



# Advocating for the Needs of Gifted and Talented Students

Whether a new or a seasoned parent of a Gifted/Talented or High Ability child, parents will come to quickly discover that advocacy is essential. Acting as an advocate for Gifted and Talented/High Ability students may come naturally for some while others must grow into this role. With proper support and guidance parents can help to reduce barriers, ensuring their child reaches their full potential.

Trying to figure out where to begin can be stressful for parents. First, parents can find out what their child enjoys and dislikes about school. Exploring how your child feels about their classwork and teacher can help to assess if they're being challenged. This can also help parents decide if they're fine with things staying as they are or if there's a need to step in. This can help to triage what needs should be first addressed.

There are various levels of advocating but all help to meet the needs of students. Parents of Gifted and Talented/High Ability students are sometimes required to advocate at the local, state, or national level. Studies show that strategies used in public relations can be valuable when spreading awareness. Networking with a committee made of up educators and parents can also help to garner community support.

Talking to teachers and administration can also help parents advocate for their child's needs. Parents can consult with their child's teachers to request screening or assessment for gifted/talented identification. Teachers, with the help from administration, may be able to determine if any additional services or accommodations are available. Parents can also share outside test results which may help validate claims and gain support.

Advocating for Gifted and Talented/High Ability students may require parents to plan, collaborate, communicate, and develop programs. This can be challenging for parents who are also learning how to navigate stereotypes and myths regarding gifted education. Finding community, whether online or local, can help to reduce feelings of judgement and isolation.

No matter where you find support, finding community can help advocacy efforts persist, especially when faced with obstacles. Finding a support group can also help to keep parents motivated during this journey. Advocating outside of the classroom can help to ensure your child feels supported and challenged inside of the classroom. The future of gifted education requires that parents, schools, and the community increase awareness and support of gifted education.

## Resources:

1. [Besnoy, K. \(2005\). Using Public Relations Strategies to Advocate for Gifted Programming in Your School. Gifted Child Today, 28\(1\), 32-37.](#)
2. [L. Advocating for your Gifted Child: 8 tips I Wish I Had Known. \(2018, January 18\).](#)
3. [Post, G. \(2021, May 13\). What Gifted Advocacy Is Not. Gifted Challenges.](#)