

BVPAGE evening meeting 11/28 – Sandra Johnson

Board attendance: Amy, Heidi, Jeannie, Tracy, Christy, Lisa, Erin, Cecilia

Approx. 62 attendees

- I. Introduction- Tracy Elford
- II. Speaker: Sandra Johnson – See website for link to power point presentation.
 - A. Additional Information during presentation
 - i. No Child Left Behind and the Achievement Gap: We need to address the achievement gap and bring up low performing kids but not by putting a ceiling on our high achieving kids.
 - ii. Excellence Gap: poverty and being a minority are preventing gifted kids from getting serviced. Does the gifted population mirror the improvements on other levels?
 - iii. International comparisons: America suffers greatly compared to the rest of the world. Some good signs in 4th grade but otherwise science and reading are trending down. Our nation has some one of the lowest proportions of high achieving kids despite parents being highly educated. We have work to do in the United States.
 - iv. National Level:
 - a. ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act: for the first time our federal education policy addresses gifted education- but doesn't require it. It just puts language in. Title 1 funding is for students – and MAY include gifted but doesn't have to. Title 2 funding is for professional development. ESSA also requires states to report out accountability on advanced students as well which is good because there is a serious lack of data. States can also now use funding for computer adaptive testing (similar to Blue Valley MAP testing) with no ceilings on results. Title also 2 requires funding for training gifted

teachers. It's a good start and a lot states are taking advantage of it.

b. JAVITS (Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act): Passed in 1988 it focuses on developing talent in schools and is dedicated specifically to gifted and talented. It funds research and innovative strategies and demonstration projects that are focused on the excellence gap. Every year its funding is threatened. NAGC advocates to keep it. We almost lost it this year again.

c. Secretary of Education DeVos: One positive coming from her is now, for the first time, gifted is included in competitive grants

d. NAGC (National Association for Gifted Children): \$59 to be a member annually. Johnson encourages parents to join to support gifted on a national level. You get a magazine and parenting tips including classroom advocacy. Tips are available on the website.

v. State of the States: We are not getting good data. We need more people advocating for better data and better representation on the state level. Kansas doesn't do any reporting on achievement or growth of gifted students. There is zero full time gifted staff at the KS Department of Ed. We need to petition for it. Get involved in KAGTC. Kansas ESSA plan needs improvement. The word gifted only appears twice but only in general statements. In Arkansas, the state requires a gifted Admin at each school who provides training annually to all staff. More people need to get involved in development of our ESSA. Be aware of the open forums.

vi. Equal Talents, Unequal Opportunities: Policy interventions and student outcomes. What is your state and district doing to tap into low-income, high-ability students. What are you doing for them

and are you seeing any results from it? We are doing a poor job across the nation of serving this population.

B. For more information you can contact Sandra direction at: sandraharoldjohnson@gmail.com.

III. Questions

A. What do you see in the future for education? Education will change a lot over the next 10 years. It will be a lot more individualized and student led but we need to keep giving gifted kids the chance to gather together.

B. Why don't some lawmakers understand the need for more support? We need to research our elected officials better before we elect them or we end up with people who aren't educated enough. BVAPGE should send a questionnaire to elected officials. Do your homework.

C. What is being done about the dropping national reading and science scores? We have a new generation of science standards to hopefully address the science end. Some states are addressing them but it's not being mandated federally. It's more on the state level especially under a Republican led federal government so we have to work with our own states to make change.

D. What about the kids who don't quite make the gifted cut? You need to work collaboratively with the teachers. Start with the teachers. The parents who don't participate are the issue so don't worry about get involved. Just because they're not labeled doesn't mean they don't have needs. Stay positive and flexible and don't be adversarial.

IV. Closing

A. Reminder to there will be a BVPAGE meeting on Friday, Dec. 1st focusing on fostering creativity.