student with a disability and the other as a student with outstanding abilities.
The 2e Identification Dilemma
The “Just Try Harder” Profile

Students who are identified as gifted and have an undetected learning disability:

- These students may have a large vocabulary and excellent verbal abilities.
- Their handwriting and spelling abilities often contradict this
- Students in this category also achieve on grade level, thus causing their learning disability to be overlooked.
- Identification of their disabilities could offer these students an understanding of their academic difficulties and ease their frustration with school.
The “Just Average” Profile

Students who are twice-exceptional, however, are not identified gifted or with a disability:

- These students’ superior intelligence seems to compensate for their undiagnosed learning disability.
- They usually receive instruction in the general classroom and often perform at grade level, so no “red flags” are raised.
- These students are often functioning below their potential.
- Their abilities and disabilities “mask” each other.
- The talents of students in this group often emerge in specific content areas, becoming noticed later in life.
Profile #3

The “Can’t be Gifted” Profile

Students identified with a disability but their exceptional abilities are unrecognized or unidentified:

- They are identified more often than those in the previous two groups because they stand out in the classroom.

- These bright students often fail in school and are noticed because of their disability, not because of their talents.

- Because little attention is given to their strengths, these students become more aware of their difficulties in learning, feeling academic failure more often than success.

- Over time, this negative outlook on school can lead to disruptive classroom behavior and feelings of low self-concept.
The Paradox of 2e Students

**Strengths:**
- Superior vocabulary
- Highly creative
- Resourceful
- Curious
- Imaginative
- Questioning
- Problem-solving ability
- Sophisticated sense of humor
- Wide range of interests
- Special talent or consuming interest

**Challenges:**
- Easily frustrated
- Stubborn
- Manipulative
- Opinionated
- Argumentative
- Written expression
- Highly sensitive to criticism
- Inconsistent academic performance
- Lack of organization and study skills
- Difficulty with social interactions
How do we support our 2e students?
Four Essential Elements to Consider for 2e Students

- **Nurturing environment** - to encourage the development of their potential

- **Learning Strategies** - to meet their needs including curriculum that challenges their thinking and promotes high-level problem solving

- **Social and Emotional Support** - to help them develop an awareness of self and understanding of their own needs

- **Strength-based/ Interest-based Programming and Interventions** - to provide challenging learning opportunities in the child's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)
One of the most common characteristics of the twice-exceptional child is low self-esteem. They often disguise this low self-esteem through the use of one or more of the following behaviors:

- Anger
- Self-criticism
- Crying
- Disruption or Clowning
- Denial of problems
- Withdrawal
- Daydreaming and fantasy
- Apathy

It is important to remember that often **EFFORT ≠ SUCCESS** for the 2e Student.
Did you know that the brain feels before it thinks?

The amygdala (think 'fight or flight' part of the brain) receives stimuli 40 milliseconds before the cortex (the thinking part of the brain.) (LeDoux, 1996).

What this means is that stress impedes learning. It is imperative that we as educators connect with our students and work to create a learning environment for them that positively impacts their learning.

Our 2e students need a connection with a caring adult who will advocate for them to be successful.
Can’t “do” Blooms until Maslow’s is in check

MASLOW’S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Abraham Harold Maslow (April 1, 1908 - June 8, 1970) was a psychologist who studied positive human qualities and the lives of exemplary people. In 1954, Maslow created the Hierarchy of Human Needs and expressed his theories in his book, Motivation and Personality.

Self-Actualization - A person’s motivation to reach his or her full potential. As shown in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, a person’s basic needs must be met before self-actualization can be achieved.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

 BREATHING, FOOD, WATER, SEX, SLEEP, HOMEOSTASIS, EXCRETION

SAFETY

 SECURITY OF BODY, OF EMPLOYMENT, OF RESOURCES, OF MORALITY, OF THE FAMILY, OF HEALTH, OF PROPERTY

LOVE/BELONGING

FRIENDSHIP, FAMILY, SEXUAL INTIMACY

ESTEEM

SELF-ESTEEM, CONFIDENCE, ACHIEVEMENT, RESPECT OF OTHERS, RESPECT BY OTHERS

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

MORALITY, CREATIVITY, SPONTANEITY, PROBLEM SOLVING, LACK OF PREJUDICE, ACCEPTANCE OF FACTS

ABRAHAM MASLOW

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Areas educators need to watch for:

- Underachievement
- Perfectionism
- Procrastination
- Depression
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Interpersonal connections
We MUST focus on STRENGTHS

The essential element in meeting the educational needs of students who are 2e is providing instruction that emphasizes these students’ strengths and interests while remediating their learning deficits - **but focus on strengths first.**

- The self-concept scores of LD students who were also receiving gifted services were significantly higher than those receiving services for their learning disability only

- Adjust your programming to meet their strengths

- When students’ services included gifted programming that focused on their strengths, the self-concepts of students who are gifted/LD matched those of their nondisabled peers

https://www.world-gifted.org/WCGTC17-Presentations/3-4-5.pdf
Fundamentals of Dual Differentiated Curriculum

- Acceleration
- Affective Guidance & Counseling
- Teach Compensatory Strategies
- Strengths & Interests Accommodations
- Small Group Direct Instruction
- Challenges and Remediation Accommodations & Modifications
- Content Extension
- Higher Order Thinking Skills
- Specific Programs/Tutoring SPED
- Differentiated Instruction
What does strength-based mean?

Focusing on:
- The student’s ability, talents and interests
- Opportunities rather than problems
- Strengths more than weaknesses
- What we CAN do rather than what we can't do
What strength-based learning is NOT:

- Not as a way to get students to work on their areas of weakness
- Not as a way to get students to turn work in or otherwise overcome bad habits or poor behavior
- Not in the service of the disability (simply meaning that you don't focus on remediation)

*What you provide for the student is a change in programming for the sake of the strength itself!
Why provide strength-based programming?

• More *motivating* to come to school, do what you love and do well than drill on what you don’t love and can’t do well

• Offers a glimpse of a *future* centered around what students can do well, a possibility of a place in the world beyond school

• Strengthens the strengths of twice-exceptional students, who tend to use their strengths to *circumvent* their weaknesses

• More *successful* to encourage a strength than try to overcome a disability
Why is remediation alone not helpful for students who are gifted/LD?

Remediation offers few opportunities for a twice-exceptional child to demonstrate his or her gifts and talents and often focuses on weaknesses at the expense of developing gifts. This set of circumstances can result in low self-esteem, a lack of motivation, depression, and stress.
Factors contributing to the success of 2e students:

- Relationship with a caring adult
- Emphasis on pursuing students’ talents and interests in an authentic manner (i.e., as an end in itself)
- Integration of self-regulation and learning strategies
- Taking the time to really get to know the student (a.k.a. forming a relationship with a caring adult)

Reis, Neu, & McGuire, 1997; Baum & Owen, 2004
So now, how can you help your Districts/AU’s/BOCES expand their understanding to support 2e students?
Statewide 2e Course Offerings

**Level 1: Foundations of 2e**
- Full Online
- Hybrid
- Summer Institute

**Level 2: Growing Deeper in Knowledge of 2e**
- Full Online
- Hybrid
- Face-to-Face
- Summer Institute
Your teams will learn about....

- 2e Characteristics
- Social/Emotional Needs
- Identification/Talent Pool
- Strength-based Goals/Learning
- MTSS, Giftedness, and Collaboration
- Neurodiversity and the 2e student
- Looking Beyond Academics
- Ensuring Rigor
- Practice Case Studies

Participants create a “2e Toolbox” throughout their learning that is a powerful tool for advocacy beyond our courses.
Specific Modules

Autism Spectrum Disorder
SLD “The Dys’s”
ADHD
SED
Executive Function
Underachievement
Social/Emotional
The data shows that as we have increased awareness, built capacity, and developed advocates we are increasing our identification of 2e learners.

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<td>2015</td>
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<td>2017</td>
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Here is a district’s data who began working with our cadre in 2013 to provide professional development for their educators, administrators, special education providers, mental health staff, and GT support.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent of 2e students in this district</th>
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What do you think?
If your AU would like to have our cadre work with you to create a tailored project to meet your specific needs let’s talk...
Remember...

Our kids are normal. They just aren’t typical...

Jim Delisle
For questions about the Colorado Department of Education’s Twice-Exceptional Project please reach out to The 2e Cadre at:
303-866-6414

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Strength Based Programming
Deficit Thinking