

Statement of Professional Goals - Lisa Turner

This D.U. doctoral program will give me the opportunity to consolidate, focus and elevate my learning experiences in gifted education. One aspect of gifted programming that I would like to delve into more deeply, is the practice of clustering gifted students together in classes in ways that are not tracking. What I've already researched about the effectiveness of various models and the research that has been done on this strategy, appears to show that clustering can be very effective. Clustering may be a very cost effective way to meet the needs of gifted, while also enhancing academic progress for all other groups in a school.

Learning more about effective strategies and best practices in gifted education will help make me more efficacious in my classroom, school, district and as I participate in the gifted education community in Colorado. Boulder Valley School District, where I am currently employed, is at a pivotal point in enhancing programming for its gifted students. Since I began my formal instruction in gifted education, working towards my endorsement, my eyes have been opened to the world that is gifted educational research and knowledge. Sharing what I've learned with my students, teammates, colleagues, and community has become my passion. Increasing my knowledge base, conducting action research, collaborating with classmates and gifted educators and experts in this program will only multiply my ability to make a difference for gifted learners in my school district and beyond. I will use this knowledge to continue planning and presenting professional development, working affectively with and being an advocate for gifted students.

I am actively seeking leadership positions in the field of gifted education, and I think that the new learning I will acquire in this doctoral program will help enhance what I have to offer. I believe that working side-by-side with teachers, teaching them how to utilize best practices and effective instructional strategies for gifted students, is one of the most efficient ways to make a positive change for gifted students. I also am very interested in finding ways to show that best practices in gifted education will also raise

the bar for all other students in a school. In this era of spending cuts, I think that showing how best practices in gifted education will reap benefits for all groups of students, will not only benefit all students, but will also ensure that the needs of those students doesn't get left behind. Embedded professional development, coaching teachers and working with other educational specialists are some more ways that I plan to use the knowledge I will gain.

Getting my undergraduate degree in Environmental Studies with an emphasis in Aquatic Biology, I participated in many different aspects of research. For my senior thesis, I wrote a 75-page paper analysing the International Whaling Commission's history and effects on the whaling industry around the world. Working side-by-side with some world renowned professors, I learned so much about what quality research takes. In my Masters program at C.U. Boulder, I also had a wonderful opportunity to assist several of my professors in their work. And, finally, in my Endorsement program at D.U., our work with all of the great professors had us looking at many articles outlining research in education. And, I have also worked with middle level students, teaching them research strategies. Last, but not least, making meaning from CSAP and TCAP data year after year, requires an eye for research. Although I have done little in regard to educational research so far, I think that I have the tools with which to do so.

Attending NAGC for four years, and presenting at two conferences has given me so much information, helped me make connections with experts in the gifted educational realm and created a broad vision for how to improve what we do with gifted students. Feeling passionate about making sure that we don't lose these students, the dreamers, creators, problem solvers and leaders of tomorrow is, I believe, one of the most important things we can do. I bring many years of educational experience to this program; experience parenting two gifted children, training and facilitation of SENG groups, the creation and implementation of affective groups for gifted students, networking with colleagues, national experts, parent advocate groups and district leadership. Participating in this doctoral program will allow me to continue to make a difference for gifted students in a deeper and even more meaningful way. Although I

am not sure where my path is taking me, I know that successfully completing an EdD will allow me to go places and do things that I can only imagine.