

BLACK SMART: EXAMINING A GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM'S OUTREACH AND
ENGAGEMENT TO EMPOWER PARENTS OF GIFTED BLACK STUDENTS

A Record of Study

by

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explored the effectiveness of outreach efforts to increase parent referrals of potentially gifted Black students at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Black students are underrepresented in gifted education and overrepresented in special education. Historically, Black-parent referrals for gifted testing have been low at Hylo Park Intermediate School. In order to increase referrals from Black parents, the parent referral process for gifted education was simplified, and Black parents were provided opportunities to engage with the campus gifted education coordinator about the gifted education–testing process. Data were gathered in order to understand Black parents’ concerns and beliefs about gifted education. Qualitative data collected from parents revealed that Black parents had questions and concerns about preparing for testing, perceived negative and positive behaviors, and future opportunities for their children. The gifted and talented parent nomination process was shared with parents on the campus website and social media platforms. Parents were also invited to attend a gifted and talented information night. Data and analytics were collected in order to determine the effect of increased parent outreach. Results showed a significant increase in Black parent referrals for gifted and talented testing in 2019 following the outreach efforts.

DEDICATION

Chris, Mom, Zayden, Cameron—love you all! The struggle was real.

Thank you, Lanora—I could not have completed this process without you!

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NOMENCLATURE

ADHD	attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder
AP	Advanced Placement
AVID	Advancement Via Individual Determination
CogAT	Cognitive Abilities Test
CRT	critical race theory
ESL	English as a second language
GT	gifted and talented
GT Equity	Equity in Gifted/Talented Education
IQ	intelligence quotient
ISD	independent school district
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
NNAT	Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test
OTL	opportunity to learn
prek–12	prekindergarten through 12th grade
ROS	record of study
RTI	response to intervention
PSAT	Preliminary SAT
SAC	special assignment class
SES	socioeconomic status
STAAR	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
STEM	science-technology-engineering-math
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TTCT	Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: LEADERSHIP CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE ACTION

Teachers in Waters Independent School District (ISD) are burdened by pressure to get students to meet state standards and pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exams. Professional development and faculty meetings often focus on remediation of “bubble kids”—students who fall below the state requirements for passing STAAR. Given the pressure of this accountability, coupled with increasing negative classroom behaviors, many teachers often overlook advanced students for recommendation to gifted and talented (GT) programming. This record of study (ROS) examines the causes of low gifted enrollment in Waters ISD and explores solutions for increasing Black enrollment.

National Context

In 1987, the Texas Legislature mandated that all school districts identify and serve gifted students at all grade levels. As a result, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) created the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* in 1990 and has updated it in the decades since. The plan offers an outline of services “without prohibitive regulation” (TEA, 2019, p. 1)—meaning that the plan should serve as a guide to school districts, not as a list of mandated requirements.

The state mandates that all schools must identify and serve gifted students at all grade levels. Teachers who serve gifted students are required to receive a minimum of 30 hr of professional development in gifted education. There are no uniform assessments or entry requirements; each school district may create its own identification guidelines. However, the state did create assessment recommendations for school districts. TEA recommends that districts

collect data from at least three measures and assess each area of giftedness. Normed assessments, informal classroom observations, and portfolios should be used to identify students who have general intellectual ability, academic aptitude, and arts, creativity, and leadership qualities. TEA recommends that identification and placement for GT programs should be made by a well-qualified and well-trained committee (TEA, 2019).

The 2019 update to the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* includes approximately 100 accountability standards. The standards focus on five areas of gifted programming: fidelity of services, student assessment, service design, curriculum and instruction, professional learning, and family/community involvement. Accountability Standard 2.25 recommends that “the population of the gifted/talented services program [be] closely reflective of the population of the total district and/or campus” (TEA, 2019, p. 6). Across Texas, school districts are struggling to increase underserved minority-student representation in GT programs and ensure that minority-student enrollment in the programs reflects the general-student population. When minority-student enrollment does not reflect the school’s population (disproportionality), Black students are affected. All students deserve access to an education that fits their academic needs, and the strengths of gifted Black students must be recognized.

Situational Context

This ROS examines the gifted education program of a school in a suburb of Houston, Texas. For anonymity purposes, the school district is referred to as Waters ISD. The school is referred to as Hylo Park Intermediate School.

Demographics

There are approximately 45,000 students enrolled in Waters ISD. The district serves prekindergarten through 12th-grade (preK–12) students who live in Houston. Student demographics are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Student Demographics of Waters ISD and Hylo Park Intermediate School

Ethnicity	Waters ISD percent of population	Hylo Park percent of population
African American	28.7	42
American Indian	1.3	0
Asian	12.3	9
Hispanic	52.7	40
Pacific Islander	0.1	1
White	4.1	6
Two or more races	0.7	1
Free or reduced lunch	82.6	84
Bilingual / English as a second language (ESL)	43	30

Note. Data are from TEA (2018).

Gifted Education in Waters Independent School District

The goal of the Waters ISD Advanced Academics Department is to provide “differentiated instruction and opportunities for students to elaborate, think originally, think flexibly, and produce new ideas as they become self-directed learners who are competent in thinking, research, and communications” (Waters ISD, 2002–2021). Two of the district’s 25 elementary campuses house a GT program for students in second through fourth grades. Students in kindergarten and first grade receive services at their home campus. There are six intermediate

campuses in the district, each with a GT program that provides services to fifth and sixth graders. Waters ISD has four high schools, each of which offers up to 35 Advanced Placement (AP) courses depending on enrollment. Waters ISD provides a variety of advanced programming for students.

Hylo Park Intermediate School

Hylo Park Intermediate School houses fifth- and sixth-grade students. With approximately 1,300 students enrolled in Hylo Park Intermediate School, its demographics reflect the district's enrollment. There is one gifted class in fifth grade and one gifted class in sixth grade. Given the school's low gifted enrollment, students with significant behavioral difficulties and academic deficits are placed in the gifted classes as "filler" students. These students are selected by the administration team and are placed in the gifted classes to balance enrollment. Currently, there are 60 fifth and sixth graders identified as academically and/or creatively gifted at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Of the 60 students, 8% are identified as Black. Representing less than 4% of the population, gifted Black students are dramatically underrepresented at Hylo Park Intermediate School.

Educator, Student, and Special Population Data

Hylo Park Intermediate School's teacher and gifted education demographics have shifted significantly over the past two decades. In 2002, 14% of students were identified as gifted. Fifty-two percent of teachers identified as White, and 36% percent of teachers identified as Black. In 2019, 9% of teachers identified as White, and 61% percent of teachers identified as Black. While the number of Black teachers has increased, the number of Black students identified as gifted has significantly decreased. Furthermore, the Black and Hispanic populations have remained

relatively unchanged since 2002. Table 2 summarizes these teacher demographics, student demographics, and gifted education demographics.

Table 2

Teacher and Student Demographics at Hyllo Park Intermediate School

Year	Black teachers	White teachers	Hispanic teachers	Asian teachers	Other teachers	Gifted students	Free and reduced lunch
2002	36%	51%	11.6%	1.4%	0%	14.8%	58%
2019	61%	9%	13%	1%	1%	4.3%	84%

Relevant History and Significance of the Problem

At the foundation of gifted education identification are racially biased intelligence quotient (IQ) tests (Terman, 1916). In the early 1900s, Alfred Binet, creator of the Binet-Simon intelligence scale, was commissioned by France to determine a way to differentiate students of normal intelligence from students of low intelligence with the goal to provide special services to struggling students and raise them to the same level as their typical peers (Frank, 2018). Alfred Binet’s scale was not intended to rank, classify, or identify intelligence. However, Binet’s intelligence scale is often used to rank and classify potentially gifted students.

Binet and Simon (1916) created a series of tests used to measure memory, verbal knowledge, paper cutting, drawing, word recognition, suggestibility, execution of commands, and visual perception. Children were ranked based on performance, and age-based norms were created based on students’ average performance. However, Binet (1916) stated that “the mark of intelligence is therefore not made nor can it be made as one measures height” (p. 243). Binet and Simon (1916) emphasized that IQ is malleable and should only be compared among children of the same background and education. Unfortunately, psychologists disregarded Binet’s warning

and erroneously used his research. This disregard led to the creation of an inaccurate and invalid IQ test.

Lewis Terman, a former American Psychological Association president and Stanford professor, is often referred to as the “father of gifted education” (Warne, 2019, p. 1). Despite Binet and Simon’s warnings, Terman misused and relied on Binet’s scale to create what is now considered the standard IQ test, the Stanford-Binet intelligence test. In 1916, Terman utilized Binet and Simon’s (1916) scale and normed it with a large group of American middle-class White children. Predictably, Terman found that Whites have a higher IQ than Blacks, Hispanics, and immigrants. He concluded the differences in IQ between races to be caused by uncontrollable genetic differences (Binet & Simon 1916). Terman used their research to support the idea of meritocracy and advocated “using intelligence tests to help guide vocational placement, with higher scoring children being suggested for more prestigious jobs and lower scoring children being suggested for factory work” (Warne, 2019, p. 5). Terman hoped that his views on IQ and research would serve as inspiration for the eugenics movement. The movement, he expected, would help with “curtailing the reproduction of feeble-mindedness and in the elimination of an enormous amount of crime, pauperism, and industrial inefficiency” (Terman, 1916, p. 7). Terman’s philosophies spurred eugenic theories that advocated forced sterilization, institutionalization, and racism.

Intelligence Quotient and Gifted Education

IQ tests created in the 1900s were based on flawed racist ideologies. Therefore, determining classroom placement based on an assessment designed for Blacks to fail is inequitable. IQ test scores were once used to prove that Blacks and other minorities have innate genetic deficiencies and, therefore, are intellectually inferior to Whites (Ford, 2008, p. 108).

While these views are now largely unaccepted, these stereotypes are still reflected in traditional IQ-based assessments. The Stanford-Binet intelligence test is one of the most widely used IQ assessments for identifying gifted students (Warne, 2019).

Students of African American, Hispanic, and Native American descent receive lower scores on achievement and aptitude tests than their White and Asian peers (Peters & Engerrand, 2016, p. 159). Cognitive ability scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress and scores on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination have shown Black students to score half a standard deviation lower than their White peers (Peters & Engerrand, 2016, p. 159). In Waters ISD, cognitive assessments determine if a student can continue the testing process. Specifically, Waters ISD utilizes the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Iowa Assessments, and Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT).

Critical race theory (CRT), a theory examining race and racism in society, identifies the power structures that have engrained racism into our society (Peters & Engerrand, 2016). CRT offers explanations on why these discrepancies in assessment exist, such as opportunity, systematic oppression, and centrality of Whiteness. Peters and Engerrand (2016) focused on Black-student educational experiences and their opportunity to learn (OTL). Peters and Engerrand (2016) believed that these inequalities exist because of systematic inequality of educational OTL. They argued that gifted achievement tests do not measure a student's knowledge; they simply measure their exposure to the curriculum.

Opportunity to Learn

OTL is a composite variable that was first introduced to compare nations on international achievement tests (Peters & Engerrand, 2016). The metric was created to determine if students' poor performance was caused by deficits or if students had not been adequately exposed to the

content. Curriculum, school facilities, and preschool learning opportunities can contribute to differential OTL (Peters & Engerrand, 2016, p. 161).

The variability in quality and quantity of preschools can have a negative effect on OTL (Peters & Engerrand, 2016). Families with higher incomes spend approximately 500% more on daycare, preschool, and early educational experiences than lower-income families (Peters & Gentry, 2010). Children from higher-income families often enter school with twice as much education as their lower-income peers (Peters & Engerrand, 2016, p. 161). Additionally, children of high-earning, professional parents are exposed to approximately 3 times as many words in their home as children who live in households receiving government assistance (Peters & Engerrand, 2016). These factors of quality and quantity of education lead to students from higher-socioeconomic-status (SES) households having almost twice the amount of formal education compared to their lower-SES peers. Intelligence tests are normed by grade, not educational background. Therefore, a 6-year-old with 4 years of formal schooling will be compared to a 6-year-old with only 1 year of formal schooling. For this reason, students with the most OTL often outperform their lower-SES peers during GT assessments. Consequently, students from lower-income households may not be correctly identified as gifted.

Twenty-seven percent of Black students live in poverty and likely have limited access to high-quality preschool and early educational experiences (Institute, 2019). As a result, many Black students enter school with 2 times less education than their peers (Institute, 2019). Consequently, Black students are also likely to be misidentified on gifted assessments.

Texas Referral and Assessment Guidelines

The State of Texas has acknowledged that racial disparities exist in gifted education programs in Texas (Olenchak, 2006). Seeking to further research the cause of this

underrepresentation, TEA created the Equity in Gifted/Talented Education (GT Equity) project to provide guidance, tools, and resources that can be used to inform school districts about gifted education (www.gtequity.org). The materials and resources for educators of gifted students and gifted education leaders are housed on the GT Equity website, which was created in 2008 and has not been updated since.

The website encourages school districts to provide professional development on recognizing characteristics of culturally diverse students before the gifted nomination window opens. It supplies slideshow presentations to use during professional development and a worksheet that schools can use to analyze enrollment equity in their GT programs (www.gtequity.org). A document with recommendations for identifying and teaching underrepresented students is also included in the online materials. This document has a chart comparing the diverse manifestations of giftedness in students. A sample of the chart is shown in Table 3 (TEA, 2008–2020).

Table 3

Traits of GT Students in Poverty (Modified from TEA [2008–2020])

Traditional perceptions of a GT student	Traits of an impoverished GT student
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does not want to move on to other tasks when present task is not finished ● Has intrinsic motivation ● Is assertive and stubborn in beliefs and actions ● Takes calculated risks ● Engages in adventures, speculative thinking ● Challenges authority ● Uses questioning characteristics that lead to nonconformity and lack of inhibition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has low self-image about academic performance ● Has higher self-image out of school ● Lacks self-control ● Is aggressive in beliefs and actions ● Takes risks without thinking about the consequences ● Challenges system fairness ● Conforms based on relationships within the peer group

The GT Equity website contains outdated materials for gifted-student educators and GT program leaders. Despite TEA’s ability to recognize that inequities in GT education exist, there has not been a significant gain in minority enrollment in Texas gifted education programs. Since 2004, Black students have accounted for 14% of the student population in Texas schools. However, these same students only account for approximately 6% of students enrolled in gifted programs (TEA, 2019). The gifted Black-student population should reflect the population of the school.

Alarming, the GT Equity website (www.gtequity.org) frequently references Ruby Payne’s poverty framework. The site also provides readers with a direct link to purchase her 2005 book, *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. Professional development materials created by Ruby Payne propose that poverty brings with it several key issues that relate to the difficulties districts have in identifying GT students who are economically disadvantaged. The issues are: lack of language, understanding middle class rules of school, and avoidance of academic rigor (Olenchak, 2006). Payne’s misinterpretation of poverty is based on destructive deficit-thinking mindsets (Bomer et al., 2008). Bomer et al. (2008) found Payne’s framework to be contradicted by anthropological and sociological research on poverty. Furthermore, these beliefs contribute to the underrepresentation of Blacks in gifted education. Payne asked teachers to adopt unfounded negative stereotypes of poor adults and students. The belief by educators that student success is outside of control leads to lower expectations for lower-income minority students. As a consequence of lower expectations for lower-income minority students, poor students are more likely to be placed in lower tracks and lower-ability groups in school (Bomer et al., 2008).

Furthermore, TEA's GT Equity project has declined to specifically address the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education, instead utilizing Ruby Payne's framework to examine how poverty relates to the underrepresentation (Olenchak , 2006). In order to address the racial disparities that exist in gifted education, we must directly address the systemic racial inequities in gifted education.

History of Gifted Education at Hylo Park Intermediate School

Since the opening of Hylo Park Intermediate School, the science specialist has served as the gifted education coordinator. The role of science specialist is to monitor and evaluate the science curriculum at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Additionally, for 20 years, the person in this role has served as the GT coordinator—identifying, assessing, and monitoring the gifted education programs and students at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Until her retirement last year, the science specialist and GT coordinator was solely responsible for identifying gifted students on campus. Prior to her departure, she trained the new gifted education coordinator (me) on gifted assessments, analyzing data, and student selection. Her brief training was the only training I received until the next school year. Therefore, I initially felt unprepared and underqualified to perform such a complex job.

Research Questions

During brief conversations with parents in my role as gifted education coordinator at Hylo Park Intermediate School, it became clear to me that parents were unaware of the school's gifted education program. Parents were not equipped to refer and advocate for their potentially gifted children. After initial interviews with parents, I explored and implemented methods to effectively communicate the mission of the gifted education program at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Throughout the process, I continually sought feedback from parents to ensure that the

school was effectively communicating information about the gifted program. Ensuring open and clear communication among stakeholders should be a priority in schools with lower-income populations. Therefore, the following questions guided my research:

1. What effect does a simplified, accessible, GT nomination form have on parent nominations?
2. What questions, concerns, and beliefs do Black parents have about the GT program and about the identification process at Hylo Park Intermediate School?
3. What effect does hosting a parent information night have on GT nominations at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

Researcher's Roles and Personal Histories

Throughout my entire doctoral journey, I have balanced being an educator, a student, a spouse, and the mother of an 8-year-old and a 7-year-old. My supportive husband, Christopher, and I have been married for 10 years. I currently reside in Richmond, Texas, where I work as a technology integration specialist for Waters ISD. Prior to moving to Houston, I lived and taught grades two through five in Las Vegas, Nevada. I moved to Las Vegas to attend the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. There, I achieved a Bachelor of Elementary Education and a Master of Educational Psychology. I briefly attended the University of Nevada, Las Vegas as an educational psychology doctoral student.

Despite growing up in a poverty-stricken single-family home, my childhood was filled with love and many positive memories. My mother always instilled the importance of two life pillars: God and reading. To her, it was impossible to know God without reading the Bible. Naturally, I was able to read by the time I was 3 years old.

I was raised in San Bernardino, California, a city known for drugs, sex trafficking, and violent crime. My mother, who did not complete high school until she was 30, was forced to work low-paying jobs. By the time I was in sixth grade, I had attended more than 13 inner-city schools. Our family finally gained a sense of stability when my mother graduated from college when I was 12.

Academically, I excelled in school. In elementary school, I was identified as gifted. In order to keep me engaged, my teachers allowed me to grade other students' papers and write on the whiteboard. I was always labeled as "smart." The teachers felt that because I had mastered grade-level material early on, I had nothing to learn. Unfortunately, I quickly learned that "smart" is relative to the context in which a student resides.

Later, we moved to a middle-class suburb in California. During the school enrollment process, my new school noted that I was enrolled in the GT program at my previous school. I was subsequently placed in the middle school gifted cluster at my new school.

I struggled—not only academically, but emotionally as well. I was no longer the smart one. In fact, compared to my gifted White classmates, I was not smart at all. I quickly realized that education across the United States is not fair or equal. To me, Black smart was not as good as White smart.

My experiences as a Black youth inspired me to teach in Title I schools in Texas and Nevada. I spent years providing support to students who struggled academically and emotionally.

Journey to the Problem

When I enrolled in Texas A&M University, I intended to continue my focus on struggling Black male students, and throughout my master's education, I focused on their reading motivation. I created an after-school reading program for struggling students to

experience books about Black historical figures and included characters who looked like they did and experienced similar upbringings. My program was successful, but I felt unfulfilled.

I expected that my doctoral interests would mirror my master's thesis. One day, while writing a paper with disparaging statistics, I grew frustrated with the constant emphasis on remediation, recovery, and intervention. I reflected on my childhood, and I remembered that not all Black students need remediation. However, it is the sole focus of education in my district and in many districts across the country. Ever since, I have been determined to prove that Black smart and White smart are the same.

I am both the instructional technology specialist and gifted education coordinator at Hylo Park Intermediate School, with the 2018–2019 school year being my first year as the gifted education coordinator. My role is to recruit, identify, and retain gifted students on the campus. The gifted program in Waters ISD is housed within the Advanced Academics Department. The Advanced Academics Department oversees the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) college-readiness program, pre-AP/AP program, and testing of the Preliminary SAT (PSAT), SAT, and ACT. There is one advanced academics coordinator and one advanced academics specialist who oversee the development of all of the Advanced Academics Department programs in Waters ISD.

Significant Stakeholders

In 1977, the United Negro College Fund used the slogan “a mind is a terrible thing to waste and erase” to increase donations to its campaign (Tucker, 2002). Without intervention, Waters ISD will continue to waste and erase the minds and futures of gifted students in the district. Gifted students have a right to an appropriate education that meets their individual needs.

When gifted students' talents are unrecognized in the classroom, their boredom often leads to classroom misconduct (Yaluma, 2018). Black-student suspensions, expulsions, and special education enrollment are disproportionately high. Black students are more likely to be diagnosed with a learning disability or emotional disturbance than other races (Gatlin & Wilson, 2016). They are also 3 times more likely to be suspended and 3.5 times more likely to be expelled from school than their White peers (Pena, Bessette, Tate, & Fingerhut, 2019). Suspending a student, even one time, doubles their risk of dropping out of high school (Jones, 2018). When high-achieving poor and minority students have less access to gifted programs than their nonminority peers, already existing inequalities may be exacerbated.

Yaluma (2018) explained the significance of gifted education in schools with lower-income populations when he stated, "For tomorrow's leaders to reflect the diversity of our country, today's elementary and middle schools must cultivate high-ability kids from diverse backgrounds, and gifted programming in high-poverty schools plays an important role" (p. 7).

The parents and students in Waters ISD rely on the Advanced Academics Department to identify and provide services to gifted students in the school district. Gifted education coordinators like myself are the gatekeepers of the gifted education program on our campuses. We are solely responsible for recruiting, identifying, and assessing potentially gifted students.

Waters ISD Advanced Academics Department oversees several programs within the district. The department is responsible for organizing PSAT/SAT/ACT tests, the AVID program, and AP exams. There are more than 45,000 students enrolled in the district. With only two staff members, the Advanced Academics Department is unquestionably understaffed. Because of a lack of central staffing, specific timelines, and referral processes, student identification is determined at the campus level. However, the district provides specialists a diagram that shows

the steps specialists should take to identify a potentially gifted students (Appendix A). As the gifted education coordinator at Hylo Park Intermediate School, I hope to implement campus-based programs that will positively impact the students and staff at my school.

Important Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions are used:

Critical race theory (CRT): A recent and still developing framework based on the notion that racism is normal and not unusual in United States society.

Deficit thinking: Belief that a “child’s social, cultural, or economic environment [is] the root cause for the child’s failure to achieve in school” (Bruton & Robles-Piña, 2009).

Gifted assessment: Tests given to students to determine their eligibility for gifted services; Iowa Assessments, CogAT, Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT), and TTCT are commonly administered qualification assessments in Texas.

Gifted education / gifted and talented (GT) programming: Special practices, pedagogy, procedures, and theories used in the education of students with perceived higher academic abilities than their peers (TEACH, 2018).

Gifted education coordinator: Waters ISD position responsible for recruiting gifted students, providing training to staff, and serving as a liaison between the district and the campus; the coordinator position is in addition to the individual’s primary role on campus.

Intelligence quotient (IQ): A measure of a person’s reasoning ability.

Upstander parent: A parent who “look[s], listen[s], and take[s] action on behalf of their children, going the extra mile to ensure their children get the education they need and deserve” (Grantham & Collins, 2013, p. 1).

Closing Thoughts on Chapter I

My childhood ideology of Black smart versus White smart is unfortunately a negative perspective held by countless students, educators, and philosophers. Ford and Whitling (2011) found fewer than 2% of journal articles to focus on gifted minority learners. Despite the data showing clear Black underrepresentation in gifted programs in Waters ISD, I have yet to attend a professional development meeting or training that addresses the blatant inequities in the district. I hope that this ROS will serve as a catalyst for change in the gifted education program in my school and district.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIP

Historical Background

Hereditarianism and Deficit Thinking

The United States education system was founded on the idea that Whites were entitled to an education, but Blacks were not. From the inception of the nation's education system, Blacks, when given the opportunity to attend school, were given a curriculum emphasizing good behavior and preparation for a life of manual labor (Rury, 2005). In the 1700s, Protestants believed it their duty to proselytize and convert untamed African slaves; hence, the very first schools created for African Americans intended on teaching to Blacks the skills they were believed to lack by Whites—morality and proper behavior (Rury, 2005). Unfortunately, the current United States education system still reflects these values today.

Theories on deficit thinking hold the idea that Black students are often reared in a culture that is inadequate and substandard relative to socialization and education (Ford, 1996). The United States education system is rooted in the belief that Blacks are not only different, but inferior. Jensen (1969), a widely recognized and accepted psychologist, conjectured that Blacks score lower than Whites on intelligence tests because of genetics. Jensen used the genetic pathology model to argue that Blacks are less intelligent than Whites. Jensen (1969) believed any type of variance in Black test scores to be caused by racial admixture. Scholars still exist who support Jensen's claim (Warne, 2019).

Valencia (2010) believed that the United States' subtle but influential beliefs in hereditarianism has caused many to develop deficit-thinking ideologies. Deficit-thinking theory

“contributes the child’s social, cultural, or economic environment as the root cause for the child’s failure to achieve in school” (Bruton & Robles-Piña, 2009). Deficit thinking postulates that students, their parents, and their environment are the root causes for student failure, leaving teachers and structures blameless.

Deficit-thinking was widely accepted until the 1980s, and traces of it still influences the nation’s education system. Influential educators such as Ruby Payne created an instructional model built on the “deficit-thinking premise that minority students live in a culture of poverty that does not prepare students to survive in middle class society” (Valencia, 2010). She described people experiencing poverty as violent, addiction-prone, and ineffective in communication. She asserted that families living in poverty do not value education the same way that middle- and upper-class families do. Her deficit-thinking ideology poses danger in sociopolitical, educational, and social contexts. Bomer and Dworin (2008) examined the content of Ruby Payne’s claims and existing research on low-income families and individuals. Their critical analysis of Payne’s claims revealed her statements to be “contradicted by anthropological, sociological, and other research on poverty” (p. 2498). As a consequence of adopting her framework, schools and teachers may set lower expectations for low-income students and are more likely to place them in lower-ability groups and classes (Bomer & Dworin, 2008). Placement in lower-ability groups and classes will often limit a student’s access to academically rigorous courses and programs.

Brown v. Board of Education

The 1954 Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* declared racial separation in schools unconstitutional. After the decision, though, school districts began tracking efforts to ensure that schools maintained a system of separate education (Losen, 1999). Students

were grouped into tracks (academic, vocational, or general), that dictated their course selections and opportunities. Minority students were disproportionately placed in vocational tracks, while Whites were primarily placed in academic groups (Miller, 2018). To eliminate tracking in schools, Title VI was passed as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI prohibits discrimination in ability groups and tracking students. However, despite attempts to end tracking practices, gifted programs remain the most segregated educational programs in the United States (Ford, 1995). Through de facto segregation, Black students are still systematically denied access to gifted education services.

No Child Left Behind

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) changed the way that schools were evaluated. After its enactment, school districts across the country sought ways to ensure that their disadvantaged students received an adequate education. Standardized test scores became the primary and ultimate measure of a school's success. The federal government set a seemingly unattainable goal—100% of students would perform at grade level on state math and reading assessments (Ravitch, 2016, p. 16). This unachievable goal changed the structure of schools in the United States.

One purpose of NCLB was to “clos[e] the achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers” (Lonsen, 2003). NCLB required schools to analyze test scores by gender, racial/ethnic group, English proficiency, and household income. Pressure to “close the achievement gap” required school districts to shift their attention to low-performing students.

Schools where underachievement is most ubiquitous are likely to be located in low-income, high-minority neighborhoods. Most Black students in large cities attend schools where at least 70% of the student population is considered low-income (*National equity atlas*, 2018). The priority of most of these schools is to assist struggling students, so gifted students of color are likely to be unnoticed. Despite belief, “intellectual talent cannot survive educational neglect and apathy” (Loveless, 2008). To avoid continued disproportional representation of minorities in gifted education, school districts must reexamine their assessment and identification practices.

Every Student Succeeds Act

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed in 2015. The ESSA revised and replaced NCLB. ESSA requires all school districts to disaggregate their student achievement data at each achievement level. Previously, states were only required to report detailed information on students performing at or below grade level. However, ESSA requires states to include information on students achieving at the advanced level. ESSA also allowed schools to use Title 1 funds to identify and service gifted students. ESSA also removed the federal universal goal that every student in every school be proficient in reading and math.

Alignment with Action Research Traditions

Action research “involves participants conducting inquiry into their own practices in order to improve learning practices and programs” (Hines et al., 2016). The goal of action research is to solve a problem. Traditional research on education is often conducted by an academic or trained researcher outside of the classroom. Their research findings and recommendations are often given authority over a practicing educator, and their suggestions are often impractical and propose theory-driven solutions. In contrast, action research is conducted by educators in the classroom. The goal of action research is to attempt to satisfy both the needs

and wants of educators (McAteer, 2013, p. 10). As the gifted education coordinator on my campus, I am employing action research by providing practical, purposeful, theory-driven solutions.

Action research is constructivist, situational, practical, systematic, and cyclical (Efron & Ravid, 2013, p. 7). Efron and Ravid (2013) defined six steps of the action research process:

1. Identify an issue or problem. Cuban (2001) recommended that researchers distinguish between a problem and a dilemma. A dilemma is “intractable and requires managing through negotiating trade-offs” (Cuban, 2001, p. 16). A problem should be clear, framed, and solvable.
2. Gather background information. Researchers must link theory to practice. A literature review familiarizes the researcher with the topic of study. Professional journals, books, conference papers, and media reports can be used to gather background information.
3. Design the study and plan. Researchers should create a realistic plan that can be implemented. The boundaries and constraints should be identified, and the researcher should ensure that their practice is not negatively affected by the research. The plan should include the approach/method, site of the study, and participants.
4. Collect data. Researchers can utilize a variety of data collection methods: interviews, observations, surveys, artifacts, and assessment. The type of problem being solved should help the researcher determine the most effective data collection strategy.
5. Analyze and interpret data. The goal of qualitative data analysis is to “bring meaning and order to the mass collected data by looking for reoccurring themes, categories,

and patterns” (Efron & Ravid, 2013, p. 166). After preparing the data, they are sorted into themes, synthesized, and interpreted in order to bring meaning.

6. Write, share, and implement solution. Researchers can share their findings in a formal paper, conference presentation, poster, or guide. If the researcher intends to have a wider impact on practice, they may publish their findings in a peer-reviewed journal.

Theoretical Framework

This ROS uses some ideas of CRT as a framework for examining the problem of underrepresentation of Black students in gifted education. However, CRT rejects the idea that race relations in the United States can improve (Dixson & Anderson, 2017). Critical race theorists often discourage open and structured conversations with outsiders (Subotink, 1998). However, I contend that Black-student underachievement and underrepresentation in gifted education *can* improve and that *all* educators and scholars must collaborate to increase representation.

Critical Race Theory

CRT is a recent and still developing framework based on the notion that racism is normal and not unusual in United States society. Because racism is so “enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people this culture” (Delgado, 1995). The overlying objective of CRT is to expose racism and propose radical solutions for addressing it (Ladson-Billings, 1999).

CRT “portrays dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, color blindness, and meritocracy as camouflages for the self-interest of powerful entities of society” (Tate, 1997, p. 235). As a dominant culture, Whites are better able to use their political and material resources to protect their educational experiences. CRT states that many of the civil rights policies and

legislation passed in the United States may appear to benefit Blacks, but that they actually further contribute to educational inequality. Even though the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education* made school segregation illegal, neighborhoods quickly began to experience “White flight,” the mass exodus of Whites from a neighborhood. Along with White flight came the loss of educational opportunities, funding, and staffing (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2017, p. 19). After desegregation, school districts attempted to entice White families to stay in their neighborhood schools. For example, Buffalo, New York was considered a model for school desegregation. After schools in Buffalo desegregated, Black and Latino/a academic performance failed to improve, so desegregation leadership provided the district extra funding for magnet schools and extended programs predominately comprising White children. Ladson-Billings and Tate (2017) argued that a desegregation program is considered a model if it “ensures that [W]hites are happy (and do not leave the system altogether) regardless of whether African-American and other students of color achieve or remain” (p. 56). Consequently, Black-student achievement is not a priority for desegregation.

CRT sees the school curriculum “as a culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 18). School policies and procedures are created to regulate cultural expressions of Blacks, thereby validating the belief that Whiteness is valued and dominant. CRT states that in the United States, testing, under the guise of being scientific, is often used to legitimize Black-student deficiencies. Higher performance on standardized tests by Whites reinforces the idea of White superiority (Ladson-Billings, 1999). CRT utilizes storytelling and counter-storytelling, recognizing that the knowledge possessed by Black people is critical to understanding and analyzing problems (Ladson-Billings, 1999). CRT counteracts the effects of the stories of White people by gathering and exploring the experiences

of people of color (Dixson & Anderson, 2017). Information is gathered through interviews, surveys, and observations. My ROS utilizes parents' stories and interviews as primary sources of data. Utilizing parents' voices allows me to validate their ideas and use their feedback to drive change.

Most Significant Research and Practice Studies

Deficit Thinking

Donna Ford, a respected pioneer in gifted education, has expressed fear that underrepresentation of Hispanics and Blacks in gifted programs has a negative effect on the school district, community, state, and the nation (Ford,2010). Ford (2010) stated that the attitude of White dominance, deficit thinking, and color-blind ideology all contribute to the underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic students in gifted education.

Ford (2010) also contended that schools must be held accountable for underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education. She reported believing that educators must move beyond White privilege, color blindness, and deficit thinking and accept gifted minority children as different. Ford (2010) contributed seven major issues to the underrepresentation of Blacks and Hispanics in gifted education, shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Major Issues Contributing to Low Gifted Enrollment of Minorities

Elements of traditional IQ testing	IQ testing biases against minority students
Identification practices	The identification process is flawed. The referral process often relies on teachers to identify potentially gifted students.
Educator training	Teachers are not trained to identify gifted students.
Lack of test administrator training	Test administrators are not properly trained to administer and evaluate results.
Ineffective multicultural training	Teachers do not receive training that helps them understand the manifestations of giftedness in minority students.
Parent/family communication	Parents are not aware of GT programming.
Student decision and self-worth	Minorities are undervalued and avoid GT programming.

Familial Factors

Black parents are often dismissed as uninterested in their children’s academic experiences (Yull & Wilson, 2018). However, many Black parents report feeling marginalized and disconnected from their children’s educational experiences. Culturally, Black families, especially Blacks from low-SES households, are often denied access to cultural capital and are fearful of exerting themselves on behalf of their gifted children (Ford, 2013). Their presence is often seen through a deficit lens, and communication with teachers and administrators is often punitive in nature (Yull & Wilson, 2018, p. 172). Consequently, when teachers and administration hold these deficit orientations, they are unlikely to communicate with Black families about available gifted services for their children (Ford et al., 2002, p. 5).

Ford (2013) examined the barriers that may lead to low parent referrals for gifted Black children, finding that Black families:

- do not know that gifted programs exist

- may not know the characteristics of giftedness
- may not have friends whose children have been identified and are thus not sure of procedures and whom to contact
- may be concerned about racial isolation in gifted classes
- may be overwhelmed by the process and forms

Schools should aggressively and proactively work to build school-home partnerships because few people would disagree that parents know their children better than anyone else. Louis (1992) found that 61% of parents who refer their children for gifted testing are themselves identified as gifted. Parents are one of the most valuable sources of information in the identification process. Ford (1996) stated that “well-informed and empowered parents are intellectual consumers of information (p. 252). Essentially, parents of gifted minority students must learn how to be effective advocates for their children.

School staff should proactively work with parents and should consistently inform parents of gifted and potentially gifted students about the substantial benefits of gifted education (Henfield et al.). Educators and gifted leaders should serve as liaisons between overly complicated district-required forms and parents interested in referring their students. Parent nomination forms and checklists should be selected with the culture and language of students in mind (Wright et al., 2017).

Professional Development

Despite often being the gatekeepers for gifted services, teachers are often underprepared to recognize and refer potentially gifted students. The “power of their attitudes and beliefs may be manifested in practices that can limit access and opportunity for the identification and referral of Black and Hispanic children” (Wright & Ford, 2018, p. 114).

Several studies have shown that there is often a mismatch between the ability of Black students and teacher perception. Irizarry (2015) found that there are significant racial differences in a teacher's perceptions of their students' academic skills. Irizarry (2015) asked teachers to rank their students' literacy skills from far below average to far above average. Students in the study (n = 10,470) were also administered a computer-based cognitive assessment. Data revealed teachers to consistently rank non-White students below average and far below average more often than White students. Irizarry (2015) found teachers not only to underestimate the overall abilities of Hispanic and Black students, but also to overestimate the abilities of White students. Teachers in the study consistently ranked White students' literacy scores as above average without their literacy testing scores actually reflecting the teacher's perceptions of the students. Furthermore, Grissom and Redding (2016) found that Black students are systematically less likely to be referred for gifted services when receiving instruction from a non-Black instructor (p. 14). Grissom and Redding (2016) conducted a longitudinal data study on 21,260 elementary students. They documented that even with high math and reading standardized test scores, Black students in their study were less likely to be referred for gifted services than other races. The pattern continues, even when controlling for health, gender, and socioeconomic factors. Black students in the study, however, were referred for gifted testing at higher rates when taught by a Black instructor (Grissom & Redding, 2016). These data are concerning, considering that 80% of Black students are taught by non-Black teachers (Grissom & Redding, 2016). If teachers possess either conscious or subconscious low expectations for Black students, it is impossible for teachers to "recognize, validate, and cultivate potential, talent, and ability" (Wright et al., 2017, p. 48).

Because teacher discretion is a primary referral method for gifted education, education leaders should take strides to combat negative racial stereotypes and challenge hegemonic ways of knowledge production by providing teachers and staff with professional development. Professional development should focus on the range of giftedness that exists, addressing implicit bias, as well as how to identify gifted students of ethnically diverse backgrounds (Grissom & Redding, 2016; Vega & Moore, 2018). Ford and Grantham (2003) recommended that, at a minimum, professional development should focus on “testing and assessment, instructional strategies and models, social-emotional needs and development, underachievement, cultural diversity, and working with families” (p. 222). While extensive professional development can have a positive impact on identification, teacher attitudes towards gifted education can be challenging to influence, therefore my ROS primarily focuses on family engagement and parent referral for gifted education.

Engagement of Black Families

NCLB and ESSA mandated collaboration between homes and schools (Louque & Latunde, 2014). Not only does positive school-home interaction increase achievement, it also changes a child’s attitude about school. For quite some time, Black parents have felt frustrated by interactions with their school (Latunde & Clark-Louque, 2016, p. 72). Many Black families may feel out of place or isolated when interacting with school officials. Because of isolation, Black families sometimes feel a sense of fear or depression when interacting with school officials (Brandon, 2007). This fear of judgement and defensiveness may stem from issues of SES, race, or language fluency (Grant, 2018). Black parents do want to be involved in their children’s education, but weak connection with their school may limit positive actions. This “lack of connection results in low parental participation and a belief among educators that

parents lack interest in and do not value their child's education" (Brandon, 2007, p. 117). Therefore, schools often misconceive the role of Black parents in their children's education. Deficit thinking has led many educators to believe the stereotype that Black families are not invested in their children's education. However, Black parents value the education of their children. Black parents frequently make school visits, attend family engagement events, and provide learning experiences for their children outside of school (Louque & Latunde, 2014, p. 8). Furthermore, Black families often seek out and participate in programs that are specific to Black families. They are more likely to participate in learning experiences and events specifically focused on Black advocacy and mentoring. Because Black families often communicate with their children's school, there is an opportunity for school personnel to enhance parent engagement (Louque & Latunde, 2014). Therefore, schools must take a proactive role in establishing an open and strong communication system.

Brown and Brandon (2007) recommended that schools establish a structured, easy-to-follow communication system with parents. Structured communication methods assist with creating parent ownership of the school. They suggested creating parent-training modules during a time that is convenient for parents (p.117). Parent-training modules should be made readily available on the school website. During the modules, educators can inform parents on current events, school policies, and frequently asked questions. Creating a predictable communication method helps facilitate the school-home connection.

Latunde (2018) examined a school district's parent involvement practices leading to a meaningful, constructive, and comprehensive parent involvement program. Latunde (2018) established a Black focus group called the DU African American Parent Council that was eventually chartered by the school board. The strategies used by the council to enhance

opportunities for school engagement include (a) use of networks, (b) access to data, and (c) participation in decision making (Latunde, 2018, p. 276).

Use of Networks

Black parents in the study insisted on utilizing outside networks to help solve problems with Black students. They contacted clergy, sororities, fraternities, business people, and outside-education professionals to attend school-based meetings (Latunde, 2018, p. 277).

Access to Data

Parents in the study requested access to state testing data over concern about Black-student performance in comparison to other subgroups. Having access to the data provided parents with direction on how to start solving school problems (Latunde, 2018, p. 277).

Participation in Decision Making

Parents in the study communicated the need to be involved in the decision-making process. They became involved in the decision-making process by presenting at board meetings, professional development sessions, and parenting workshops (Latunde, 2018, p. 277).

Using networks, giving parents access to data, and allowing parents to participate in decision making create a comprehensive partnership between Black families, educators, and school systems that can enhance the ability of Black parents to engage with the education of their children.

Closing Thoughts on Chapter II

The underrepresentation of Blacks in gifted education is a multifaceted epidemic. Ideally, school districts should create professional development programs that provide teachers with the knowledge they need to serve as gifted facilitators. Schools should also clearly communicate

with parents and provide resources that will empower them to become advocates for their potentially gifted children.

CHAPTER III
SOLUTION AND METHOD

Proposed Solution

The proposed solution to the problems outlined in my ROS is to create a community of upstander parents who will serve as advocates for their own children. Grantham and Collins (2013) defined “upstander parents” as those who “look, listen, and take action on behalf of their children, going the extra mile to ensure their children get the education they need and deserve” (p. 1). In order to reverse minority underrepresentation in gifted education classrooms in Waters ISD, parent advocacy is critical. Ford et al. (2020) created a recommendation guide to assist with the desegregation of gifted education programs. Schools must confront, interrupt, and investigate the attitudinal climate. They should reflect on “[the effectiveness] of family referrals for students of color, and what supports exist to increase their advocacy, awareness, knowledge, and efficacy/empowerment” (p. 32). This ROS sought to explore three main research questions:

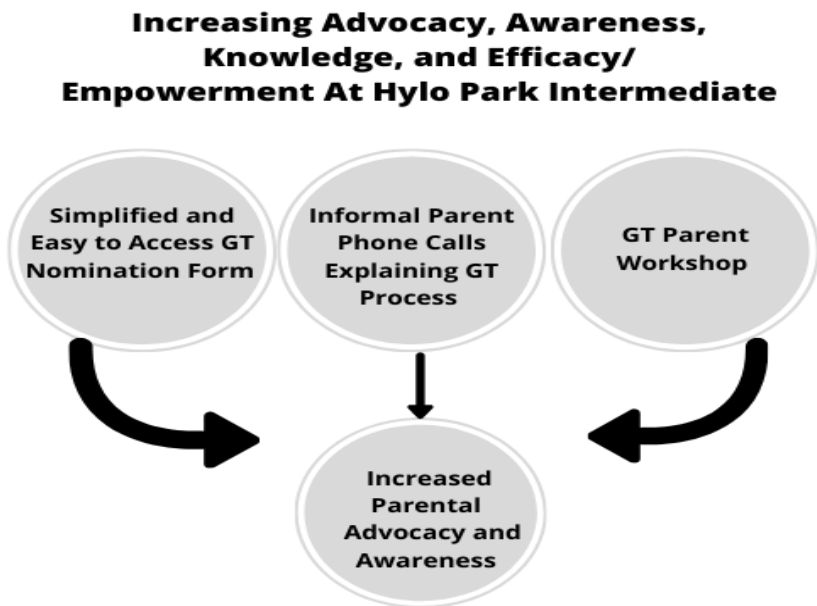
1. What effect does a simplified, accessible GT nomination form have on parent nominations?
2. What questions, concerns, and beliefs do Black parents have about the GT program and about the identification process at Hylo Park Intermediate School?
3. What effect does hosting a parent information night have on GT nominations at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

Therefore, my proposed solution engages parents of potentially gifted students and provides them the knowledge to become advocates for their children. The proposed solution is

threefold: simplifying the GT nomination form, hosting a GT information night, and having informal conversations with parents. Figure 1 depicts the proposed solution.

Figure 1

Proposed Solution to Increase Advocacy and Awareness of the GT Program at Hylo Park Intermediate School



Simplified Parent Referral Process

For the assessment of potentially gifted students by teachers, Waters ISD has published a rating scale (Appendix B), along with a gifted identification matrix for use by campus gifted education coordinators (Appendix C). Waters ISD has also recommended distributing a gifted education referral form to parents in October each year during the GT referral window (Appendix D). Historically, the GT coordinator has distributed the nomination form to parents and students. After the form has been completed, the student has begun the testing process. This

nomination form has previously included complex pedagogical jargon that may have proved difficult to understand. Parent responses on the nomination form have not affected a student’s overall score. Parents have been asked to rate each GT quality using a scale (seldom/never, sometimes, often, almost always / always). Sample questions from the parent referral form are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Sample Questions from Waters ISD Parent Referral Form

Sample Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is a perfectionist and is self-critical; gets frustrated with imperfections in others and himself ● Has a strong sense of justice and is concerned with the world ● Is curious and asks many questions about a variety of subjects ● Sees patterns and connections that others don’t see, even among things that are apparently unrelated ● Shows uneven development—may be “super smart” in some areas while age-appropriate or even somewhat delayed in others (example: an 8-year-old who understands and can explain the role of chlorophyll in the process of photosynthesis, but struggles with reading all the words in a picture book)

For the study, I eliminated the existing parent nomination form and replaced it with a simpler, parent-friendly nomination form, free of educational jargon, including four sections:

- Parent name
- Student name / ID number
- Parent contact number/email
- Parent questions about the process/selection

The new digital Google Form (Appendix E) was placed on the school website and in newsletters, and its availability was announced via the school callout system. As the social media coordinator for Hylo Park Intermediate School, I have access to the school's Facebook and Twitter administration portals. Such access allows me to respond to parent questions via Facebook Messenger and view data analytics on post engagement. The link for the Google Form was embedded into the campus Facebook and Twitter feeds and shared daily for 10 days. Additionally, the form included an invitation to a subsequent gifted education parent information night at Hylo Park Intermediate School. The date for the parent-centered GT information night was added to the calendar on the Hylo Park Intermediate School website, and a sharable Facebook event was created.

Parent-Centered Information Night

During the first semester of school, I held an after-school parent informational session focused on communicating the goals of the gifted education program in Waters ISD: to provide “differentiated instruction and opportunities for students to elaborate, think originally, think flexibly, and produce new ideas as they become self-directed learners who are competent in thinking, research, and communications” (Waters ISD, 2002–2021). The GT information night was marketed on the Hylo Park Intermediate School website, Twitter feed, and Facebook page. Flyers were placed in the campus front office and were distributed to parents during Meet-the-Teacher Night. The flyer listed atypical and typical gifted traits, as well as the date and location of the GT information night. (Appendix F).

During the parent information night, I briefly discussed gifted traits, gifted identification, and the testing process. I intentionally shared typical and atypical traits that may be expressed by a gifted child, such as humor, verbal creativity, energy, experimentation, and risk-taking.

Additionally, I created student profile sheets for fictional potentially gifted students. The profile sheet included test scores, behavioral characteristics, and hobbies. As a group, we discussed whether the parents believed each fictional student to be gifted or not. Because the CogAT, Iowa Assessments, and TTCT are not publicly available, I shared simple test summaries from the test publishers' websites. Parents also explored the Waters ISD Advanced Academics Department website and were afforded the opportunity to ask for clarification about the testing process. Questions posed by parents during the session were used to create resources for a future GT information night. Furthermore, parent-friendly handouts and resources were distributed during the session. The agenda for the parent information night is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Parent Information Night Agenda

GT Information Night Agenda
Introduction to Hylo Park Leadership Team Giftedness Activity—Gifted or Not? GT Matrix <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CogAT ● Iowa ● Torrance Waters ISD Advanced Academics Department Website

Parent Conversations

Ford et al. (2001) stated that Black families must understand screening methods, procedures, and gifted classroom placement decisions. Therefore, I held brief phone conversations with parents of underrepresented students who had successfully completed the first round of gifted education testing. I shared their student's CogAT score and percentile rank.

During these brief conversations, we also discussed subsequent GT assessments, as well as the Iowa Assessments and TTCT. Parents had the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions about the testing process.

Justification of Proposed Solution

Ford (2015) recommended that schools “be proactive and aggressive in outreach to parents and caregivers from under-represented groups so they can support and advocate for their children” (p. 38). When parents of culturally diverse students are informed and actively involved in practices, they are in a better position to advocate on behalf of their children’s education (Grantham et al., 2005, p. 139).

Previous parent communication efforts at Hylo Park Intermediate School about the gifted program have been inadequate. Information regarding the nomination and testing process has not been posted on the school website, in the newsletter, or on the billboard outside the building. Therefore, my primary goal was to inform parents of the gifted education nomination process. It was my hope that parent awareness would increase the enrollment of Black students in gifted education.

Proposed Research Paradigm

This ROS is a qualitative action research project. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) defined the four major characteristics of qualitative research:

- The research focuses on meaning and understanding. The primary goal of qualitative research is to gain understanding of the participant’s perspective.
- The researcher is the primary instrument. Qualitative research requires that the researcher be the primary instrument for data collection. Qualitative researchers conduct interviews, host focus groups, review periodicals, and observe settings.

- The process is inductive. Qualitative researchers collect data in order to build toward theory. Data from observations, interviews, and documents are categorized into themes, concepts, hypothesis, and theories.
- The product is richly descriptive. Qualitative researchers use rich, descriptive words to convey meaning. Qualitative research data often include transcripts of conversations, field notes, and excerpts from written communication.

Action Research

Action research is constructivist, situational, practical, systematic, and cyclical (Efron & Ravid, 2013, p. 7). As the gifted education coordinator at Hylo Park Intermediate School, it is my responsibility to ensure that students are referred and identified as gifted in a prompt manner so that they can begin receiving gifted programming as appropriate. Given my critical role in the district and the importance of timely GT placement for students, I could not conscientiously complete the research process before recommending change.

Study Context and Participants

The study took place at an intermediate school campus in Houston with approximately 1,300 enrolled fifth and sixth graders. Approximately 90% of students on campus qualify for free or reduced lunch. Table 6 summarizes the ethnicity of each racial group tested for GT. Table 7 summarizes the referral method of tested students. Black and Asian parents referred their children for gifted testing at higher rates than other races, whereas Hispanic students had the highest rate of teacher referrals. A total of 240 students were tested for gifted services at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Table 8 summarizes the 40 Black students who were referred by their parents for GT testing, with fifth graders representing 55% and sixth graders representing 45%.

Aside from participating in the standard gifted education–testing process, students did not participate in the ROS research process.

Table 6

Ethnicity of Tested Students

Ethnicity	Number of students tested (% of total)
Black	60 (30%)
Hispanic	55 (27%)
White	10 (5%)
Asian	65 (33%)
Native American	0 (0%)
Other/Biracial	10 (5%)
Total	200

Table 7

Referral Method of Tested Students

Ethnicity	Black	Hispanic	White	Asian	Native American	Other/Biracial
Parent referral, %	69	32	50	54	0	40
Teacher referral, %	31	68	50	46	0	60
Total	100					

Table 8*Grade Level and SES of Referred Black Participants*

Student number	Student grade	Free/reduced lunch
1	5	Y
2	5	Y
3	6	Y
4	6	Y
5	5	N
6	6	N
7	6	Y
8	5	Y
9	5	Y
10	6	Y
11	6	Y
12	5	Y
13	5	Y
14	6	Y
15	6	Y
16	6	Y
17	5	Y
18	5	Y
19	5	Y
20	6	Y
21	6	Y
22	6	Y
23	5	Y
24	5	Y
25	6	Y
26	5	Y
27	6	Y
28	5	Y
29	6	Y
30	6	Y
31	5	Y
32	5	Y
33	6	N
34	5	Y
35	5	Y
36	6	Y
37	5	Y
38	5	Y
39	5	N
40	5	Y

Parents also served as participants in the study, as I conducted a total of 40 phone conversations with parents. The conversations ranged from 2 to 15 min. Parents were contacted via telephone using the phone number in their child's online profile. Some participants required multiple attempts to contact. All the informal phone conversations were held with parents who had referred their child for testing online or via paper permission slip. During the phone conversations, I introduced myself as the campus gifted education coordinator, shared their child's CogAT score, and discussed the next steps of the testing process. After this brief explanation, parents were able to ask questions and share any comments about their child or the identification process.

I also selected one parent, Kary, to participate in a formal interview because her son Marcus's cumulative file was noteworthy. After reviewing his STAAR results, history, grades, and district assessments, I saw his level of academic advancement clearly. However, his conduct record frequently contained negative teacher comments, such as "talks too much in class" and "is frequently distracted." Despite Marcus's high academic performance, he had never been referred by his teachers or parent for gifted testing. Kary is a Black single parent of two boys, fifth-grade Marcus and second-grade Torry, who attends a campus that feeds to Hylo Park Intermediate School. Kary works full time as a receptionist at a local medical office. In addition to her full-time job, Kary is taking classes at the local community college in hopes of eventually becoming a teacher. Only one participant was formally interviewed because of convenience and limited availability among other participants. Furthermore, Kary's participation in parent and school organizations allowed me to access her for the interview and follow-up questions. Kary's involvement on the School Improvement Committee demonstrated that she was invested in proactively changing school process.

Data Collection Methods and Analysis

Qualitative interview data, historical data, and social media analytics were collected in order to triangulate data collected during the research process. Multiple data sources were collected in order to enrich the understanding of each posed research question. Table 9 summarizes the data collection methods for each research question.

Table 9

Research Questions and Data Collection Methods

Research question	Data collection methods
1. What effect does a simplified, accessible GT nomination form have on parent nominations?	Twitter, Facebook, and website analytics Google Forms nominations Historical GT data from 2015–2019
2. What questions, concerns, and beliefs do Black parents have about the GT program and about the identification process at Hylo Park Intermediate School?	Interview with Kara Informal parent conversations
3. What effect does hosting a parent information night have on GT nominations at Hylo Park Intermediate School?	Twitter, Facebook, and website analytics Data summarizing the parent referral methods (online, paper, parent information night)

Simplified Parent Nomination Form

In order to determine the effect of a simplified parent nomination form on Black-parent nominations, historical parent GT referral data from 2013 to 2019 were collected in order to determine trends in gifted enrollment and referrals of Black students. Descriptive statistics were

used to analyze the data. Data from the parent referral form were exported into a Google Sheets document. Then, data were disaggregated by race. After I gathered historical GT referral data, I compared Black-parent nominations from prior years to the current year. Social media analytics were collected via Facebook, Twitter, and the school website. I tracked the clicks and engagements for each social media post. Social media analytics were collected in order to determine the number of parents who engaged with the GT referral form. Site visits, clicks, and engagements were recorded and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Questions, Concerns, and Beliefs

CRT acknowledges the importance of interviews for people of color. Therefore, for this study, interviews served as the primary data collection method. Because deMarrais (2004) defined an interview as “a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study,” my primary role during the study was to act as a liaison; therefore, the interviews were unstructured/informal in nature. As Hylo Park Intermediate School is a majority-minority Title I school, many families are marginalized members of society. Their voices are critical to changing the GT assessment process at Hylo Park Intermediate School. For this ROS, I conducted 40 unstructured parent phone calls and 1 semistructured interview.

Unstructured parent phone calls (conversations) are useful for asking relevant questions when the interviewer does not know much about the phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 111). For the parent phone calls in this ROS, there were no predetermined questions, and the data collected were used to create a guide for future conversations. The primary purpose of all the phone calls was to describe the gifted education process to parents and to gather information on the questions and concerns had by Black parents on the GT-testing process. Naturally,

conservations regarding programming, assessment, and support were likely to occur. Detailed handwritten notes were collected during the 40 informal parent conversations.

The semistructured, recorded interview with one parent, Kary, was held after a parent conference she had with Marcus’s teachers at Hylo Park Intermediate School. I created a list of eight questions that guided my interview with Kary, shown in Table 10. The interview questions allowed me to explore themes and create a profile of a Hylo Park Intermediate School gifted student and parent.

Table 10

Semistructured Interview Questions

Interview questions for Kary
Tell me about your child’s education experience at Hylo Park.
What does your child enjoy most about Hylo Park?
If you could change something about your child’s education, what would you change?
What are Marcus’s strengths?
What are Marcus’s weaknesses?
What do you know about the gifted program in Waters ISD and at Hylo Park?
How do you define giftedness?
What goals do you have for Marcus?

Informal Parent Conversation Coding

Data from the 40 unstructured parent phone calls were collected using Google Sheets. After the conclusion of the calls, I began the coding process by rereading parents’ questions and concerns multiple times and highlighting important words and phrases. Coding allows researchers to “scrutinize and interact with the data as well as ask analytical questions of the data” (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014, p. 5). All data were analyzed using Consider.ly, a

qualitative data analysis program that creates transcripts of audio and video recordings and allows users to easily tag and organize qualitative data.

After familiarizing myself with the data, I selected the process-coding method because it is intended for simple, observable activity and general conceptual actions (Saldana, 2009). After the initial coding, I used focused coding to develop major categories and themes from the data. Table 11 is an example of how data from the informal phone calls were coded and collected.

Table 11

Sample Coding/Collection of Parent Conversations

Student name	Parent name	CogAT percentile	Parent questions/concerns	Codes
Taylor Johnson	Tanya Johnson	83%	How to study for next test; Will student be moved to another class; Results	Study; Placement; Scores

Formal Interview Coding

The formal interview with Kary was also transcribed using Consider.ly. After transcription, thematic and conceptual codes were developed. First, I coded relationships, concerns, emotions, and values. Categories were created based upon the first-level codes.

Theme Identification

Lastly, four major themes emerged from the interview data. Parents of potentially gifted students had questions, concerns, and beliefs about (a) their child’s academic behavior, (b) preparing for testing, (c) future opportunities available to their child, and (d) their child’s

strengths. These themes were used to code both the parent phone calls and the interview with Kary. The thematic codes and brief descriptions are shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Qualitative Data Analysis Codes

Code	Theme	Descriptor
ACP	Academic behaviors	How students perform in class (grades, tests, passing/failing a course)
TP	Test preparation / testing	How students prepare for tests (workbooks, prep materials, online activities, sleeping enough, breakfast)
FO	Future opportunities	Future opportunities/benefits of being in the GT program (colleges, science-technology-engineering-math [STEM] experience)
ST	Student strengths	Talents/strengths of the student (art, academics, music)

Historical Data and Social Media Analytics

Historical parent GT referral data from 2013 to 2019 were collected in order to determine trends in gifted enrollment and referrals of Black students. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Social media analytics were collected via Facebook, Twitter, and the school website. Social media analytics were collected in order to determine the number of parents who engaged with the parent referral posts on social media.

Parent Information Night

I hosted a GT information night for parents of prospective GT students. Parents had the opportunity to refer their child for testing during the event. Demographic data were collected on each participant. After the event, I disaggregated the attendee data by ethnicity in order to

determine the number of Black-parent GT nominations. Data were displayed in a descriptive table.

Study Timeline

Table 13 outlines the general activities that occurred in the study. Reviewing historical GT data provided me with insight into the practices possibly affecting the attitudinal climate of gifted education at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Subsequent activities included creating the online parent referral form and sharing the form through multiple communication methods. The parent information night was held 1 month after the initial parent referral window closed. Follow-up parent interviews and short, informal calls were conducted after the initial round of GT tests.

Table 13

Timeline of Data Collection Methods and Activities

Activity	Date
Review historical GT data	05/2019
Create online form for parent referrals	05/2019
Host parent information night	09/2019
Maintain deadline for parent referrals for GT testing	10/2019
Conduct CogAT testing (round 1 of GT testing)	10/2019
Contact parents and host informal discussions regarding next round of GT testing	11/2019
Code data from initial informal discussions	11/2019
Conduct Iowa testing (round 2 of GT testing)	12/2019
Conduct TTCT testing (round 3 of GT testing)	01/2020
Conduct formal interview with Kary	01/2020
Code data of formal interview with Kary	06/2020
Conduct thematic analysis of data	06/2020

Objectivity, Credibility, Trustworthiness, and Validity Concerns

The study context and participants and my position within the school place several limitations on the study. As a Hylo Park Intermediate School staff member of more than 4 years, I have developed relationships with many families, students, and staff members on campus. Validity in qualitative research means trustworthiness. Most researchers agree that qualitative research is judged by credibility, reliability, and validity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Given the nature of this study, there are several concerns in these areas.

Objectivity

Most qualitative researchers do not seek objectivity. However, qualitative researchers use credibility to validate their data. Credibility is “the truth of the data or the participant views and the interpretation of them by the researcher” (Cope, 2014, p. 89). Credibility in qualitative research can be attained through triangulating methods and sources. Member checking is an integral part of creating credibility and trustworthiness in the qualitative research process. However, because of the brief and informal nature of the phone calls with parents, I was unable to perform member checking with those who participated in the parent phone calls. However, I did frequently communicate with Kary to ensure that I fully captured her concerns, questions, and beliefs about the gifted education program at Hylo Park Intermediate School.

Chammas (2020) stated that a researcher’s involvement in the interplay of research can be extremely valuable. The insider-outsider researcher often has trust and confidence that is only offered to trusted members of a group. Chammas (2020) recognized the impossibility of being objective. Therefore, Chammas (2020) urged researchers to aim to be “risk-aware, rather than risk-averse” (p. 548).

Traditionally, reliability is “the degree to which the findings can be replicated” (Lichtman, 2014, p. 10). However, in qualitative research, reliability is “whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 251). Qualitative researchers seek for their results to be consistent and dependable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Each campus in Waters ISD is unique, and the roles and responsibilities of the gifted education coordinator vary. Participants in schools can fluctuate, and the dynamic in schools is multifaceted. However, this study applied research-based methods to increase outreach in schools, and the materials used during the study are accessible for other GT stakeholders to adopt.

Closing Thoughts on Chapter III

One of the goals of my study was to create a community of parents who are informed about the gifted education program at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Through the examination of phone call and interview data, as well as historical and social media analytics data, I was able to gain insight into parents’ perceptions, needs, and beliefs about gifted education and the impact of new parent engagement efforts.

CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Introducing the Analysis

This ROS sought to discover how Black parents would respond to increased parent outreach regarding GT assessment. The central goal was to discover and analyze the perceptions, beliefs, and understandings of Black parents at lo Park Intermediate School around GT testing and placement.

This qualitative study used both qualitative methods and quantitative data to examine parent perceptions and beliefs about giftedness and key aspects of the GT education program at Hylo Park Intermediate School (e.g., recruitment and referral process, testing process). More specifically, I sought to determine if a more simplified and accessible nomination process, as well as a parent information night, would improve outcomes (e.g., Black students referred for GT testing). Additionally, I analyzed the data to determine Black parents' perspectives on the GT program and identification process at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Qualitative interview and phone call data, historical GT referral data, and social media analytics were collected and analyzed to enrich the understanding of each of the research questions posed.

The purpose of this record of study was to answer the following research questions:

1. What effect does a simplified, accessible GT nomination form have on parent nominations?
2. What questions, concerns, and beliefs do Black parents have about the GT program and about the identification process at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

3. What effect does hosting a parent information night have on GT nominations at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

Data and results from the qualitative and quantitative analyses follow.

Analysis Methods

SPSS statistical software was used to perform statistical analysis of quantitative data collected. ATLAS.ti and Consider.ly are the qualitative software tools that were used; they allow researchers to organize, analyze, and manage qualitative data. Consider.ly was used to transcribe Kary’s interview. ATLAS.ti was used to organize and code interview data.

Presentation of Data and Results

Research Question 1

What effect does a simplified, accessible GT nomination form have on parent nominations?

Simplifying the Parent Referral Process

Hylo Park Intermediate School has 540 “likes” on Facebook. On average, a Facebook post gets a total of 15 likes per post. The GT nomination form was posted on the Hylo Park Intermediate School Facebook page for 7 days. As the campus social media manager, I have access to Facebook analytics. The analytics from the GT nomination window are listed in Table 14.

Table 14

Facebook Analytics

Likes	Engagements
80	340

I also serve as the website manager for Hylo Park Intermediate School. Therefore, I have the ability to share news, events, and forms on the school website. I created a graphic announcing the opening of the nomination period and a link for parents to use to refer their children for testing. The Hylo Park Intermediate School website is hosted by Blackboard, which provides website managers with the number of overall site visits. On average, the Hylo Park Intermediate School website receives 450 visits per day. Listed in Table 15 are site statistics for the website posting titled *Gifted and Talented Parent Nomination Window Is Now Open*.

Table 15

Website Analytics for GT Parent Nomination Announcement

Dates	Total GT Site Visits
09/01/2019 to 10/01/2019	400

I created a GT nomination form using Google Forms and shared it on the school website, Twitter, and Facebook. The initial form only included text boxes for student name, student ID, student grade, and homeroom teacher. However, after I received eight parent referrals, I recognized that I was unable to determine which parent/guardian nominated the student and how to contact the parent. Subsequently, I created a modified nomination form including sections for student name, student ID, student grade, homeroom teacher, parent contact information, and parent questions/concerns. All sections of the form were required except the questions/concerns section.

The Google Form was attached to the school website and the Facebook posting. Parents were able to refer their children for GT testing using the online form. The submissions were only

viewable by me. Eleven of the 40 referrals from Black parents were received through the online referral form. Table 16 shows the methods of parent referral disaggregated by race.

Table 16

Parent Referral Methods

Ethnicity	Black	Hispanic	White	Asian	Native American	Other/Biracial
Online	11	3	3	25	0	1
Total referrals	40	18	5	35	0	4

Historical Data Collection

I collected historical data from archived GT assessment records. The previous gifted education coordinator retained electronic GT matrices in our shared computer drive. Additionally, she preserved paper nomination forms, matrices, testing booklets, and detailed testing data from 2009. The GT matrix includes the student referral method, ethnicity, and GT placement decision. Electronic data were only captured from 2015 until 2019; therefore, I had to transfer data from paper matrices to a spreadsheet. Table 17 shows the demographic data for referred students in 2015 vs. 2019. In 2015, only 3 Black students were referred by their parents for GT testing, and in 2019, 40 Black students were referred by their parents for GT testing. Figure 3 shows the number of students referred by their parents/guardians for GT testing between 2013 and 2019.

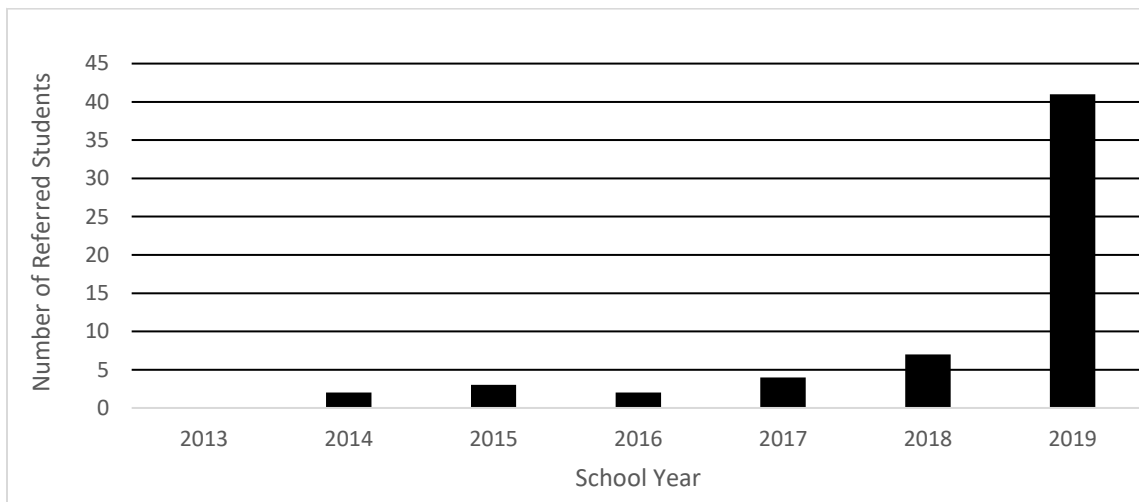
Table 17

Demographic Data of Parent GT Referrals (2015 vs. 2019)

Student Ethnicity	Black	Hispanic	White	Asian	Native American	Other/Biracial
2019	40	18	5	35	0	4
2015	3	0	1	6	0	0

Figure 3

Black Students Referred for GT Testing



Quantitative data revealed a significant increase in parent referrals for gifted testing in 2019. Additionally, social media analytics showed that parents accessed the GT form through the school website or Facebook page.

Research Question 2

What questions, concerns, and beliefs do Black parents have about the GT program and about the identification process at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

Data for Research Question 2 were collected from a parent interview, informal parent phone calls to Black parents, and Black-parent feedback during a campus-hosted parent information night.

Coding of Interview Data

Notes from the informal phone calls were uploaded into Consider.ly. Additionally, the formal, recorded parent interview was uploaded to the cloud-based qualitative research platform Consider.ly. Consider.ly generated a transcript, and I read the transcript multiple times and carefully went through the coding process using the following coding levels:

- First-level coding—descriptive coding
- Second-level coding—relationships (classmates, parents, teachers), emotions (fear, excitement), actions (talking, moving)
- Third-level coding—questions, concerns, values, hopes/aspirations

Thematic qualitative codes were created after coding the parent phone calls, questions from the parent information night, and the interview with Marcus's parent. Qualitative data were uploaded into ATLAS.ti, a qualitative coding and data collection software. For the first level and second level of coding (descriptive coding), I coded relationships, concerns, emotions, and values. Categories were created based upon the first-level codes, and themes emerged from analyzing the questions from the parent information night presentation, the informal parent calls, and the full-length interview. Table 18 displays the codes used to analyze the qualitative data.

Table 18*Qualitative Data Analysis Codes*

Code	Theme	Descriptor
ACP	Academic behaviors	How students perform in class (grades, tests, passing/failing a course)
TP	Test preparation / testing	How students prepare for tests (workbooks, prep materials, online activities, sleeping enough, breakfast)
FO	Future opportunities	Future opportunities/benefits of being in the GT program (colleges, science-technology-engineering-math [STEM] experience)
ST	Student strengths	Talents/strengths of the student (art, academics, music)
CB	Classroom behaviors	How students are perceived to behave in class (lazy, nice, quiet, talkative)

Informal Parent Phone Calls

I contacted 40 Black parents of potential students for the gifted program. During our brief phone calls, we discussed the gifted education–testing process, and I answered any questions they had. I took detailed handwritten notes on each parent conversation and recorded the notes in a document. Table 19 displays 23 sample parent responses and the coded themes that emerged from each response.

Table 19*Sample Supporting Quotes for Themes*

Theme	Supporting quotes	Parent
Academic/classroom performance	Wonders when GT starts this year and if it is possible to have the student moved out because she gets bored in class because the kids are bad, and she has a hard time focusing while she is in there.	Parent 1
	Is worried that the student won't perform well in GT because she was in GT in a different state and was removed because she was not performing. Is willing to continue the testing process. Wants her student to know that she will pull her out of GT if needed.	Parent 3
	Wants information on why student is not performing well in class (Cs in math). Was impressed by high CogAT tests, but believes the student is lazy and needs to try harder on the next phase of testing.	Parent 4
	Wants her child to start the GT program as soon as possible or wants her to receive some sort of extra project because she finishes her homework quickly and is always looking for extra things/projects to do online. Said that the student wants to go to the local STEM charter school next year.	Parent 15
	Is concerned that her child would not do well in the GT class, as her first progress report grades had 70s and the teacher said that she often was not paying attention in class.	Parent 18
	Wants to know if her child could only be tested for GT math/science because her child was receiving 504 services for dyslexia and is worried that he would not do well in a GT reading class.	Parent 19
	Is surprised that her child scored so well because her child "don't ever do no work" in class. Is interested in a workbook to help get him ready for the next test.	Parent 20

Table 19 *Continued*

Theme	Supporting quotes	Parent
Testing/preparation	Wants to know what materials she can use to prepare for the next test. Is concerned about the exact date of the test because she wants to ensure that her child is present.	Parent 2
	Wants practice worksheets for art to help student prepare for the test because student was tested for GT in third grade and was very close to making it, but didn't because of the art portion.	Parent 5
	Has two other children, one in the elementary GT program and another in the high school program. Stated that the student desperately wants to be in the GT program like his siblings. Wants to know when the next round of testing will begin to make sure the student has a good breakfast that day.	Parent 6
	Wants the student to receive more work in class because of too much free time. Hopes that a GT class will keep him busy and out of trouble.	Parent 8
	Wants scores emailed to use for another school application. Also wants to know if other score reports can be immediately emailed upon completion.	Parent 9
	Said that the child told her that the test was really hard and she didn't think that she did well on it. Wants to know when she will start being in the GT class.	Parent 11
	Wants to know the name(s) of the next test that will be administered to prepare her child for the next set of upcoming tests.	Parent 12
	Wants dates on when the next test will be.	Parents 13-16
	Said that her child previously qualified for GT in another district, but Waters ISD stated that the district does not accept out-of-state GT results. Wants to know how our tests are different from the tests her child took before. Requests that her child be moved into a GT class this year. Requests a call from the building principal.	Parent 17

Table 19 *Continued*

Theme	Supporting quotes	Parent
Future opportunities	Wants the child to have the GT teacher in the building because she feels like he would be a good role model for her son. Hopes that he qualifies.	Parent 14
	Wants her child to start the GT program as soon as possible or wants her to receive some sort of extra project because she finishes her homework quickly and is always looking for extra things/projects to do online. Said that the student wants to go to the local STEM charter school next year.	Parent 15
	Wants more information on the seventh-grade STEM program for GT students. Has a friend whose child was in GT and attended Hylo Park Intermediate School and was in the STEM program.	Parent 22
	Said that her child is the smartest child in the whole family, taught herself to read when she was only 3 years old, and wants to go to an Ivy League school.	Parent 23
Student strengths	Was in GT classes in elementary and middle school. Stated that the student is always reading books at home and did very well on the STAAR test.	Parent 7
	Said that she will let her husband know that her child did well on the GT test.	Parent 10
	Is happy that her kid did well on GT tests.	Parent 21
	Said that her child is the smartest child in the whole family, taught herself to read when she was only 3 years old, and wants to go to an Ivy League school.	Parent 23

Interview With Kary

I conducted a one-on-one, formal, semistructured interview with Kary, a parent of a Hylo Park Intermediate School fifth grader. The following questions were crafted to guide the conversation:

- What do you know about the gifted program in Waters ISD and at Hylo Park Intermediate School?
- How do you define giftedness?
- What are Marcus's strengths?
- What are Marcus's weaknesses?

Table 20 highlights sample supporting quotes for each theme from the interview with Kary.

Table 20

Sample Supporting Quotes from Kary's Interview by Theme

Theme	Supporting quotes
Academic/classroom performance	Marcus is really calm; he has never been in fights. Actually, he is always the victim of bullying. I always tell him that he needs to stand up for himself because kids always want to make fun of him. It's probably because they are jealous.
	All of the trouble that Marcus gets in is because he talks way too much in class. It's for real, all the time. He gets in trouble so much that he started to hated going to school because now, he sees school as a place to go to get in trouble. The more he gets in trouble, the more consequences he gets: no recess, silent lunch, SAC. All for talking; his agenda got so many red marks.
	At this point, I just don't know what to do. I've spanked him all the time. Took away video games, grounded him. Everything. He is still disruptive in class. Every year, same thing. Except for one year, a teacher in second grade, she really knew how to work with him. She made sure to keep him busy so that he had no time to chat. She gave him classroom jobs and let him walk around in this little box she made him.
	His pediatrician said that he may have ADHD, but I'm just not ready to put him on medication. He's too young, and right now it's just not that serious to me.
	A person that is gifted is really smart without trying. They don't have to study, and things just come to them naturally.
Testing/preparation	There are a few different tests that students have to take in order to become a GT student. The parent night that you held was very helpful.

Table 20 *Continued*

Theme	Supporting quotes
Future opportunities	<p>Marcus is on the waiting list to get into KIPP; he had been on the list before, and when his number was called, he did not want to go, but since he has been having some problems lately, we had decided to try to give KIPP a chance. The tour of the school was really nice. He liked it a lot.</p> <hr/> <p>I think that if Marcus was to be in the GT program here, he would be challenged, and he would like it, so I have to see what happens when we get the results. The field trips, faster pace, and friends like him would be great for him.</p> <hr/> <p>When Marcus was in fourth grade, he went on a tour to Prairie View University; ever since then, he fell in love and he has been wanting to go to campus. But I want him to go to Southern University because I have a cousin that goes to Southern as well.</p>
Student strengths	<p>Marcus was able to walk when he was about 8 months old; everyone I told thought that I was lying, but when they actually saw him, boy, they were shocked. He wasn't much taller than their ankle, and he would run, would be walking around like a little man.</p> <hr/> <p>Marcus has been a member of the church choir since he has been able to talk. He never had to read the lyrics to know the words of the song; he would just listen to gospel over and over again, and eventually, he would start singing it. Marcus can SANG; his voice gives everyone goosebumps. But sometimes, he gets on my nerves with all of his singing. I can never have any silence in my house because he is always hymning and hollering some sort of tune</p> <hr/> <p>Marcus has always received an “exceeding standards” on STAAR tests.</p> <hr/> <p>I promise I’m not making this up when I say there is nothing this he can’t do well. Football, singing, math, reading. Everything—really he does everything really well. I’m not saying that he practices, and that’s his problem; he never really wants to practice anything, and he ends up falling behind the rest of his teammates. I had him on the basketball team, and he started off the best on the team. But he ain’t ever wanna practice. He got so mad that all of his teammates, even them little Asian boys got better than him that he just said, “Momma I don’t wanna play anymore.”</p> <hr/> <p>Gifted people are artists, musicians, and doctors; back in my days, those are the people we would refer to as “geeks.” But now, people would consider them cool.</p>

Qualitative Data Themes

Qualitative data revealed four main themes for which Black parents had questions, concerns, and beliefs about gifted education at Hylo Park Intermediate School: (a) academic and classroom performance, (b) testing preparation, (c) future opportunities for their child, and (d) their child's strengths.

Academic and Classroom Performance. Data from both the parent phone calls and Kary's interview revealed Black parents to be concerned about their child's overall academic performance and the potentially problematic behaviors they exhibit in class. Parent data revealed a struggle with contrasting views of academic success and giftedness. Although Parent 18 expressed being impressed by her child's CogAT scores, she shared concerns about her child's low progress report grades. Parent 18 also questioned her child's ability to succeed in an academically rigorous classroom because she believes her child to be "lazy." Similarly, Kary reported having grown frustrated with Marcus's propensity toward off-task behavior (chatting, fidgeting, etc.). Their concerns over these perceived negative behaviors often overshadowed their children's strengths.

Testing and Testing Preparation. The interviewed parents sought resources to help prepare their child for the GT exam. They also showed great interest in the testing timeline. Multiple parents requested specific testing dates in order to ensure that their child was well rested and ate a complete meal before the testing date. The following quote is representative of a parent's perspective on testing: "[I] want to know what materials she can use to prepare for the next test. I [am] concerned about the exact date of the test because [I] want to ensure that [my] child is present."

Future Opportunities. Participants often mentioned hoping to explore schools outside of Waters ISD. Kary stated that her child was on the waiting list for KIPP, a neighborhood charter school. Parent 15 said that she hoped her child could enroll at a local STEM charter school. Parents also shared hopes for their child to attend college. Kary expressed interest in Prairie View A&M University, a historically Black college in the area. Parents expressed hope that being identified as gifted would improve their child’s chances of being admitted.

Student Strengths. A limited number of parents shared their child’s strengths during the informal phone conversations. However, Parent 23 did state that her child was “the smartest child in the family.” Kary shared that Marcus succeeds at everything he attempts. She also stated that he had been able to read, walk, talk, and sing at a young age.

Research Question 3

What effect does hosting a parent information night have on GT nominations at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

I hosted a parent information night at Hylo Park Intermediate School in order to inform parents/guardians about the Hylo Park Intermediate School GT-testing process, discuss gifted traits, and give parents another opportunity to nominate their child for GT testing. The event was held in September 2019. A Facebook event was created that allowed parents to RSVP for the GT information night. A flyer was included in the school’s monthly newsletter, and a text message was sent to all families using the school’s mass text-messaging system. Table 21 details the sources of parent RSVPs.

Table 21

Parent Information Night RSVP Sources

Source	RSVPs
Facebook	30
Online newsletter	10
Text message	45

During the presentation, I solicited questions using the Google Slides Audience Q&A tool. This tool allows participants to submit questions during a Google Slides presentation. A total of 12 questions were asked during the presentation.

Only 5 of the 12 questions asked during the presentation were asked by Black parents. Because this research question focuses exclusively on the concerns of Black parents, only these questions were analyzed (shown in Table 22).

Table 22

Parent Questions Asked During GT Information Night

Question no.	Question
1	Will my child have to be tested for GT every year?
2	When will I receive test results for my child?
3	How will I know if they got in the GT program?
4	What if my kid is not receiving good grades?
5	Is there much more homework in GT?

Parents were able to complete the online parent nomination form during the GT information night. Data were collected and disaggregated by ethnicity. Table 23 shows the methods of referral.

Table 23

Parent Referral Methods

Ethnicity	Black	Hispanic	White	Asian	Native American	Other/Biracial
Online	11	3	3	25	0	1
Paper	20	6	1	5	0	2
Online during parent night	10	9	1	5	0	1
Total referrals	41	18	5	35	0	4

Data indicated that 26 students were referred for GT testing during the parent information night. Ten of the 26 referred during the parent night were Black students. Twenty-four percent of the total referrals for Black students were received during the parent information night. Given that this was the first GT information night, there are no comparison data. However, there was a significant increase in GT referrals from Black parents after the parent information night in 2019.

Interaction Between the Research and the Context

Throughout the study, I made an explicit effort to communicate regularly with all stakeholders. This was my second year as the gifted education coordinator at Hylo Park Intermediate School, and the ROS process showed me the importance of creating and maintaining a clear communication process with all stakeholders.

After hosting the parent information night, conducting the parent phone calls, and analyzing the data, I shared the research and findings with the campus instructional team during

its weekly instructional data debrief. As a campus, Hylo Park Intermediate School is primarily fixated on campus deficits (low performance, interventions, and response to intervention [RTI]); therefore, while the content specialists and administration team were receptive to the data from my study, they expressed that the GT identification process is most effectively managed by the gifted education coordinator rather than being incorporated into the multifaceted processes and roles of the administration team.

Additionally, because the gifted education coordinator is a campus-level role, I created a shareable resource folder in our learning management system, Schoology. The resource folder contains the handouts and slides I used during the parent information night. The resource folder can be easily shared with other intermediate gifted education coordinators in Waters ISD.

Closing Thoughts on Chapter IV

The purpose of this ROS was to discover how Black parents would respond to a parent-centered gifted education referral process at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Creating a simplified, online, accessible referral method significantly increased GT referrals by Black parents at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Additionally, the parent-centered GT information night provided parents with valuable information on the testing process. This ROS also sought to identify the questions, concerns, and beliefs by Hylo Park Intermediate School parents had about giftedness and the identification process. Qualitative interviews with parents gave me further insight on parent beliefs. In order to refine the GT-testing process and create a parent-centered identification process for Hylo Park Intermediate School, I must continually communicate with parents about the GT program and the testing process, as well as partner with the campus instructional team, to effectively identify students for GT placement.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The goal of this research study was to facilitate a process that would increase the number of Black students identified as gifted at Hylo Park Intermediate School. This study used aspects of CRT to raise awareness of the gifted education program and increase parent outreach and engagement. The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What effect does a simplified, accessible GT nomination form have on parent nominations?
2. What questions, concerns, and beliefs do Black parents have about the GT program and about the identification process at Hylo Park Intermediate School?
3. What effect does hosting a parent information night have on GT nominations at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

This research study sought to increase parent engagement by creating and publicizing a simple, accessible GT referral form for parents. Additionally, Hylo Park Intermediate School parents were invited to a GT information night. Throughout the recruitment process, Black parents of potentially gifted children were contacted regarding the testing process. During brief phone conversations, parents were able to ask questions regarding the testing process and gifted education at Hylo Park Intermediate School. One semistructured interview was conducted with a parent. Data were collected during the process through qualitative interviews and quantitative demographics.

Discussion of the Results and the Extant Literature Related to the Research Questions

Discussion of the Results for Research Question 1

What effect does a simplified, accessible GT nomination form have on parent nominations?

This ROS sought to create an accessible GT nomination form for Black parents and then to analyze the effects of the simplified form following its use. The previous GT nomination form for parents was verbose and unnecessarily complicated, and because parent responses do not affect a student's overall GT rating, I created a short, easily fillable Google Form accessible from the school website and social media. The short form only required parents to supply their child's name, homeroom teacher, and student ID number. I frequently communicated with parents about the nomination process via the school text-messaging platform, Facebook, and Twitter. In 2019, the year that the new form was implemented, 40 Black parents referred their children for GT testing, a significant increase from previous years.

I urged schools to make school-to-family communication a priority. In order to counteract deficit thinking in schools—and thus effectively recruit Black students in gifted education programs—educators and gifted leaders should serve as liaisons between overly complicated district-required forms and parents interested in referring their children (Ford & Grantham, 2003). Ford et al. (2018) asserted that culturally diverse families must be trained and fully empowered to become advocates for their children. Furthermore, Ford et al. drafted the *Culturally Responsive Bill of Rights* as a framework for removing barriers that limit Black students' access to gifted education. In the bill of rights, they contended that Black parents are their child's first and forever educator. Therefore, their opinions must be valued and respected.

This study's culturally responsive parent communication system and referral process align with the suggestions of Ford (2015), Ford et al. (2018), and Grantham et al. (2005). The quantitative data revealed that Black parents do respond well to a jargon-free, accessible GT nomination form. Black parents at Hylo Park Intermediate School were emboldened to advocate for their children.

Discussion of the Results for Research Question 2

What questions, concerns, and beliefs do Black parents have about the GT program and about the identification process at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

This study explored the questions, concerns, and beliefs held by Black parents at Hylo Park Intermediate School about the gifted education program and the gifted education–testing process. Through qualitative interviews and analysis, their questions, concerns, and beliefs about gifted education were categorized into four main themes:

- Student's academic/classroom behaviors
- Test preparation
- Future opportunities available to their child
- Their child's strengths/talents

Black parents seemed to respond with more vigor and frequency on their child's perceived negative classroom behavior rather than their child's strengths. Notably, Marcus, who later scored in the 99th percentile on the CogAT, exhibited behaviors that concerned his mother. She stated, "At this point, I just don't know what to do. I've spanked him all the time, took away video games." Parents seemed concerned about their child's chattiness, inability to focus, and general off-task behavior. However, some parents did attribute these behaviors to boredom.

Deficit thinking is a key cause of underrepresentation of Black students in gifted education. GT stakeholders often hold misguided definitions of giftedness (Ford et al., 2021). Furthermore, data from this ROS revealed Black parents to have adopted problematic beliefs about their potentially gifted child. Being easily distracted, chattiness, and off-task behavior are often characteristics of a potentially gifted Black student. White-dominant culture has defined the characteristics of an advanced student (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2017). It does appear that Black parents have embraced these beliefs about academic success.

Contrary to deficit-thinking, this study found that Black parents aspire for their children to succeed academically. This finding aligns with the ideas of Ford (1996), Weber and Stanley (2012), and Young and Balli (2014).

Additionally, Black parents at Hylo Park Intermediate School frequently reported hoping that their child would attend neighborhood charter schools. This data point was unexpected, as extant literature has not discussed charter school education for gifted Black students. However, Almond (2012) discovered that Black students attend charter schools at a much higher rate than White students. Black parents who enroll their children in charter schools seek a smaller class size, skilled teachers, and specialized programming. Additionally, Almond (2012) found that Black parents see charter school enrollment to escape lower-performing schools and gain a sense of entitlement.

Furthermore, Black parents showed a keen interest in the test-taking process. They wanted to know about the exact dates of the test to better prepare their child. Brown and Brandon (2007) recommended that schools with high enrollment of Black students create a clear and expected pattern for communication. They also recommended that these schools publish content online and use multiple forms of delivery.

Discussion of the Results for Research Question 3

What effect does hosting a parent information night have on GT nominations at Hylo Park Intermediate School?

After sharing the simple, accessible GT nomination form with parents, I hosted a GT information night for parents. The event was advertised on Facebook, Twitter, and the school text-messaging system. Parents were able to RSVP for the event online. However, walk-ins were also welcomed. During the parent information night, I discussed characteristics of giftedness, and I provided a timeline of the testing process. Parents were able to ask questions about the GT program at Hylo Park Intermediate School and refer their child to be tested for GT.

Data showed 85 parents RSVPed for the event. During the event, 10 Black parents referred their child for GT testing. The nominations received during the GT information night had a substantial impact on the total number of nominations received. However, there had been no prior data collected on the effectiveness of a GT information night at Hylo Park Intermediate School. Qualitative results, though, revealed Black parents as showing interest in the referral and testing process. Black parents asked questions about the testing process, timeline, and classroom placement.

Ford and Grantham (2003) emphasized the importance of holding workshops and meetings for parents to educate them on the importance of gifted education and how to become advocates for their children. Additionally, parents and families must be aware of the testing process and understand the referral and placement process. Brown and Brandon (2007) recommended that schools establish a structured, easy-to-follow communication system with parents to inform them about current events, school policies, and frequently asked questions.

Frequently posting on social media and the school website facilitated the school-home connection in this study.

This study's data align with the findings of Latunde and Clark-Louque (2016), Weber and Stanley (2012), and Young and Balli (2014). Parents showed a keen interest in the gifted program and showed willingness to attend a targeted, informational session that would benefit their potentially gifted child.

Discussion of Personal Lessons Learned

Throughout the research process, I quickly learned that the Waters ISD GT program does not meet best practices for GT identification. As I examined data, I realized that while the student body is diverse, the GT population mirrors the diversity of nearby homogenous districts. Inequities in the district such as this often left me feeling frustrated and defeated. The frustration and disappointment I felt often made me question my own position and value in the district. At times, I considered leaving the school district for another position or leaving the education field altogether.

Action research requires researchers to have a deep connection with their participants. While I frequently reflected on how my role in the school affected the data, I did not reflect on how my emotional reaction would affect the context. I also struggled with creating a realistic, actionable timeline for my research. Not having clear, concrete research questions during the initial research process made it difficult for me to collect data. Heen (2005) shared that intense feelings “[create] untidiness in the established order and [are] surrounded by taboos, often in the form of avoidance” (p. 272). Reflecting on my feelings is a competency on which I will continue to improve. Furthermore, I will ensure that in future studies, my research questions and methods are clear before starting the data collection process.

Implications for Context

Highlighting the Hylo Park Intermediate School GT program allowed teachers and the leadership team to see that gifted students have been underidentified. Previously, the GT referral process was secretive. However, conducting this ROS on campus emphasized (brought to life) the needs of the parents of potential GT students. Furthermore, following Ford's (2010) recommendations, I explicitly removed four of the six potential barriers to increased Black student representation (Ford, 2010).

Teachers and other staff continue to excitedly approach me and say, "You have to test [student]; I know they are gifted." While changing the school-wide focus on deficits will take years, I have noticed small, subtle changes in the school's attitudes toward potentially gifted students.

Noticeably, my research process immediately increased Black enrollment in the GT program. Despite execution errors in the research process, I was able to produce change in the gifted population at Hylo Park Intermediate School. A significant number of students referred by their parents later qualified for GT services.

Additionally, I created digital resources that will help facilitate future parent information nights at Hylo Park Intermediate School and other schools within the district. The digital resources include a copy of the slideshow I presented and relevant journal articles related to recruiting underidentified students of color. The materials I created and researched for this study will help other campuses create similar Black-parent outreach programs.

Most importantly, my open, clear communication process with parents serves as a model for parent communication at Hylo Park Intermediate School. High parent involvement during the GT referral process refutes the deficit mindset that Black parents are not invested in their

children's education. Educators must create a clear, streamlined process for parent communication. Clear communication between schools and Black parents will empower parents to become upstander parents. Black parents at Hylo Park Intermediate School showed a high level of interest in their children's education and future.

Implications for Practice

Recently, scholars have started to explore poverty and gifted education. However, there has been limited research on the intersectionality of poverty, race, and gifted education. A recent professional journal article showed that since 2000, only 22 studies have been published about recruiting low-income students of color to gifted programs (Goings & Ford, 2018).

Furthermore, most research on recruiting Black students for gifted education concentrates on identifying primary and high school-aged students. This ROS explores an often-disregarded age group, middle-schoolers. In Waters ISD, identified gifted students are automatically enrolled in all pre-AP courses in high school, thus forever changing a student's high school trajectory. This study underscores the importance of continually recruiting gifted students in all grade levels.

Moreover, researchers have rarely discussed the effect that poverty and race have on the recruitment and retention of Black students to gifted programs. Instead of using the words "Black" or "African American," often words are used such as "alternative" or "displaced." Additionally, Goings & Ford (2018) reported in their investigation that nine studies used deficit-thinking methodology.

Extant literature has suggested that increasing professional development, as well as boosting the population of Black teachers on campus, can increase the number of Black students identified as gifted (Ford et al., 2021; Peterson, 1999). However, during the 2003–2004 school

year, 51% of Hylo Park teachers identified as White, and 57% of students were eligible for free or reduced lunches. Furthermore, 14.8% of the students at Hylo Park were identified as gifted. In 2019, less than 4% of Waters ISD teachers identified as White, and only 4.3% of Hylo Park Intermediate School students were identified as gifted (TEA, 2004). Grissom and Redding (2016) found that a White teacher is more likely to refer a White student for GT than a Black student, even when family characteristics, grades, and test scores are controlled. Data from Hylo Park Intermediate School have followed the tragic trajectory of White-teacher flight—yet the negative correlation between White teachers and gifted Black students is not present. Previous research on teacher race/demographics does not align with the trajectory of Hylo Park Intermediate School. This research study could potentially impact research on teacher race and gifted-student outcomes.

My ROS explored the recruitment of Black students in gifted education. Unlike previous studies, I explored how empowering Black parents challenges the deficit mindset held by many schools and government institutions.

Limitations and Recommendations

This ROS has many limitations. The most limiting factor is the small sample size. The study focused on one intermediate school in one urban school district. Future studies should explore the effect of streamlined parent communication processes over many schools or districts.

Additionally, Hylo Park Intermediate School has a high percentage of Black teachers. Culturally responsive pedagogy would predict Black teachers to refer Black students for gifted testing at higher rates than White teachers. Demographic data from Hylo Park Intermediate School revealed the opposite, however. Further research studies should explore this phenomenon and the correlation between teacher demographics and referrals of Black students.

Furthermore, the Hispanic gifted population at Hylo Park Intermediate School does not reflect its Hispanic population. Future studies should investigate the causes of this disproportionality and explore possible solutions.

Additionally, researchers should explore Black-student enrollment at charter schools and examine why parents believe their children to receive a superior education at a charter school. If charter schools continue to admit the most advanced students at Hylo Park Intermediate School, its program will become sparse and unable to meet students' needs.

Data revealed that many Black parents feared their child would not be successful in a gifted education classroom. They believed their child's perceived negative traits would cause their child to struggle. Researchers should continue to explore this mindset held by some Black parents.

Most importantly, I recommend that Waters ISD assess its use of deficit mindset thinking, such as those shared by Ruby Payne. Ruby Payne described characteristics commonly seen in low-income Black children as problematic (high energy, chattiness, etc.) (Bomer et al., 2008). Data from this ROS reveal that deficit thinking may have permeated the definition of giftedness understood by Black parents. Hylo Park Intermediate School should increase its outreach to Black parents by confronting and shifting their ideas about academic success, talent, and giftedness. Ford et al. (2021) created a framework for equity-based identification that Hylo Park Intermediate School should explore and take steps to adopt. I urge Hylo Park Intermediate to continue to make parent communication a priority.

The 2020–2021 school year brought unexpected challenges to Hylo Park Intermediate School. The global COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on GT recruitment. Students attended virtual school from May 2019 to October 2020. Many families were inaccessible and

difficult to contact. Therefore, I was unable to replicate the previous school year's successes. To increase Black-student representation in GT programming, Hylo Park Intermediate School should perform intentional, targeted outreach during the summer of 2021 and during the first weeks of the 2021–2022 school year. Waters ISD should allow students to receive GT services during the school year in which they are identified. Prompt recruitment is critical to the success of the GT program at Hylo Park Intermediate School.

Closing Thoughts

This ROS challenges current beliefs on Black-parent involvement. Through qualitative interviews and data exploration, I demonstrated that Black parents have aspirations for their gifted Black children. Black parents respond to targeted outreach and open, clear communication. Black parents of Hylo Park Intermediate School students are entitled to a support system that will keep them connected to their children's school. It is vital for schools to provide parents access and to empower Black parents of gifted children to become upstander parents.

Throughout my childhood, I struggled with being Black and gifted. When I lived in the inner city, I was often the only gifted child in my class. Consequently, GT services were unavailable. Researchers and practitioners should proactively seek ways to increase Black-student identification and recruitment. By changing mindsets from deficit thinking to recognizing Black-student strengths and integrity, Black children like me will recognize that Black smart is smart.

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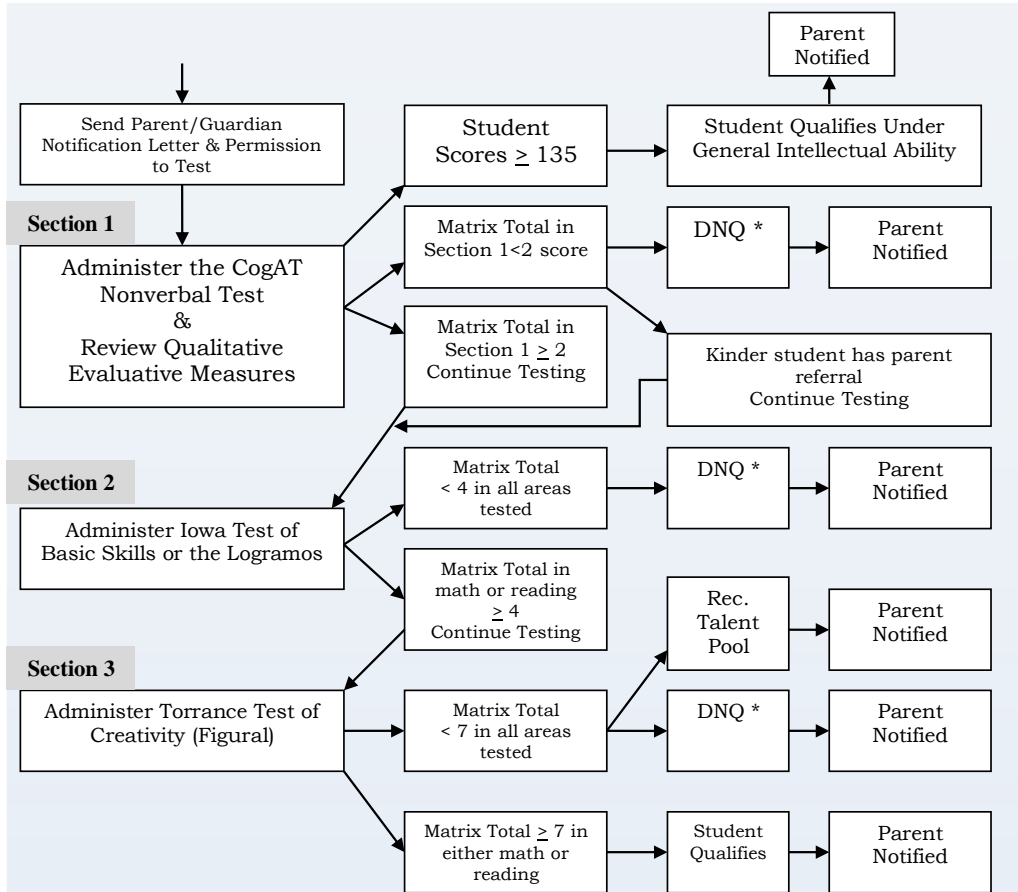
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APPENDIX A

PEP/Quest/GT Identification Process Grades K – 12



* Campus committee may convene to determine appropriate placement or to continue testing.

Occasionally students who achieved lower than a 7 on the matrix may be recommended for placement in the GT program due to other factors. The GT Campus Committee may recommend for placement a student who achieves a total of 6 on the matrix in either math or reading, or both. A comment explaining the reason for the placement must be written on the matrix. If the campus committee wishes to recommend a student with a matrix score lower than 6, the student must be referred to the district committee for a decision on GT participation. An explanation of factors contributing to this recommendation must accompany the referral. Students scoring 5 or 6 in either or both areas can be recommended for Talent Pool.

The GT Campus Committee may recommend participation in the campus Talent Pool for any student who does not qualify as GT.

APPENDIX B

6 X 6 GT RATING SCALE FOR TEACHERS

Directions: Please evaluate students using the following information in each of six (6) domains. *Students exhibiting six or more characteristics in one or more of the domains should be nominated* for testing for possible identification as a gifted or talented student.

Student Name: _____ Grade Level: _____

Birth Date: _____ Teacher Name: _____

Domain 1: Intellectual Ability

- Student has an excellent memory
- Student has a long attention span
- Student demonstrates strong reasoning skills
- Student quickly identifies relationships and patterns
- Student has excellent problem solving skills
- Student learns quickly with less practice and repetition than other students

Domain 2: Academic Readiness

- Student is reading above grade level expectations
- Student is performing above grade level expectations in mathematics
- Student has an extensive vocabulary (in either primary language or English)
- Student is performing at the top of the class
- Student asks "what-if" questions
- English Learners (ELL's) are acquiring English at a faster rate than their peers

Domain 3: Motivation

- Student is highly interested in learning
- Student listens with interest
- Student shows strong feelings or opinions
- Student is highly curious
- Student asks high level questions related to various topics
- Student seeks out learning opportunities beyond regular class assignments

Domain 4: Creativity

- Student has an unusual or vivid imagination
- Student is fluent in producing and elaborating on ideas
- Student provides multiple solutions or responses to problems
- Student provides unexpected or "silly" responses
- Student tolerates ambiguity and uncertainty
- Student redefines or juggles elements of an assigned task

Domain 5: Artistic Ability

- Student responds readily to rhythm, melody and harmony
- Student uses music to express feelings or experiences
- Student readily shifts into role of another character, animal, or object
- Student demonstrates ability to dramatize feelings and experiences
- Student puts depth into drawing, showing planning and good proportion
- Student is interested in other people's art, both appreciating it and criticizing it

Domain 6: Social and Emotional Traits

- Student is concerned about fairness and social injustice
- Student can be a perfectionist
- Student can be highly self-critical
- Student has a well-developed sense of humor
- Student may be very energetic and have a hard time being still
- Student relates well to parents, teachers, and other adults

All students should be observed as potentially gifted. This form should be completed only for nominated students in grades 1 – 6. This form should be completed for all kindergarten students by February 29th.]

APPENDIX C

Waters ISD

Gifted Identification Matrix

Grades K-12

20___/20___ School Year

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____ Grade: _____ Ethnicity: _____ Campus: _____

Teacher Name: _____ Student DOB: _____ Indicators: Dyslexia 504 ESL Special Ed. Bil

PHASE I																										
Naglieri Cognitive Abilities Measure Date Administered _____ Form _____ Raw Score _____ %ile _____ Points NAI Score _____ Stanine _____ Stanine 9 3 Stanine 8 2 (Student is automatically enrolled if Naglieri raw score is Stanine 7 1 ≥135) Stanine ≤ 6 0				Points Earned	Points Earned		Committee Meeting Date: _____ Signatures of Committee Members: _____ _____ All Committee Members are in compliance with state GT training guidelines (initial 30 hours, 6-hour update): YES NO Student is: Recommended _____ Not Recommended _____ Recommend Talent Pool _____ Student exhibits strengths in the area(s) of: <input type="checkbox"/> Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Math <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity <input type="checkbox"/> All areas Additional Comments: _____ _____ _____																			
Additional Evaluative Measures Nomination form: <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher 6 X 6 Rating Scale <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ Observable behaviors (includes, but is not limited to): <input type="checkbox"/> Finishes work quickly <input type="checkbox"/> May not finish work quickly because focused on perfection <input type="checkbox"/> Appears bored, but completes work <input type="checkbox"/> Strong memorization capabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Possesses high energy <input type="checkbox"/> Can focus at length on a topic that interests him/her <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits perceptiveness or hyper keen awareness Points given for Evidence of Work: <input type="checkbox"/> Writing sample <input type="checkbox"/> Product <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio <input type="checkbox"/> Report card <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____ Work evaluated exhibits giftedness =1 Insufficient evidence =0				Points Earned	Points Earned																					
TOTAL POINTS PHASE I																										
Student recommended to continue to PHASE II (Total score ≥ 1)				YES	NO																					
Comments for decision (if applicable):																										
PHASE II																										
<input type="checkbox"/> IOWA <input type="checkbox"/> Logramos <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">TOTAL READING</th> <th style="width: 25%;">TOTAL MATH</th> <th style="width: 25%;">%tile</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Pts.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Raw Score _____</td> <td>Raw Score _____</td> <td>Stanine 9 96-99%</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>%ile _____</td> <td>%ile _____</td> <td>Stanine 8 89-95%</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stanine _____</td> <td>Stanine _____</td> <td>Stanine 7 77-88%</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Stanine 6 <76% and below</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				TOTAL READING	TOTAL MATH		%tile	Pts.	Raw Score _____	Raw Score _____	Stanine 9 96-99%	3	%ile _____	%ile _____	Stanine 8 89-95%	2	Stanine _____	Stanine _____	Stanine 7 77-88%	1			Stanine 6 <76% and below	0	Rdg. Points Earned	Math Points Earned
TOTAL READING	TOTAL MATH	%tile	Pts.																							
Raw Score _____	Raw Score _____	Stanine 9 96-99%	3																							
%ile _____	%ile _____	Stanine 8 89-95%	2																							
Stanine _____	Stanine _____	Stanine 7 77-88%	1																							
		Stanine 6 <76% and below	0																							
PHASE III Torrance Test of Creativity (Figural) Date Administered _____ 75-99 percentile =3 _____ 50-74 percentile =2 _____ 25-49 percentile =1 _____ 0-24 percentile =0				Points Earned	Points Earned																					
TOTAL POINTS PHASE I, II, III																										

APPENDIX E

Gifted and Talented Nomination Form

*** Required**

Homeroom Teacher *

Your answer

Grade *

5th

6th

Student ID *

Your answer

Student First Name *

Your answer

Student Last Name *

Your answer

Gender *

Female

Male

Student Date of Birth *

Date

Submit

Join us for Hylo Park's GT Parent Information Night

GT Parent Info Night

Does your child:

Get bored easily?

Seem TOO interested in EVERYTHING

Create songs, tunes, and poems people love to hear

Love talking about life's big questions

Have a desire to change the world

Love leading groups of their peers

Write hilarious stories or jokes?

Your child may be showing traits of giftedness. Join us for an informational parent night to learn about our gifted and

talented program on
September 2, 2019

5:00-6:30

LGI

RSVP on our website