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An Exploration of Gifted Hispanic/Latino Students' Educational Capital at One Title I Elementary School

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By

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A dissertation presented to the Faculty of the School of Education,

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ABSTRACT

An Exploration of Gifted Hispanic/Latino Students'

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Gifted programs, designed to enhance engagement and rigor for students exhibiting talent or potential beyond their peers in the general education classroom, are not equitably identifying and serving Hispanic/Latino students. This qualitative study explored gifted programming at a Title I elementary school located in a largely Hispanic/Latino community. Very few students received gifted services at the school, despite equity measures in place. Using a framework of educational capital, this study highlighted the cultural capital and community cultural wealth of gifted Hispanic/Latino students and provided suggestions for enhancing programming for this historically underidentified population of learners. Data were collected through semistructured interviews of parents and teachers of students receiving gifted services. Questions were aligned with concepts of capital, and a priori codes were used to analyze participant perspectives. Findings identified embodied cultural capital as the dominant gifted paradigm, but inequitable opportunities to learn hinder students' ability to embody giftedness. Also, the linguistic capital of other cultures has been unrecognized by gifted testing, impacting access for gifted emergent bilingual students. Finally, barriers to success (e.g., low levels of rigor and engagement at the school, lack of opportunity to test for the gifted program, and lack of navigational capital for

parents and teachers) threaten the vibrant hopes and dreams parents and teachers have for these students. Findings support the need for increased gifted programming in Title I schools and updated gifted policy to reflect culturally inclusive values.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Gifted and talented education (GATE) programs were developed to provide educational equity for students exhibiting knowledge or potential beyond their peers. Without challenges in their zone of proximal development, supporters of GATE programming have believed gifted students lose their edge, engagement, and motivation, and the United States loses the groundbreaking contributions of creativity and complexity those students would have made (Hollingworth, 1926; Marland, 1972; Renzulli, 2016). However, in the past 3 decades of educational reform, policymakers have dedicated most of their focus and funding to struggling students scoring in the bottom percentiles so these students may approach grade level expectations (Jolly & Robins, 2016). Emphasis on standardized testing has resulted in drill-and-kill teaching, frustrating students and parents alike (Darling-Hammond, 2007). Many eligible students have seen GATE as a refuge from the monotony of rote learning, a time and space where they can feel challenged, engaged, and understood (Lafollette, 2019). With no federal mandate and limited funding supporting their needs, advocates have claimed gifted students are an at-risk population (Jolly & Robins, 2016; Kurt & Chenault, 2017; Marland, 1972).

However, critics of GATE have proclaimed this program is a vehicle for inequity (Mansfield, 2015; Oakes et al., 1990; Persson, 2014). National data have consistently revealed disturbing enrollment patterns, as GATE programs across the United States have served an overwhelmingly White and Asian student population. Despite steadily increasing diversity in public schools, Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American students have been significantly underrepresented in GATE classrooms nationwide (Andreadis & Quinn, 2017; Ford et al., 2020;

Gentry et al., 2019; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Hodges et al., 2018; Peters et al., 2019; Siegle et al., 2016).

Scholars have investigated possible causes for this enrollment discrepancy for several decades (Ford et al., 2020; Gentry et al., 2022; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Hollingworth, 1926; Johnsen, 2004; Peters & Gentry, 2012). Some scholars have offered deficit-based rationales for the lack of diversity (Delisle, 2001; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Hollingworth, 1926; Johnsen, 2004). Other scholars have dug deeper to uncover barriers such as subjective referral policies, teacher biases, use of national testing norms, limited funding, unequal learning opportunities, and limited definitions of giftedness (Ford et al., 2020; Gentry et al., 2022; Peters, 2022; Peters & Gentry, 2012).

Solutions have been proposed to increase diversity in GATE classrooms such as universal screening processes, local norms, and lowering cutoff scores for eligibility (Ford et al., 2020). However, limited research exists on the results of such interventions, or on the students who are impacted by them (Horn, 2015; Olszewski-Kubilius & Steenbergen-Hu, 2017; Tempel-Milner, 2018). This dissertation explored the effects of gifted equity initiatives implemented in one of the nation's largest school districts from the perspectives of parents and teachers who have worked closely with one of the underidentified subgroups: Hispanic/Latino students.

This introductory chapter begins with contextual information on the school district featured and the equity journey the school's GATE department has undertaken. Then, a brief overview of the study's conceptual framework is shared, followed by a description of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions explored, and significance of this contribution to the body of knowledge surrounding gifted education. The research design and methodology

are briefly discussed, limitations and delimitations are exposed, and key terms used throughout this document are defined. The chapter concludes with an overview of the subsequent chapters.

Context

The United States has been undereducating its racially minoritized gifted learners and widening the excellence gap. According to Gentry and Whiting (2021), gifted White students are 2–10 times more likely to be identified and placed in gifted programs than their non-White peers. When comparing demographics of GATE programs with those of their corresponding school populations, racial disproportionality was found in all settings–urban, suburban, and rural alike. An estimated 53%–66% of gifted Hispanic/Latino students and 63%–74% of gifted Black/African American students have been missing from GATE classrooms (Gentry et al., 2022). The gifted gap is connected to a larger conversation on racial inequality, as inequitable opportunities create disparate schooling outcomes, widening the achievement gap (Ford et al., 2020; Peters, 2022).

As noted in the introduction, gifted researchers have uncovered myriad contributing factors to gifted identification disproportionality, including subjective referral policies, teacher bias and misinformation, eligibility requirements, lack of sufficient funding and policy, unequal learning opportunities, and limited definitions of giftedness (Aganza et al., 2015; Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012; Ford et al., 2020; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Mansfield, 2015; Siegle et al., 2016). These factors are explored in depth in Chapter 2. Two contributing factors—student referral procedures and gifted eligibility requirements—are discussed in this chapter for context, as the district in which this case study was situated implemented interventions to address these factors.

In most school districts, the gifted testing process has been initiated at a teacher's discretion (Grissom & Redding, 2016). Research has shown Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American students have not been referred for gifted testing as frequently as their White counterparts, even if their grades and test scores were the same (Ford et al., 2020; Gentry et al., 2019; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Novak & Jones, 2021). Clark County School District (CCSD), the district in which this study was situated, addressed this barrier by introducing a universal gifted screener.

Schools located in low-income communities are entitled to additional resources through Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965) to democratize access to a basic education. Since 2013, all CCSD second graders enrolled in Title I schools have been screened for the GATE program by participating in a whole-class computerized nonverbal assessment. This initiative has provided low-income students an opportunity to qualify for gifted services without teacher or parent referral, removing a documented barrier for some gifted students (Milliard, 2014). In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, universal gifted screening was extended to all CCSD second graders, regardless of socioeconomic status.

Rigid eligibility requirements have also served as identification barriers for non-White gifted students (Ford et al., 2020; Mansfield, 2015; Peters et al., 2019). Many assessments have become outdated and culturally biased (Mansfield, 2015; Siegle et al., 2016). Critics have said culture-blind norms failed to align with the 1993 federal definition of giftedness, which recommended students be compared to peers from their same environment and experience (Ford et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2019).

For minoritized student abilities to be evaluated equitably, their diverse backgrounds and educational experiences must be considered (Aganza et al., 2015). CCSD GATE program leaders addressed this barrier by adopting the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, Third Edition (NNAT3; Naglieri, 2018), an assessment that is completely nonverbal and does not require academic content knowledge. The NNAT3 has been promoted as culturally sensitive, predicting a "smaller difference between racial and cultural groups on a nonverbal measure of general ability than on a traditional verbal and quantitative measure of general ability" (Naglieri & Ford, 2015, p. 235). A computerized version of this test was also used as the second-grade screener.

The final and most intensive equity measure CCSD employed was an enrichment program serving all Title I students scoring above the 90th percentile during gifted testing. Poverty has been linked to lower academic outcomes, which includes lower average performance on tests used for gifted placement (Gentry et al., 2019; Peters & Engerrand, 2016; Welsh, 2018). According to Gentry et al. (2019), students attending Title I schools qualified for GATE nearly half as often as their counterparts in more affluent areas. In an effort to reduce barriers to opportunity for low-income students, CCSD developed Title I Alternative Gifted Services (TAGS), an alternate gifted program for Title I schools, providing weekly enrichment for students who score at or above the 90th percentile but do not qualify for GATE (Clark County School District [CCSD], n.d.).

Despite introduction of the universal screener and TAGS program, Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American students have continued to be underidentified as gifted, a designation that provides access to more robust services. This study investigated the gifted program at one Title I school to better understand its efficacy in identifying and serving its gifted students, and

what additional measures might increase students' educational capital. The school selected served a primarily Hispanic/Latino student body; therefore, gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students were the focus of this particular project. The following section unpacks the notion of educational capital as a theoretical concept and explains how this theory was used in this study.

Conceptual Framework

This research was influenced by the idea that enriching learning opportunities have real value because they facilitate the accumulation of further opportunities that can improve likelihood for success in adulthood. Once only available to children of wealthy elites, the U.S. public school system was developed to extend such learning opportunities to children of lesser means (Carpenter, 2013). Despite the democratic roots of public education, disparate outcomes have been consistently documented along racial and socioeconomic lines, always in favor of nonpoor, White students (Gentry et al., 2019; Peters & Carter, 2022; Yaluma & Tyner, 2018). As this study explored equity measures developed to improve valuable educational opportunities for historically undervalued students, I selected to use the economic concept of *capital* to frame the research. This section briefly describes cultural capital (CC) and community cultural wealth (CCW), the two main concepts informing this work.

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986), who wrote at length on the role of education in society, posited knowledge represented CC, or symbolic wealth. Bourdieu believed education could be embodied, objectified, and institutionalized to acquire–or keep–wealth and power. Although school was presented as a democratic opportunity for all members of a society to shape their futures, Bourdieu (1986) suggested schools actually contributed "to the reproduction of the social structure by sanctioning the hereditary transmission of cultural capital" (p. 17).

In other words, well-educated parents, having CC of their own, used this capital to ensure their offspring excelled in school. Meanwhile, less-educated families did not have the CC to help their children rise above the station into which they were born. According to Bourdieu (1986), schools were not using democratic pedagogy that enabled "relatively unprepared working class pupils" to succeed (Nash, 1990, p. 436). Similarly, in an article linking racial inequities in gifted education to the intentional establishment of Eurocentric concepts of intelligence promoted by early gifted scholars, Mansfield (2015) described the gifted label as *White property*, a distinction hoarded by White society to secure "an accumulation of material wealth that was just not possible for those not owning the gifted label" (p. 7).

In this study, I used Bourdieu's (1986) theory to situate the gifted gap that exists on a national scale. Many gifted Hispanic/Latino students have been found lacking at the highest levels of cognitive performance; thus, they have been turned away from gifted programming. Being consistently underidentified and undereducated, these minoritized students cannot access the same CC as their middle-class White counterparts, which, in turn, hinders their future opportunities to rise above their social and economic stations. According to Bourdieu's (1986) theory, this social structure is designed to reproduce itself ad infinitum. The next chapter reveals decades of gifted programming data corroborating Bourdieu's assertion. To break this cycle of hegemony, Hispanic/Latino students must be viewed through a lens free of bias, one that highlights what these students possess rather than what they lack.

Yosso (2005), centering her research on non-White students, objected to the frequent use of Bourdieu's (1986) deficit-based depiction of nondominant groups as an explanation for the achievement gap between White and non-White students. Yosso (2005) argued non-White

students possessed vast CC, but their forms of capital have been undervalued in White, hegemonic society. An example offered by Yosso depicted a teacher placing high value on a middle-class student's large computer-related vocabulary, yet not appreciating the skill required for a working-class bilingual student to regularly translate for her mother. To correct the erroneous narrative depicting non-White students as "culturally poor," Yosso developed a CCW framework that de-centered White, middle-class values as the gold standard and highlighted assets of minoritized people. The six forms of capital presented as CCW were aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant (Yosso, 2005).

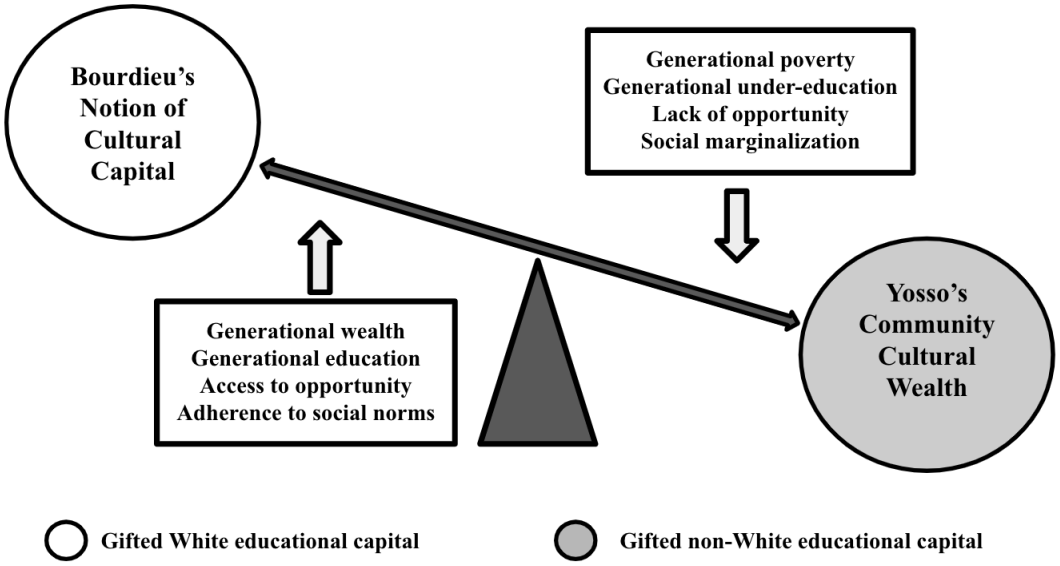
In this study, to consciously counter deficit-based tropes centered on White, middle-class ideals, I used CCW to highlight overlooked and undervalued strengths of non-White gifted students. The limited literature centering the unique gifts of underidentified subgroups has been shared, along with evidence indicating the education system has often ignored those gifts. Using CCW in my research enabled participants to highlight assets beyond the traditionally recognized paradigms of intelligence and helped me as a researcher to recognize nontraditional student gifts as these gifts emerged in my findings.

Together, CC and CCW presented a continuum of gifted capital that I used to better understand CCSD's gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students and the educational landscape in which they were learning (see Figure 1). On one end was the existing paradigm of giftedness, which White, middle-class students have had more opportunities to hone and demonstrate (Ford et al., 2020; Mansfield, 2015; Peters, 2022). On the other end were culture-specific traits that have enabled marginalized communities to persevere and thrive in the face of systemic barriers (Carrillo, 2013; Villaseñor, 2021; Yosso, 2005). I did not represent this continuum on a

horizontal plane, but rather on a diagonal plane to acknowledge U.S. students have often not started on even footing. Ladson-Billings (2006) asserted the United States is indebted to its historically minoritized students due to centuries of educational neglect and abuse. This imbalance of educational capital is visually depicted in Figure 1 as an unbalanced scale to keep the focus on systemic inequities rather than student deficits, as the gap existed long before the students did. Evaluative decisions affecting minoritized students' intelligence, potential, or access to opportunity have either added to or detracted from the education debt owed to these students for centuries (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Figure 1

Continuum of Cultural Capital



Note: Conceptual framework based on theories by Pierre Bourdieu and Tara Yosso. Cultural capital elements from "The Forms of Capital" by P. Bourdieu, in J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241–258), 1986, Greenwood Press. Copyright 1986 by Greenwood Press. Community cultural wealth elements from "Whose Culture Has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth" by T. Yosso, 2005, in *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), pp. 69–91. Copyright 2005 by Taylor and Francis.

The education system has been referred to as democratic, and opportunities have been labeled as equal or, in the case of gifted education, meritocratic (Bourdieu, 1986; Gagné, 2011; Hollingworth, 1926). This conceptual framework was designed to expand the conception of

giftedness beyond an elitist, status quo version that has disproportionately belonged to White students, and acknowledge the reality that other traits of giftedness exist and are regularly demonstrated by historically minoritized gifted students. The onus is on educators to acknowledge, nurture, and uplift these students. Throughout this study, this framework was used to highlight power imbalances that negatively impacted educational opportunities for minoritized gifted students.

The literature review in this study exposed how White superiority was embedded in the CC prioritized in eugenics-era intelligence tests, and how the link between race and intellect managed to persist even after race-science was debunked. Literature on non-White students has been filtered through the lens of CCW to move beyond the prevailing deficit-based perspectives that have barred so many students from gifted programs to see them for what they are, rather than what they are not. Both CC and CCW were woven into the interview questions and a priori analysis codes for the research component of the current study to identify these concepts in the dynamics of one school's gifted equity journey. The next section defines the problem of practice examined in this study.

Problem Statement

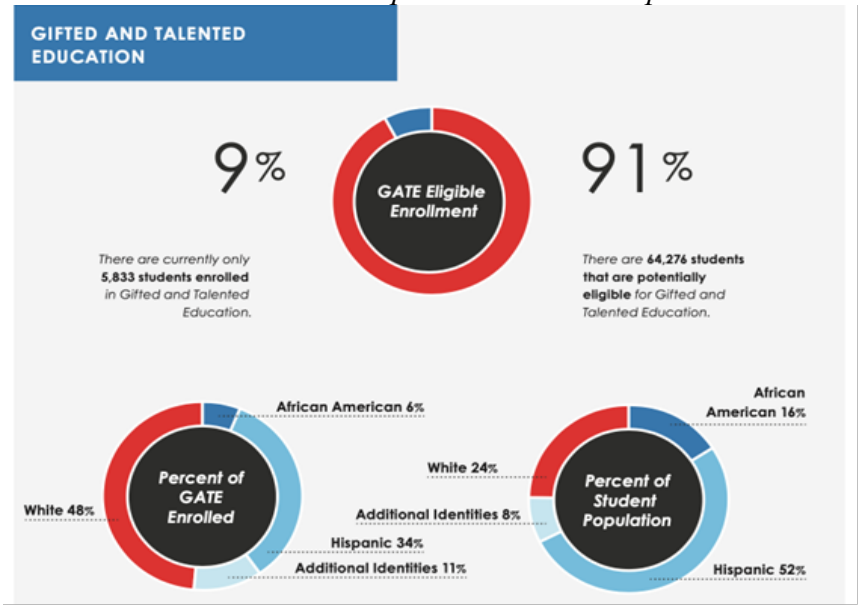
In this section, the specific problem of practice this dissertation explored is described. As stated in the introduction, minoritized students have been underserved by gifted programs since their inception, and limited literature has explored district efforts to close this gap. CCSD, a large urban district in Nevada, has been implementing interventions to identify more historically underidentified gifted students for over 20 years. Nevertheless, White students have been identified as gifted far more frequently than their Hispanic/Latino peers.

In 2020, the CCSD superintendent publicly acknowledged Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American students were not proportionately experiencing the same educational outcomes as White students in the district. A Student Equity and Access Commission was assembled to identify the main areas of educational disparity. School-level data analysis was conducted to reveal four areas in which White students received overwhelming advantages: prekindergarten access, accelerated coursework in middle school, advanced placement/career and technical courses in high school, and eligibility for GATE services (Clark County School District Superintendent's Student Equity and Access Commission [CCSDSSEAC], 2020).

According to the Commission's final report, White student representation in GATE was double their enrollment in the district overall, whereas Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American representation was significantly under their overall district enrollment (see Figure 2). The report stated a higher percentage of lower-income, Hispanic/Latino, and Black/African American students were enrolled in the 50-minute weekly TAGS program (CCSDSSEAC, 2020).

Figure 2

CCSD GATE Enrollment Compared to Student Population

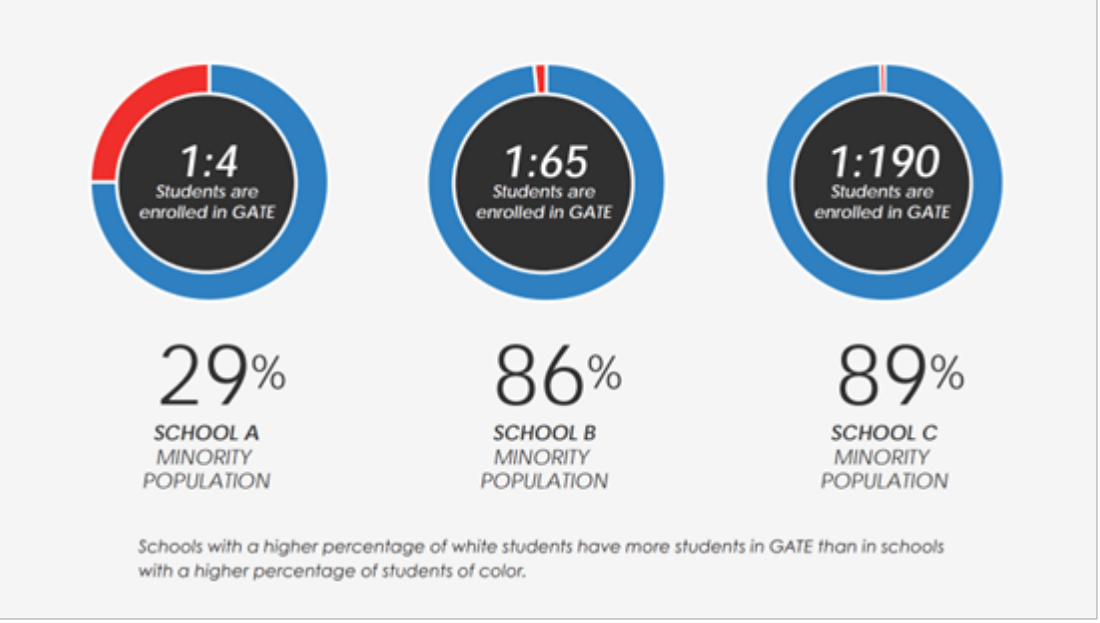


Note: This figure depicts district GATE enrollment by race. Adapted from "*Achieving Equity and Access in the Clark County School District: Optimizing Rigorous Academic Experiences*" by Clark County School District Superintendent's Student Equity and Access Commission, 2020, https://newsroom.ccsd.net/wp-content/uploads/CCSD-Student-Equity-and-Access-Commission-Report_FINAL-PRINT-SM.pdf. Copyright 2020 by the Clark County School District.

Also included in the district report was a ratio comparison of identified-gifted to nonidentified-gifted students at three CCSD elementary schools—one school in which two thirds of the student body was White (i.e., School A), one school in which 14% of the student body was White (i.e., School B), and one school in which 11% of the student body was White (i.e., School C). In School A, 1 in 4 students was enrolled in GATE; in School B, 1 in 65 students was enrolled in GATE; and in School C, 1 in 190 students was enrolled in GATE (see Figure 3; CCSDSSEAC, 2020). These data indicate an unmistakable equity of access issue.

Figure 3

Gifted Identification in Three CCSD Schools



Note: GATE enrollment according to minoritized population. Adapted from "*Achieving Equity and Access in the Clark County School District: Optimizing Rigorous Academic Experiences*" by Clark County School District Superintendent's Student Equity and Access Commission, 2020, https://newsroom.ccsd.net/wp-content/uploads/CCSD-Student-Equity-and-Access-Commission-Report_FINAL-PRINT-SM.pdf. Copyright 2020 by the Clark County School District.

Bourdieu and Wacquant (2013) attempted to identify laws, or "significant relationships—significant in the sense of nonrandom—between distributions" (p. 293) of resources among social classes. To truly see social and cultural capital at play, the authors posited, scholarly knowledge and practical knowledge had to be combined to assemble the whole picture. Scholarly or objective knowledge about scarcity of resources and the human instinct to compete for those resources had to be considered, along with practical or subjective acknowledgement that individual or collective divisions exist (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2013). The data depicted in the comparison of three schools' GATE enrollment in CCSD schools supported the suggestion that unseen CC was being exchanged that disproportionately benefitted CCSD's White students, making giftedness primarily White property (Bourdieu, 1986; Mansfield, 2015).

The district responded to the data revealed by establishing the following equity goal: the district must improve access to GATE programming so more Hispanic and African American students access the specialized instruction to support them with attaining their fullest academic potential. Specifically, the district should cut the gap in half between district enrollment and GATE enrollment for African American and Hispanic students by 2023–2024 (CCSDSSEAC, 2020).

The sentiment of this goal was echoed in an antiracism, equity, and inclusion policy set forth in 2020, which included commitments to identify and remove systemic racial barriers for students and optimize access to instructional programming while improving academic performance of underrepresented students (Clark County School District [CCSD], 2020). The following purpose statement reflects how this study directly addressed this urgent, district-identified need.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study was to better understand how racial disparities in GATE programs have been maintained in CCSD despite the equity measures the district has implemented, and to explore how those equity measures might be enhanced to create more racially proportionate outcomes in line with the CCSD goal for equity and access in gifted programming. By documenting and analyzing voices of parents and teachers who work most closely with historically underidentified and undereducated students, state and district education leaders may better be able to design and fund gifted programming that equitably aligns with the diverse communities they serve.

Research Questions

Semistructured interviews were used to gather data on the education of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students at one urban elementary school in the United States. The perspectives of parents and teachers working closely with this population were studied to better understand their attributes and educational needs. This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

- Central research question: Drawing from Bourdieu (1986) and Yosso (2005), how do notions of capital formatively shape the CCSD gifted program's ability to challenge educational inequities for racially minoritized students?
    - Subquestion 1: How do parent and teacher perceptions potentially differ regarding the assets and/or deficits of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students?
    - Subquestion 2: In what ways can the gifted program further enhance the educational capital of racially minoritized students in CCSD?

Significance of the Study

For decades, various scholars have proposed interventions to address the racial and socioeconomic disproportionality plaguing gifted programs (Ford et al., 2020; Gentry et al., 2022; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Johnsen, 2004; Peters, 2022; Peters & Gentry, 2012). However, comparatively little research has explored the efforts school districts have made to approach equity in this area, or the results they have had (Horn, 2015; Mun et al., 2020; Tempel-Milner, 2018). As this has been a nationwide equity crisis, studies on districts applying and evaluating interventions for GATE equity are desperately needed to build a database of effective strategies and best practices.

Also important to the field of gifted education are perspectives of adults working directly with students from underidentified populations. Interviews with teachers and parents of Hispanic/Latino students participating in gifted programs can provide invaluable insights regarding these programs and their impact on students, which can assist gifted policymakers and gifted program developers in creating more equitable and effective gifted programming.

Research Design and Methodology

This research was a qualitative study of the gifted program at a single urban elementary school in a southwestern state in the United States. The school, Sandy Dune Elementary School (pseudonym), was selected based upon its Title I status and majority non-White student body. At the time of research, the racial/ethnic breakdown of students was approximately 75% Hispanic/Latino, 20% Black/African American, and 5% White. Sandy Dune Elementary School had one part-time gifted specialist who provided both traditional GATE and TAGS services 1 day per week.

Data were collected through semistructured interviews with teachers and parents of gifted Hispanic/Latino students currently enrolled at the school. The purposive sample of interview participants included four teachers and five parents of Hispanic/Latino children receiving gifted services. The interviews centered around the participants' perspectives on the GATE and TAGS programs and the gifted students they worked with. The interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom (www.zoom.us), lasting approximately 30 minutes each. The transcripts were coded to correspond with the tenets of Bourdieu's (1986) CC and Yosso's (2005) CCW.

Limitations

Limitations bearing the potential to impact my findings included reliance on self-reported data, which may have contained inaccurate memories, exaggeration, or undue emphasis on events examined retrospectively; sample size, which limited generalizability of the findings; selection bias, as participant willingness to be interviewed may have been due to strong opinions; and my own researcher bias due to my positionality as a former gifted specialist in the school district studied. A detailed description of these limitations, and steps I took to minimize their influence, can be found in Chapter 3.

Delimitations

The delimitation of this study was its scope. This was a study of only one school's gifted programs, in one district, in one state located in the United States. This study took place during the spring semester of 2023. Only teachers and parents working directly with Hispanic/Latino Title I students receiving gifted services were interviewed.

I chose to direct my focus on gifted programming at a Title I school because of the lower number of students identified for GATE services. Also, Title I schools offered the additional TAGS program, supplemental lessons provided by a gifted specialist for students who narrowly missed the threshold for gifted identification. Research has shown race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status have served as factors affecting gifted identification. The TAGS roster may have contained the unidentified gifted Hispanic/Latino students the district has been seeking, making these students a group worthy of investigating (Peters, 2022; Peters & Carter, 2022; Siegle et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017).

Positionality Statement

In my youth, I struggled to navigate the divide between my Mexican and American identities, as the two cultures represented such different existences for me. I felt this conflict very profoundly at the end of second grade, which is also the time of year students begin testing for the GATE program. Like the students I am advocating for, I was an "other" at that time. I was not in lockstep with the system, impressing my teacher with noteworthy work. Academic excellence was the least of my concerns.

At that time, my mother and I shared a bed in the spare room of my grandparents' house in Sherman Oaks, California. We had just moved back from Mexico after my parents' attempt at reconciliation had failed. I was heartbroken to leave Mexico, and I did not make the transition easily. I was quickly labeled a *problem student.* My teacher regularly forced me to stand in the hallway until I was "ready to behave." She would also dump every item from my messy desk onto the floor, shaming me in front of my peers. There was a boy who would harass me on the playground, calling me a "beaner" and a "wetback" whenever he saw me. I remember feeling confused by the conflicting love and shame I felt for Mexico, and for being Mexican.

In hindsight, it is clear I was a child experiencing personal and cultural trauma, being forced to assimilate at school. Rather than being met with humanity and compassion, I was quickly labeled a problem. If "identity is constantly being reproduced through a process of social construction" (Kezar & Lester, 2010, p. 166), the information I was receiving at that time was I was unacceptable and unwanted. A child receiving such messages is unlikely to achieve at high levels. Fortunately, my mother believed vehemently in the transformative power of education and was determined I would succeed.

I come from a family of educators, so my White mother had the CC to steer me back on track that year, and each subsequent time I veered off-course—there were a few. Without her, I know I would have fallen through the cracks. In my capacity as a teacher, I have regularly seen children who were not so lucky, and who have faced academic and emotional obstacles far too great to tackle alone. Like other culturally diverse education leaders, I identify with minoritized students, and wish to serve as a bridge for them to reconcile their personal and school identities, so they can make the most of their education and their lives (Santamaría, 2014). This was the impetus that drove me to become a teacher and continued to drive me as I pursued this research.

Definitions of Key Terms

Before I define the terms repeated throughout this document, I must offer a brief disclaimer. I acknowledge language is continually evolving and terms often change to reflect greater respect, understanding, and visibility for people and their experiences. I ask that you, the reader, assume the best of my earnest intentions, and excuse any terminology no longer used.

Black/African American: In this document, this term refers to students whose parents have identified them as Black/African American on school registration forms.

Emergent bilingual: In this document, this term refers to students whose native language and language spoken in the home is not English.

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE): This term refers to special practices, methods, and theories used in the education of children who have been identified as gifted or talented. This service is available at all CCSD elementary schools for students in third, fourth, and fifth grades. A student can qualify for services by scoring at or above the 98th percentile on the NNAT3 (Naglieri, 2018) or the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition (KBIT-2; Kaufman &

Kaufman, 2004) or by earning at least 15 points on a multiple criteria matrix (Clark County School District, n.d.).

Gifted gap: This term refers to racial disproportionality of students identified as gifted. Representation is calculated by dividing the number of identified gifted students in a subgroup by the number of subgroup students in the overall population. (Dis)proportionality is found by comparing a subgroup's gifted representation versus that of other subgroups.

Gifted specialist: This term describes a licensed teacher dedicated to the identification and education of gifted students. In CCSD, this teacher is an employee of the GATE department and may work at a particular school on a full- or part-time basis, depending on the number of identified gifted students. This teacher must hold a graduate-level endorsement in gifted education.

Hispanic/Latino: In this document, this term refers to students whose parents have identified them as Hispanic/Latin American on school registration forms.

Representational equity: In this document, I use representation indices (RI) to examine the population of gifted programs as outlined by Gentry et al. (2019). RI are the percentage of a group identified as gifted divided by the percentage in the larger school population. The researchers define equity as having an RI of at least 0.80. A RI of 1.00 signifies perfect proportional representation.

Title I Alternative Gifted Services (TAGS): This term refers to gifted services only available at Title 1 elementary schools. CCSD students who qualify for TAGS score between the 90th and 97th percentiles on the NNAT3 or KBIT-2, and do not earn at least 15 points on the multiple criteria matrix (Clark County School District, n.d.).

Low-income: In this document, this term refers to students or families whose family income is at or below the poverty line, thus qualifying for free and reduced school lunch.

Middle-class: In this document, this term refers to students or families whose family income is above the poverty line, thus ineligible for free and reduced school lunch.

Title I: Under Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965), this program provides financial assistance to local educational agencies and schools with high percentages of children experiencing poverty to assist all children in meeting challenging academic standards.

Title I school: Schools in which students experiencing poverty comprise at least 40% of enrollment. Title I funds are issued for the operation of schoolwide programs that serve all children enrolled to improve the performance of the lowest-achieving students (Nevada Department of Education, n.d.b).

Organization of Dissertation

In this chapter, I introduced the study by sharing background and contextual information on GATE programming, describing the social justice problem of underidentification and undereducation of Hispanic/Latino students, and stating the purpose of the study. I outlined the research questions, provided the significance of the study, and situated the study in its theoretical framework. I shared the research design and methodology used, exposed limitations and delimitations, and defined key terms that are used throughout this document. Chapter 2 contains a review of literature surrounding the problem of practice, Chapter 3 provides a detailed account of the methodology used to conduct this study, and Chapter 4 shares the main findings of this

project. Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the results and their implications, and suggestions for next steps on the path to equity in gifted education.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review highlights critical research surrounding the underidentification and undereducation of gifted Hispanic/Latino students. The literature has been organized to demonstrate the complexity of this problem from various perspectives. The chapter begins by examining giftedness according to an assortment of federal and state policies. Next, the theoretical concepts that have framed this study are described, and connections are made to tie them to both gifted education and equity. The conceptual framework overview is followed by a chronological review of giftedness theories, from the racist pseudoscience promoted by early enthusiasts, to competing ideas accepted today.

Then, the focus of the literature review shifts from status quo ideals of giftedness to the gifts of students who have been historically ignored. Literature magnifying the traits of gifted Hispanic/Latino students is explored, as are the many barriers these students face in obtaining equitable gifted services. The chapter concludes with scholarly recommendations for improving access for non-White gifted students, and literature detailing evidence of progress in some districts.

Giftedness in Policy

It is helpful to begin a study of giftedness by establishing how it has been officially defined and identified in schools, as the language of legislation indicates what a system values and who it is meant to serve (Swanson & Lord, 2013). This section begins by historically tracing the ebbs and flows of national interest in gifted students in U.S. federal policy. The impacts of

these policies are examined through a brief overview of current state gifted policies, and data surrounding the students are subsequently identified.

Giftedness in Federal Policy

The first federal definition of giftedness was established in the Marland report of 1972, which stated:

> Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program to realize their contribution to self and society. Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas:
>
> 1. General intellectual ability,
> 2. Specific academic ability,
> 3. Creative or productive thinking,
> 4. Leadership ability,
> 5. Visual and performing arts, and
> 6. Psychomotor ability. (Marland, 1972, pp. 20–21)

The Marland report revealed the dearth of educational support in place for gifted students, who although federally acknowledged since 1931, had received inconsistent attention (Jolly & Robins, 2016; Marland, 1972). Marland (1972) emphasized the federal government's role in the marginalization of gifted students by asserting the lack of legislation supporting gifted learners "has kept the visibility of these children very low and makes it difficult to focus Federal

resources on the area" (p. 108). This official report helped gifted students access some attention, as evidenced by the establishment of the National and State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and Talented and the Office of Gifted and Talented, although the latter was later dismantled by President Ronald Reagan (Jolly & Robins, 2016; Lockhart et al., 2022; Marland, 1972). Perhaps the most significant outcome of the Marland report was Senator Jacob Javits' subsequent inspiration to become a champion for gifted students and procure grant money specifically for gifted education. The *Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Children and Youth Education Act* (1988) continued through 2023, providing supplemental funds between $5 million and $16.5 million annually for gifted research and programming; however, its continued funding is precarious (Jolly & Robins, 2016; National Association for Gifted Children, 2023).

Marland's (1972) definition of gifted children held legal ground until 1993, when it was supplanted by new language that described the gifted as:

> Children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools. Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. (U.S. Department of Education, 1993, p. 26)

The latest definition of giftedness established gifted and talented children are those "who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or

leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school to fully develop those capabilities" (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). Ford et al. (2020) asserted the 1993 definition was more equitable than its replacement, as the former definition indicated giftedness students should be compared with peers of same age, experience, and environment, and affirmed giftedness existed across all populations and all areas of human endeavor. Regardless of wording, some characteristics of gifted definitions have been virtually universal (Hodges et al., 2018; Rinn et al., 2020; Subotnik et al., 2011). The proceeding section addresses giftedness according to state definitions.

Giftedness in School Districts

Unlike special education, which has been federally protected, U.S. states have not been required to adopt the federal definition of giftedness. Nevertheless, many U.S. state and district definitions have been aligned with the federal definition (National Association for Gifted Children, n.d.). School districts have largely agreed giftedness specifically refers to students with high intellectual abilities (Hodges et al., 2018; Rinn et al., 2020; Subotnik et al., 2011). Subotnik et al. (2011) conducted a policy analysis of gifted programs throughout the United States and found general intelligence was the dominant paradigm of giftedness for district leaders, along with an understanding gifted students are highly sensitive and in need of socioemotional support.

Other common beliefs discovered by the researchers were abilities of gifted people transfer across domains, and giftedness is lifelong, regardless of what a person achieves in adulthood (Subotnik et al., 2011). A 2018–2019 survey of U.S. gifted policies conducted by Rinn et al. (2020) also revealed advanced intellectual ability and specific academic ability were commonly accepted indicators of giftedness, along with creativity or creative thinking. Hodges et

al. (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of gifted identification processes and found only half of U.S. states included latent potential along with manifest abilities in their definitions of giftedness.

As formally adopted language protects the values of a system, if equity affirming language is not present, needs of historically underidentified gifted learners can remain unaddressed indefinitely (Swanson & Lord, 2013). As states have tended to borrow language from federal policy to draft their own, a federal gifted definition validating potential would increase the possibility that marginalized gifted students with less educational capital might be identified and properly supported. According to Horsford et al. (2018), district-level education policies have revealed local power dynamics and ideologies, as the distribution of limited resources has affected community outcomes in significant ways. Education policy scholars have accused local policymakers of maintaining White innocence by not acknowledging harms policies have caused and not scrutinizing their systems for biases (Horsford et al., 2018; Lewis-Durham, 2020). Federal policies void of equity considerations have enabled local leaders to uphold the status quo, shrugging education and opportunity gaps off as "just the way things are" (Horsford et al., 2018, p. 34).

Some states have revised their gifted policies to reflect inclusivity. For example, Colorado, Florida, North Carolina, and Washington are among states that have explicitly addressed socioeconomic factors in their gifted definitions (Colorado Office of Gifted Education, 2022; Lockhart et al., 2022; Swanson & Lord, 2013). On the other hand, it has been common for states—including Nevada—to offer only vague descriptions of intellectual and academic needs. The Nevada definition for gifted and talented pupil was a student "who demonstrates such

outstanding academic skills or aptitudes that the person cannot progress effectively in a regular school program and therefore needs special instruction or special services" (Gifted and Talented Pupils, 2013).

Operational definitions for giftedness have been far from uniform nationwide, a fact several scholars have pointed to as proof giftedness is—at least to some degree—a subjective designation (Pearman & McGee, 2022). Regardless of the definitions or criteria used, a gifted gap has persisted. This chapter reveals several factors scholars have identified as barriers to opportunity for gifted Hispanic/Latino students. Notions of cultural capital (CC), community cultural wealth (CCW), and educational debt are used to highlight these inequities and underscore the urgency of this exploration. The next section explores these three concepts and ties them to literature on gifted students–White and non-White.

Conceptual Framework

To enhance understanding of how giftedness is so strongly tethered to Whiteness and how democratic school systems have consistently withheld opportunities from gifted non-White learners, theoretical concepts of CC and CCW were used in this study. CC, as described by Bourdieu (1986), was used to examine the status quo in gifted education, and how this status quo has continued to serve populations disproportionately. Yosso's (2005) critique on CC theory and subsequent theory of CCW was used to explore underidentified populations in gifted education, barriers that block their access, and gifts that remain unrecognized. With these theories as the poles, one can consider a continuum of knowledge—and beliefs about knowledge—possessed by members of a community. On one end is CC, showing knowledge endorsed and guarded by a dominant group to secure and maintain power, and on the other end is CCW, showing

knowledge and skills found in and used by nondominant groups to navigate life in the margins successfully.

Notions of Capital

Sociologist Bourdieu (1986) rejected the societal claim at the base of the American Dream—that through hard work every person has an equal chance to be successful in life. Bourdieu posited systems were at play among the wealthy and powerful that prevented those beneath them from rising above their assigned station in life. According to Bourdieu, those systems operated by the exchange of three types of capital among elites—economic, social, and cultural.

Economic capital was the most concrete form, referring to money or tangible items immediately convertible to money (Bourdieu, 1986). Both social capital, pertaining to connections to and belongingness with people in power, and cultural capital, referring to education and understanding of cultural norms are symbolic in nature, could also ultimately transform to economic capital. Social groups lucky enough to possess the three types of capital regularly traded the capital among themselves, solidifying their power in society, and blocking others from rising to their status (Bourdieu, 1986). CC is the form most closely aligned to education, although the three forms of capital often overlap in societal transactions.

Bourdieu (1986) posited CC existed in three different states: *embodied* state, presenting as knowledge; *objectified* state, presenting as tangible educational resources; and *institutionalized* state, presenting as degrees or titles signifying intellectual eminence. Bourdieu developed the concept of CC to explain the disparate educational outcomes of students from different social classes. Bourdieu noticed students did not necessarily succeed according to their

natural aptitudes, as would commonly be assumed, but would instead perform according to their social class. The more capital a student's family possessed, the better education the student would receive, even if the education was technically free in the first place. Economic and social capital somehow converted to CC as the result of a hidden system Bourdieu (1986) described as "domestic transmission of cultural capital" (p. 17).

Although economists have regularly studied educational investments in terms of profitability and expenditures, Bourdieu (1986) suggested such explorations were incomplete, as they failed to recognize and factor in "the best hidden and socially most determinant educational investment" (p. 17) elite parents made, which consisted of their time and their own CC. Scholars have found evidence of CC affecting equity in gifted education (Mansfield, 2015; Montoya et al., 2016). Montoya et al. (2016) identified CC at play in traditional gifted education programs, focusing particularly on the hegemonic advantage White parents give their children.

Following Bourdieu's (1986) suggestion that societal ideals are embedded in CC just as CC is embedded in the societal ideal, Montoya et al. (2016) suggested Whiteness was enmeshed in the educational system in "both agency and structure, embodied and socialized" (p. 130). Parents acted on their Whiteness to curry favor with an overwhelmingly White teacher workforce, and these parents embodied their socialized Whiteness by perceiving their children gifted and entitled to additional services (Montoya et al., 2016; Peters, 2022). Peters (2022) highlighted parental expenditures on education prior to formal schooling as an investment in CC, which in turn made their children appear smarter than children from less privileged families. Bourdieu (1986) posited by ignoring hidden-in-plain-sight cultural transactions such as these, the educational system was complicit in the reproduction of an inequitable status quo. Literature

surrounding gifted education has described minoritized students as frequent casualties of this type of system (Mansfield, 2015; Montoya et al., 2016).

Mansfield (2015) posited White skin had productive capacity and a student's Whiteness increased their likelihood of possessing attributes and knowledge aligning with gifted eligibility criteria. Established as White property, it has been easy and natural for educators to draw boundaries along the lines of giftedness and exclude all who were not White enough to enter (Mansfield, 2015). Montoya et al. (2016) suggested these boundaries were damaging to students' self-concept, asserting gifted non-White students doubted their intelligence and capability when found ineligible for gifted services due to White-centered criteria. A broader, more inclusive lens must be adopted to solve the equity issue in gifted education—one that acknowledges the lived experience of marginalized populations—otherwise, the students who have been kept in the dark will remain forever obscured from view. The next section describes CCW.

Community Cultural Wealth

Yosso (2005) agreed with Bourdieu's (1986) assertion that education economics were failing to account for the invisible—yet critical—exchanges of capital that ensured priority access to educational resources for students from elite groups. Yosso (2005) developed CCW as an extension of CC, broadening the cultural lens to minoritized populations—which has been Hispanic/Latino students in the case of this study.

CCW pointed a lens toward the epistemology of CC, questioning "whose knowledge counts and whose is discounted?" (Yosso, 2005, p. 69). Bourdieu (1986) described CC as the *habitus*, or disposition, of wealthy elites; however, CCW identified CC accepted in U.S. schools as dispositions of White, middle-class Americans (Yosso, 2005). As schools have been fashioned

on White, middle-class American values, educators have been conditioned to view non-White students as culturally deficient (Yosso, 2005). Yosso (2005) asserted minoritized communities possessed great cultural wealth that enabled them to navigate adversity and could be of great value in schools if recognized and nurtured.

Yosso (2005) described culture as behaviors and values that have been learned, transmitted, and embodied by a group of people, encompassing multiple identity factors such as immigration status, gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity. To develop CCW, Yosso analyzed research from various critical race scholars and compiled a working list of capital specific to non-White groups that often remains unacknowledged in educational spaces:

1. Aspirational capital: Ability to maintain optimism in the face of barriers.
2. Linguistic capital: Ability to use one or more language(s) or cultural code(s) intellectually and socially.
3. Familial capital: Cultural knowledge, strong sense of family, community ties.
4. Social capital: Networks of people and community resources who freely share connections to education, employment, legal support, healthcare, etc.
5. Navigational capital: Ability to navigate social institutions that are racially hostile by use of inner resources.
6. Resistant capital: Knowledge and skills to challenge inequality and resist the status quo. (Yosso, 2005)

This list represented "an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro- and micro-forms of oppression" (Yosso, 2005, p. 77).

This theoretical framework was also informed by Moll et al. (1992), who labeled similar culturally specific skills *funds of knowledge*. The researchers theorized if these skills were validated and nurtured in educational spaces, non-White students would be able to use the abundance of assets already in their communities to empower themselves and transform their education. Moll et al. (1992) tested their theory by training general education teachers in ethnographic research methods so these teachers could learn about their Mexican students' families through home visits. Teachers developed multidimensional perspectives of their students, realizing their students had rich backgrounds and experiences that could easily be tied to the curriculum to create engaging, culturally responsive lessons. Household funds of knowledge that could be transferred to the classroom included economics, agriculture, business skills, design and architecture, contemporary medicine, and moral knowledge (Moll et al., 1992).

Several gifted scholars have written about the friction between culture and giftedness (Carrillo, 2013; Ford & Harris, 1996; Luna et al., 2015). In this chapter, CCW was used to highlight deficit-based perspectives of non-White students and to counter those ideas with literature featuring assets and capabilities born out of these students' cultural experiences. The next section explores how the concept of giftedness has evolved and outlines how it has been recognized in the modern educational landscape.

Background and Historical Context

The fascination with the nature of thinking can be traced back to early civilizations. In ancient Egypt, people believed thought originated in the heart and judgment in the kidneys and head (Gardner, 1983). In ancient Rome, the word *genius* was used to describe the spirit of inspiration which guided artists to create masterpieces, rather than the artists themselves

(McDermott et al., 2006). In the 18th century, physician and scientist Franz Joseph Gall's *phrenology* attributed certain mental faculties with head shape, which incited a popular interest in the diagnosis of intelligence (Combe, 1824). In the 19th century, scholars such as Sir Francis Galton attempted to develop more specific methods of determining mental capacities to rank people by their intelligence and explore connections between genealogy and accomplishment (Gardner, 1983).

Various tests emerged to measure intellectual powers, and though some focused on strengths such as sensory discrimination, most followed scientist Alfred Binet into the realm of language and abstract thought (Gardner, 1983). Early in the 20th century, Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon introduced the first iteration of the intelligence quotient (IQ) test that could sort students into their appropriate grade levels and identify outliers at the very low and high ends of the intelligence spectrum (Gardner, 1983; Hollingworth, 1926; Terman, 1916). The field of gifted education was born in the era of the IQ test, largely influenced by psychologist Lewis Terman, who drafted a revision of the IQ test in 1916 (Gardner, 1983; Mansfield, 2015; Terman, 1916).

Early Beliefs on Giftedness

Lewis Terman (1916) and fellow psychologist Leta Hollingworth have been described as the father and mother of gifted education (Mansfield, 2015). Both individuals were supporters of the eugenics movement, believing human superiority and inferiority were inherited conditions, and personality traits such as feeblemindedness, criminality, poverty, immorality, and mental disorders would lead to the pollution and deterioration of humanity (Allen, 2011; Mansfield, 2015). As seminal experts in the field of giftedness, Terman (1916) and Hollingworth (1926)

successfully established a link between intelligence and White superiority. The scholars' early writings on IQ and giftedness firmly established intelligence as White property, and inferiority and subjugation as the incontestable fate of the non-White (Mansfield, 2015). Hollingworth (1926) stated "(c)omparatively few of (Black/African American) children are found within the range which includes the best 1% of white children" (p. 69). Terman (1916) elaborated on the intellect and subsequent human value of Black/African American, Mexican, and indigenous populations by stating:

> Children of this group should be segregated in special classes and be given instruction which is concrete and practical. They cannot master abstractions, but they can often be made efficient workers. . . . [F]rom a eugenic point of view they constitute a grave problem because of their unusually prolific breeding. (p. 92)

This quote suggested placing non-White students on rudimentary education tracks to prepare them for menial work. Although the scientific movement behind Terman's recommendation was debunked, academic tracking has been a well-documented phenomenon that has continued to negatively impact Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students (Mansfield, 2015; McDermott et al., 2006).

Terman (1916) and Hollingworth (1926) also addressed intellectual divisions among socioeconomic classes, noting most gifted children they identified came from wealthy families. Terman (1916) hinted at emergent discourse that suggested privileged environments facilitated intellectual excellence but cast the idea off as an "entirely gratuitous assumption," for "common observation would itself suggest that the social class to which the family belongs depends less on chance than on the parents' native qualities of intellect and character" (p. 115). Hollingworth

(1926) offered a meritocratic explanation, positing "modern men, both voluntarily and involuntarily, allow more money to the more gifted, which eventuates as inequality of earnings" (p. 2). Although this eugenicist rationale is no longer socially acceptable, the race and wealth-based achievement gap has been a social norm.

Terman (1916) and Hollingworth (1926) had many critics, but the general public was exposed to propaganda regarding the inherited nature of intelligence and intellectual superiority of upper-class White families via newspapers and popular magazines, thus White superiority prevailed as the dominant intellectual paradigm (Mansfield, 2015). Mansfield (2015) posited this propaganda paved the way for tracking procedures that ultimately made giftedness and gifted education White property, "resulting in an accumulation of material wealth that was just not possible for those not owning the gifted label" (p. 7). To this day, although the race-related pseudoscience of the eugenics movement has long been disproved and other theories of giftedness have emerged, racial and poverty-based deficit tropes have lingered. Gifted programs have continued to serve predominantly middle-class, White students. The next section describes the conceptual framework used to guide this study.

Defining Giftedness: Who Gets In?

Although the eugenics movement fell from grace, the power of the original gifted paradigm as general fixed intelligence has lingered, as has the "social caste system in schools" (Mansfield, 2015, p. 3). IQ tests, despite being critiqued for their incomplete measure of gifts as early as 1932, have continued to be commonly used to label gifted children (Allen, 2011; Subotnik et al., 2011). General intelligence, whether discovered through testing or academic achievement, has been the broadly accepted definition of giftedness among educators, and has

been reflected in policies throughout the United States (Subotnik et al., 2011). Other concepts of giftedness have emerged over time and have found followers. Three notable gifted theorists who have made significant contributions to the field are Joseph Renzulli (1978), Howard Gardner (1983), and Françoys Gagné (2004). Brief overviews of their ideas are described in the following sections.

Joseph Renzulli

Joseph Renzulli (1978) challenged the status quo by suggesting the word *gifted* should not be used as a noun to label students, but as an adjective to describe their behaviors. Instead of considering giftedness as fixed and static, Renzulli (2012) believed giftedness was "a developmental set of behaviors that can be applied to problem solving situations" (p. 1122). A proponent of theory-driven gifted instruction, Renzulli developed several theories and frameworks for gifted education that could be used in isolation or combined to provide an entire student body with the schoolwide enrichment model. The first and most well-known of Renzulli's theories was the three-ring conception of giftedness, which posited gifted behaviors resulted when three clusters of traits—above average ability, task commitment, and creativity—overlapped and interacted (Renzulli, 1978). According to Renzulli (2012), gifted behaviors "emerge in certain people, at certain times, and under certain circumstances" (p. 153). Renzulli posited students possessing above average ability—not those in the top 5% or 10%, as commonly assumed—had the potential to produce greatness if those students could harness perseverance (i.e., task commitment) and a willingness to think outside the box (i.e., creativity).

Renzulli (2012) proposed the enrichment triad model to lead entire student bodies through the learning process in three progressive tiers, a process that would gradually invite

students to move from deductive to inductive thinking. Proponents of standard gifted testing by way of IQ tests have disagreed with Renzulli's suggestion that giftedness was a behavior rather than a fixed trait, and disapproved of conditional access to the most advanced opportunities in the enrichment triad model (Delisle, 2001). Olszewiski-Kubilius (1999) critiqued the lack of information regarding identification and monitoring of the most advanced students, citing the need to ensure all students are provided increasingly complex tasks.

Howard Gardner

Howard Gardner (1983) presented a theory of multiple intelligences (MI) that dramatically broke away from the IQ test. Gardner (1987) resisted the notion intelligence was strictly linguistic or mathematical in nature and did not think a mind could be accurately appraised through an IQ test. Through historical research and time working with children and adults with brain damage, Gardner came to believe the human mind contained multiple areas of possible intelligence, and each of those areas had use and value—alone or in combination with one another. MI recognized nine different domains of intelligence: linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial, bodily–kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal, naturalist, and existentialist (Gardner, 1983, 1999). Gardner (1983) suggested all human beings possessed differing levels of intelligence in each realm. By focusing primarily on linguistic and logical intelligences, schools were doing a tremendous disservice to children and society. According to MI theory, identifying and understanding each student's intelligences could help teachers engage and instruct children more successfully, according to their unique learning orientations.

Gardner (1987) critiqued gifted identification based on IQ, suggesting numeric cutoff scores were arbitrary, and arguing giftedness was not general. Gardner insisted gifts and creativity were domain-specific and would be best developed with a specialized curriculum tailored to a student's particular combination of intelligences. Gardner was particularly concerned about students gifted with nonacademic intelligences and suggested an education system based on MI could better recognize and facilitate opportunities in the community where students' gifts could be used and appreciated.

Gardner (1983) predicted his use of the word *intelligence* to describe strengths he uncovered would provoke backlash from psychologists and others whose careers relied on the status quo understanding of the mind. As expected, one scholar dismissed MI as a "politically correct but intrinsically incorrect notion of what intelligence is," (Delisle, 2001, p. 14) enabling school officials to claim they were enriching all children, despite abandoning the truly gifted ones. Another scholar begrudgingly acknowledged MI's influence on educational reform, shifting educator perception of student abilities, and improving self-esteem of academically challenged students, however insisted Gardner's (1983) work was "built on flaky theory" (White, 2008, p. 624). Carrillo (2013) supported the inclusive slant of Gardner's (1983) MI theory but claimed the list of intelligences recognized were situated in the White, middle-class experience. Carrillo thus contributed a list of intelligences representative of Hispanic/Latino culture titled Mestiz@ Intelligence (2013). A description of Carrillo's framework is provided later in this chapter.

Françoys Gagné

Unlike many scholars who have used the terms gifted and talented synonymously, Françoys Gagné's (2004) differentiated model of giftedness and talent separated the two terms and demonstrated how the terms interacted. According to Gagné, gifts were the aptitudes children exhibited naturally as they developed. All children were born with gifts, but to varying degrees, according to genetics. Those children with natural abilities in the intellectual, creative, socio-affective, or sensorimotor domains registering in the top 10th percentile compared with peers could be considered *gifted*.

Talents, on the other hand, were high caliber skills that could only be developed with training, and *talented* individuals were those whose performance level ranked in the top 10th percentile of a particular field (Gagné, 2004). The differentiated model of giftedness and talent did not assume all gifted children would develop into talented adults. According to Gagné (2004), three types of catalysts existed that could have facilitating or hindering effects on gifted children as they developed: intrapersonal, environmental, and chance. An intrapersonal catalyst could be reflected in a child's temperament and attitude toward learning, and environmental catalysts could be size of family, neighborhood services, or access to high quality schools. Gagné (2004) believed chance served as the ultimate catalyst, as "children have no control over the socioeconomic status of the family in which they are raised, the quality of the parenting they receive nor over the existence of talent development programs in the neighborhood school" (p. 129).

According to Gagné (2004, 2011), a primary characteristic of gifted children was rapid learning, and acceleration was the best form of enrichment. Gifted students benefitted from being

identified and admitted to school early and needed their curriculum compacted to avoid monotony and maintain steady growth. Early success would engage children to keep striving and parents and coaches to keep encouraging gifted children. Gagné (2011) promoted daily enrichment in class with other gifted children, critiquing gifted camps and weekly pullout programs as not consistent or rigorous enough.

Gagné (2011) wrote a target article on the issue of representational equity in gifted education for *Talent Development and Excellence*. Regarding underrepresentation of non-White students in gifted programs, Gagné posited gifted eligibility (e.g., college admissions and drafts for sports teams) should remain meritocratic, prioritizing academic talent over gifts and accepting only students performing in the top 10th percentile, regardless of the impact of chance. Gagné's stance on the gifted equity issue was challenged on several fronts. Scholars dismissed Gagné's meritocratic justification for gifted racial disproportionality, citing systemic racism, inequitable opportunity, poverty, and stereotype threat as barriers for minoritized students (Baker, 2011; Cohen, 2011; Guenther, 2011; Harder, 2011; VanTassel-Baska, 2011). Gagné's argument that racial disproportionality was common in many fields was labeled an excuse to maintain the status quo, and critics defended underrecognized gifts of underperforming and undertaught minoritized children (Harder, 2011; VanTassel-Baska, 2011).

Of the three modern gifted scholars, Gagné's (2004) philosophy of gifted education aligned most closely with Terman (1916) and Hollingworth (1926), confirming the general definition of giftedness, affirming the effectiveness of IQ testing, and justifying gifted racial disproportionality through meritocracy. Privilege and early opportunity were accepted in Gagné's (2004, 2011) model of gifted education, even if it resulted in a suspiciously

homogenous student body. Renzulli (1978, 2012) and Gardner (1983, 1987, 1999) presented more expansive conceptions of giftedness and recommended enrichment for learners of all abilities. Analysis of state and district policy information, as well as enrollment disparities, has indicated most U.S. school districts have adhered to narrow interpretations of giftedness, supporting small, elite clusters rather than expanding their reach. The next section explores the gifted gap from a variety of angles.

Denying Giftedness: Minding the Gaps

Earlier sections of this literature review covered major ideas that have informed the concept of giftedness from the inception of gifted education to the theories surrounding the current environment. Despite the renouncement of eugenics as a movement, certain elitist tenets have persisted, namely the association of intelligence with the exhibition of early mastery and little acknowledgement of the impact privilege has on that expectation (Mansfield, 2015; Peters, 2022). Arguments positioning gifted children as a vulnerable population in need of rigorous educational experiences have been shared, as has evidence indicating students qualifying for and benefiting from gifted services have been largely White and middle class. This inequitable status quo has been unapologetically defended through a meritocratic rationale that stated future potential can be determined by evidence of past accomplishment (Gagné, 2011). This logic would support the outcome Bourdieu (1986) identified—a society in which CC remains in the hands of elites and social roles are reproduced ad infinitum.

This section shifted the spotlight from students who fit the definition of giftedness to the missing Hispanic/Latino students for whom the label was not originally made. First, literature on the characteristics of gifted Hispanic/Latino learners is explored and framed in alignment with

CCW. Common themes summoned in discussions of barriers to gifted identification and interventions that have been documented are shared to clarify how educational debt has continued to accumulate. Literature is reviewed documenting parent and teacher perspectives on Hispanic/Latino students, framing differing perspectives on the CC these students possess. At the end of this section, the gifted gap is situated in the broader excellence gap, confirming the grim fact that missing gifted students will most likely continue to be shortchanged.

Cultural Differences

Teachers in the United States have been predominantly White, rendering schools White spaces by default (Ford et al., 2020). Research indicates teachers have been prone to recognize strengths and advocate on behalf of students from their own ethnic background, and gifted Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students have been identified at higher rates in schools employing larger numbers of non-White teachers (Grissom & Redding, 2016). Cultural differences have stunted the communication between parents and teachers, which can also affect gifted identification. As the gifted referral process is often initiated at a parent's request, research indicates a non-White parent would feel more comfortable approaching a teacher of the same culture to discuss opportunities for their child (Grissom & Redding, 2016).

Gifted Hispanic/Latino Students

Assets of Hispanic/Latino learners have often gone unnoticed in U.S. schools, as educators have rarely sought background information about students through research or interviews (Aganza et al., 2015). According to Andreadis and Quinn (2017), national longitudinal data have yet to reveal improvements regarding Hispanic/Latino gifted enrollment.

Several researchers have analyzed strengths of gifted Hispanic/Latino students, many of which can be aligned with Yosso's CCW (2005) as follows:

- Aspirational capital: High motivation to learn, high achievement in school and community, creativity, internal locus of control, resourceful and imaginative with simple objects (Bernal & Reyna, 1974; Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012).
- Linguistic capital: Commonly indicated, either regarding the speed of English acquisition, storytelling abilities, or ability to code switch between English/Spanish and social/academic (Bernal & Reyna, 1974; Carrillo, 2013; Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012).
- Familial capital: Strong family bonds, ability to handle mature responsibilities at home (Bernal & Reyna, 1974; Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012).
- Social capital: Strong interpersonal and leadership skills, interacting comfortably with adults, cultural pride and sensitivity, collaborative nature (Bernal & Reyna, 1974; Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012).
- Navigational capital: Ability to obtain resources and supports, sufficient "street" smarts to meet their needs in the community (Bernal & Reyna, 1974; Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012).
- Resistance capital: These strengths are best exemplified by Carrillo's (2013) mestiz@ theory of intelligences, which are all reflections of resistance capital, including (a) navigating/contesting oppression; (b) centering subaltern knowledge; (c) centering critical, hybrid identities; (d) straddling multiple forms of cultural capital; (e)

> decolonization; (f) struggling for psychic, cultural, emotional, and spiritual wholeness; and (g) remaining committed to social justice. (p. 76)

Aganza et al. (2015) recommended educators testing Hispanic/Latino students for any type of special education use a cultural assets identifier to frame an investigation of their abilities. Rather than making deficit-based assumptions, information should be gathered via records, observation, and student interviews to complete a cultural assets identifier and gain a more complete picture of Hispanic/Latino student abilities.

Parent Perspectives

Insights of Hispanic/Latino parents have seldom appeared in literature surrounding gifted education, even though parental involvement has been linked to academic success for minoritized students (Villaseñor, 2021). This section details research conducted on parent perspectives on the education of gifted Hispanic/Latino students.

Non-White parents, like White parents, have expressed high aspirations for their children's academic success (Chan, 2022; Huff et al., 2005; Huguley et al., 2021; Villaseñor, 2021). However, studies surrounding non-White parents have revealed distinct social experiences such as social exclusion, economic subordination, and interpersonal racism, and a lack of acknowledgment regarding their parenting approaches surrounding school (Huguley et al., 2021). Chan (2022) found non-White and/or low-income parents increased their involvement when children were admitted into gifted and talented education (GATE), but White, middle-class families maintained the same level of involvement or became less involved. Chan interpreted this finding as an indication White parents saw themselves as substitutes for educators when

schooling was inadequate, whereas non-White parents engaged more as complementary educators when schooling was strong.

Parent perspectives collected by other researchers have confirmed strong involvement by non-White parents in their gifted child's learning, but Black/African American parents interviewed by Huguley et al. (2021) reported home-based supports were necessary for their children to have a minimally adequate education. Participants interviewed by Huff et al. (2005) also believed their children were being systematically undereducated and parents were on their own to teach their children. Most parents interviewed by Huff et al. had attended college, which the parents acknowledged as navigational capital, surmising less-educated parents would likely not know about or be able to procure the same opportunities for their children that they had.

Villaseñor (2021) interviewed Hispanic/Latino parents in a district that boasted equitable identification of Hispanic/Latino students, and their perspectives were far more positive concerning their children's teachers and gifted programming. Parents appreciated frequent communication from the gifted program, and information was available in Spanish. As a result, parents were more active in their children's education. The parents consulted with the school for support and advocated for educational opportunities for their children in the GATE program.

Gifted Hispanic/Latino students' parents interviewed by Villaseñor (2021) also supported their children's education from home. Parents reported promoting high achievement through verbal praise and motivation regarding academic performance. Parents provided necessary supplies to be successful at school, recounted their stories of immigrant hardship and lack of educational opportunity, and exposed children to extracurricular activities such as literacy events through the public library.

Hispanic/Latino parents indicated school involvement was hard due to inflexible work schedules (Villaseñor, 2021). Parents reported feeling supported by the school, assuming the teacher knew what was best for their child. Fortunately, in the district studied, GATE teachers were trained in cultural responsiveness, aware of lesser-known traits of giftedness, and not misguided by cultural characteristics that may mask giftedness such as avoiding eye contact, being shy, and not volunteering answers even if the child knew the answer (Villaseñor, 2021).

Barriers to Equity

Non-White students have faced some major hurdles on the path to equitable gifted identification. Scholars have identified barriers within the tests administered for gifted identification and the norms used to determine eligibility (Gentry et al., 2019; Hodges et al., 2018; Mun et al., 2020; Naglieri & Ford, 2015). Inequitable opportunities to learn for non-White students have been identified because of poverty and systemic racism (Peters, 2022; Peters & Carter, 2022; Siegle et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). Researchers have also found the biases of teachers and tracking systems negatively impacting gifted non-White students Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012; Ford et al., 2020; Grissom & Redding, 2016; McDermott et al., 2006; Siegle et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). This section describes the barriers to equity, as well as the excellence gap that has grown as a result.

Tests and Norms

IQ tests have been seen as identification barriers for many gifted Hispanic/Latino students due to their verbal and quantitative requirements; thus, advocates have promoted nonverbal assessments to measure students' problem solving, reasoning, and observation skills (Gentry et al., 2019; Hodges et al., 2018; Mun et al., 2020; Naglieri & Ford, 2015). Many

districts have incorporated nonverbal tests into their testing routine (Hodges et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2021). Nevertheless, use of nonverbal testing has not proven a panacea in and of itself, as non-White students have demonstrated lower average scores even when taking reportedly culture-blind nonverbal tests (Giessman et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2021). Scholars have endorsed the use of local norms for identifying historically underidentified student groups (Ford et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2019; Plucker et al., 2017).

Using Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA, 2000) test data, Peters et al. (2019) created hypothetical school-based norms for schools in 10 states and proved Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino representation would increase by at least 20% using school norms over national norms. These norms aligned with the verbiage of the 1993 federal definition of giftedness by comparing students with peers not just alike in age, but also in environment and experience. This more nuanced comparison acknowledged factors such as the impact of CC on students' opportunities to learn (OTL).

Opportunities To Learn

A significant amount of literature has indicated White students have benefitted from more OTL than their non-White counterparts due to poverty, privilege, and even outright systemic indifference to injustice (Peters, 2022; Peters & Carter, 2022; Siegle et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). A critical look at OTL sheds light on how the exchange of capital—symbolic and financial—has negatively impacted non-White gifted students.

Poverty. Hispanic/Latino students have been more likely than White students to experience poverty and remain in poverty for longer periods of time (Paschall et al., 2018). Although gifted programming has been offered in most high poverty schools, participation has

been much lower than in more affluent schools (Gentry et al., 2019; Peters & Carter, 2022; Yaluma & Tyner, 2018). Yaluma and Tyner (2018) compared gifted participation statistics of White, native English speakers who did not qualify for free or reduced lunch with other populations and found low-income, emergent bilingual Hispanic/Latino students were 15.5 times less likely to participate. According to Andreadis and Quinn (2017), disadvantaged students have been disproportionately affected by education budget cuts. States that have dedicated substantial resources to increasing graduation rates of disadvantaged students have experienced positive spillover effects on gifted identification and enrollment (Andreadis & Quinn, 2017). Without equitable, need-based investment to increase OTL, low-income students have not had the CC to compete with students raised in more privileged circumstances.

Privilege. The abundance of OTL available for many White students has compounded the lack of OTL that poverty has presented to many non-White students. Multiple studies have confirmed the most significant variable in the achievement gap is parental education (Hung et al., 2020; Peters & Carter, 2022; Rindermann & Ceci, 2018). Parents with higher education degrees could afford to live in low-poverty areas, where schools were more likely to provide gifted program access, even after controlling for achievement, than high poverty schools in the same district (Peters & Carter, 2022). According to Plucker et al. (2017), college-educated parents were more likely to pursue rigorous academic challenges outside of the public system such as private schooling, extracurricular programs, and educational computer programs.

This supplemental education is a privilege bought by various forms of capital unavailable to low-income families. Plucker et al. (2017) described hidden education costs privileged families have been able to take for granted, such as transportation or time to take a child to off-

campus extracurricular activities, funds for a college student to accept an unpaid internship instead of a summer job, or even access to quality enrichment opportunities in the neighborhood. Peters (2022) insisted student circumstances and outcomes have been vastly different due to the negative factors such as poverty, lead exposure, and police violence disproportionately experienced by some groups and positive factors such as prenatal care, parent spending on education, and childcare experienced by others. Peters (2022) stated without equitable gifted education in public schools, "the gifted kids who have the most cultural, social, and economic capital" (p. 88) will be just fine, but their less privileged peers will not.

Systemic Racism. Some scholars have insisted years of blatant inequities in OTL are evidence of systemic racism (Mansfield, 2015; Peters, 2022; Wright et al., 2017). Both Mansfield (2015) and Wright et al. (2017) claimed inequitable identification practices have been used strategically to justify gifted classrooms as White spaces. Wright et al. (2017) identified elementary gifted programs as the pipeline to advanced placement and International Baccalaureate courses in high school, securing future White spaces. At the very least, Peters (2022) flagged the dominant culture's resistance to self-examination and change as a major equity barrier, stating:

> That there should be proportionality in gifted education given the current state of inequality is a perfect example of a noble lie—something nearly everyone wants to be true, because it will not require anyone or anything to change or make any personal sacrifices, but due to the massive inequalities and institutional racism in society, it simply is not. (p. 90)

One group many gifted equity scholars have implicated in this form of willful ignorance is teachers in the United States.

Educator Bias

Research has indicated Hispanic/Latino students have been perceived as less capable than their White peers by educators, thus preventing them from accessing rigorous educational opportunities. The negative effects of educator bias have been studied at the classroom level with teacher attitudes, as well as at the schoolwide level with ability tracking.

Teachers. A significant obstacle found standing between gifted Hispanic/Latino children and GATE services has been their general education teacher (Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012; Ford et al., 2020; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Siegle et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). The GATE testing process is usually initiated at a general education teacher's discretion, and research has shown White teachers have not referred Hispanic/Latino students as frequently as they have referred White students, even if grades and test scores were the same (Ford et al., 2020; Grissom & Redding, 2016). One explanation for this discrepancy may be bureaucratic representation, an idea borrowed from political science suggesting bureaucratic teachers offer preferential treatment to students of their own race (Grissom & Redding, 2016). Another explanation offered is misunderstanding of student behavior. Teachers could interpret non-White student inattention, withdrawal, or disorganization as deficiency when this behavior might represent frustration with language and cultural adjustments (Aganza et al., 2015).

Multiple studies have indicated teachers lack education surrounding unique characteristics of gifted Hispanic/Latino learners and require training to reduce biases (Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012; Ford et al., 2020; Grissom & Redding, 2016). However, White

teachers may not be aware of their cultural blind spots. In a study comparing White teacher and non-White teacher perceptions, Hargrove and Seay (2011) discovered White teachers held lower beliefs in the abilities of their Black/African American male students, and attributed student deficits to nonschool factors such as home life as opposed to school factors such as school personnel, practices, or policies. Non-White teachers held more nuanced beliefs, implicating both school-related and non-school-related factors as barriers to Black/African American male achievement. White teachers did not rate teacher perception as a barrier to Black/African American student success and rated themselves highly as teachers for Black/African American boys (Hargrove & Seay, 2011). Teacher bias could be internalized by non-White students, leading them to grapple with issues such as stereotype threat, self-doubt negatively impacting non-White students when faced with the possibility of confirming a negative stereotype (Baker, 2011; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Walton & Spencer, 2009).

Tracking. Deficit perspectives have also been linked to racist tracking practices in schools. McDermott et al. (2006) noticed a race-based hierarchy was enacted in schools through ability tracking, although educators insisted students were sorted based on natural, inherent differences. According to the researchers, "American education is well organized to have the problem of mixing and matching [learning disabilities] and minority status" (McDermott et al., 2006, p. 12). Ratios of White students at the top and minoritized students at the bottom of a fiercely competitive system indeed align with Bourdieu's (1986) assertion that forces beyond sheer effort and ability are at play in schools. According to McDermott et al. (2006), labels teachers affix to students say more about U.S. culture than they do about U.S. schoolchildren.

Widening the lens to the larger excellence gap, race-based hierarchy is a throughline in U.S. culture.

The Excellence Gap

Sometimes labeled achievement gap, excellence gap refers to documented discrepancies in eminence between middle-class, White Americans and their non-White peers. This gap has been studied concerning various measures such as academic achievement, college graduation rates, and even incarceration rates (Bransberger, 2017; Hung et al., 2020; Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Black/African American boys have consistently been the population least likely to graduate high school (Bransberger, 2017). Furthermore, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino men have been less likely than their female counterparts to complete an associate or bachelor's degree. Beyond school walls, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino men between 18–24 years old have been more likely to be incarcerated than the general population, hindering success in the labor force (Bransberger, 2017). This unfortunate finding has been supported by a body of disturbing research surrounding the school-to-prison pipeline; however, a detailed account of the school-to-prison pipeline was beyond the scope of this current study (see Christle et al., 2005; Skiba et al., 2014; Wald & Losen, 2003).

A study by Valant and Newark (2016) revealed U.S. residents did not prioritize closing the race achievement gap. Researchers surveyed approximately 1.8 million U.S. residents about closing test score gaps, offering several options that participants could rank in order of preference. Findings suggested U.S. residents were twice as concerned about wealth-based gaps than race-based gaps. These findings suggested policies targeting wealth gaps were likely to be

more successful than those addressing Black–White or Hispanic/Latino–White gaps (Valant & Newark, 2016). The authors surmised efforts could be made to close race gaps using race-neutral initiatives that happened to disproportionately benefit non-White children, as there was significant overlap in the race and wealth gaps.

Ladson-Billings (2013) critiqued the language surrounding excellence gaps for implying non-White learners have caused their own educational failings, when White society has thwarted the education of their ancestors for centuries by stating:

> Achievement gap language suggests that each individual is responsible for his or her own educational circumstance and Black and Brown students need to "catch up" to their White counterparts without acknowledging the ways that catching up is made near impossible by the many structural barriers the society has imposed on them. (p. 105)

Rather than problematizing non-White students as learners, Ladson-Billings (2006) insisted the onus of the excellence gap was on society—that the education debt was mounting and long overdue. Just as the U.S. national debt has continued to grow—even when the budget was balanced—due to climbing interest from years past, the education debt has represented centuries of enslavement, forced assimilation, and legalized apartheid, with costly effects extending to various sectors of society.

It is impossible for non-White students to close the excellence gap alone, especially when funding inequities continue to negatively impact them (Ladson-Billings, 2006). The responsibility lies with educators and researchers, who must work urgently and creatively to bridge the gap.

Diversifying Giftedness: What Do We Do?

As evidence has clearly suggested, the gifted gap is a complex problem to solve. Peters (2022) recommended schools and districts address the problem in stages, wasting no time with what can be done immediately to develop a plan for more substantive measures over time. The following sections indicate equity recommendations culled from literature.

Immediate Actions

Regarding assessment, many scholars have agreed universal screening provides far more access to historically underrepresented gifted students than the teacher and parent nomination process (Peters, 2022; Plucker et al., 2017). Screening all students can lessen the unbalanced influence of privileged parents who tend to over-refer (Peters & Carter, 2022). Also, having universal data would facilitate implementation of local norms, another recommended practice to ensure the most advanced learners of a school community are challenged (Plucker et al., 2017).

Nonverbal assessments, although there has been some discrepancy on whether these types of assessments make a difference in closing proportionality gaps, have been seen as more culturally neutral for emergent bilingual students and for students whose parents do not have college degrees (Mun et al., 2020; Plucker et al., 2017; Siegle et al., 2016). Scholars have also recommended using multiple strategies for identifying gifted learners from diverse cultural backgrounds, such as portfolios, teacher and peer nominations, and class tryouts (Mun et al., 2020; Siegle et al., 2016). By incorporating more inclusive identification practices for historically underidentified gifted students, educators could consider giftedness beyond the scope of CC and provide space for students from nondominant cultures to demonstrate CCW.

Longer Term Commitments

Siegle et al. (2016) insisted equitable gifted education must begin before assessment because underrepresented students need OTL to develop their talents and prepare them for success in gifted programs. Frontloading historically underidentified students with challenging activities could facilitate success with more rigorous coursework (Peters, 2022; Siegle et al., 2016). By frontloading, schools would distribute CC to students with fewer OTL as an effort to even the playing field. The Young Scholars program, Project Excite, and Access to Inquiry were examples of frontloading programs (Peters, 2022). Frontloading equity efforts have been implemented as programs in high-poverty schools and as extracurricular camps and after-school programs (Horn, 2015; Olszewski-Kubilius & Steenbergen-Hu, 2017; Tempel-Milner, 2018).

Enrichment for all students would be a strategy in alignment with Renzulli's (1978) theory that giftedness is a behavior contingent upon a rigorous, creative environment. Reis and Renzulli (2010) promoted the schoolwide enrichment model as an equitable way to circumvent opportunity gaps for learners in urban schools. Using Science, Talents, and Abilities to Recognize Students Promoting Learning for Underrepresented Students (U-STARS~PLUS; Harradine et al., 2014) was another schoolwide talent development program reported to help ignite, nurture, and identify talent of underserved K–3 students through science-based lessons in the general education classroom (Coleman, 2016).

Grouping gifted children in clusters was also recommended to facilitate differentiation and advanced learning (Chan, 2022; Plucker et al., 2017; Reis & Renzulli, 2010). According to Plucker et al. (2017), teachers have fostered greater academic outcomes when supporting smaller

bands of student abilities. The authors claimed equity could be ensured by keeping grouping flexible, so no student was tracked for low expectations.

The area scholars have focused on as paramount in any gifted equity endeavor is teacher training (Brown & Wishney, 2017; Hargrove & Seay, 2011; Mun et al., 2020; Plucker et al., 2017; Wright et al., 2017). Academically, teachers must understand the excellence gap and be trained with interventions not just for struggling students, but also for those on the advanced end (Plucker et al., 2017; Wright et al., 2017). As most teachers are White, these teachers must become culturally responsive and raise expectations for Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and emergent bilingual students (Mun et al., 2020; Wright et al., 2017).

Scholars have also suggested educators must have courageous conversations about race (Brown & Wishney, 2017; Hargrove & Seay, 2011; Wright et al., 2017). According to Hargrove and Seay (2011), administrators have avoided talking about race by discussing poverty as a proxy. School leaders have been advised to conduct surveys on teacher perceptions regarding cultural competency, lead staff in case study analyses, develop safe spaces to discuss ideas about improving outcomes for underserved students, and target trainings to align with teacher survey responses and the unique needs of the school community (Brown & Wishney, 2017). Teachers who carry deficit mindsets regarding non-White students must be identified, and a plan must be made to develop their cultural competency (Wright et al., 2017). A final critical recommendation is that districts hire more non-White teachers to serve as "cultural brokers, role models, mentors, and strong advocates" for an increasing population of non-White students (Wright et al., 2017, p. 58).

This section provided many research-based recommendations for improving equitable access to gifted education. Although multiple scholars have proposed solutions for closing the gifted gap, a scarcity of literature has documented school or district efforts to implement these solutions and their effect on underidentified gifted populations (Siegle et al., 2016). These data are urgently needed for the gifted community to be informed of best practices as they emerge and keep the equity needle moving in the right direction.

Conclusion

Lewis-Durham (2020) posited policymakers "willfully maintain White ignorance" (p. 3) by failing to acknowledge repercussions of systemic racism and ways U.S. society has been fashioned to favor certain groups over others. It is clear the origins of gifted education were steeped in racist misconceptions and gifted programs have failed to identify students equitably. Scholars have written prolifically about the racial disproportionality in gifted identification and education. Considering persistent racial disparities extending far beyond the gifted classroom, it is also clear more needs to be done to solve this equity issue. In this regard, many school districts have adopted universal screeners and nonverbal tests to reduce discriminatory barriers for gifted Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students. Moreover, some districts—including CCSD—have even offered alternative programming to extend frontloading to underrepresented populations. As such, these school districts are in a unique position to find and serve gifted students who have been missing since the inception of gifted programs.

Unfortunately, there has been limited literature surrounding the impact of gifted equity measures. Existing research has highlighted the need to adapt gifted identification and education practices, but only minimal documentation of such efforts exists to show how efforts affect the

targeted student populations. As such, much can be learned by studying the firsthand accounts of teachers and parents of underrepresented students involved in gifted programs. To this end, CC and CCW provide a relevant lens to analyze perceptions of giftedness in minoritized students and program efficacy. It stands to reason research on this topic can inform the future practice of gifted education leaders who are looking to develop more equitable, culturally responsive programs.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The previous chapter illustrated White students, by belonging to the dominant U.S. culture, have had a higher likelihood of being identified as gifted than non-White students (Mansfield, 2015; Montoya et al., 2016). On the other hand, Hispanic/Latino students have been more likely to experience poverty, racism, and other barriers to equitable education (Ford et al., 2020; Gentry et al., 2019; Peters, 2022). Participation in gifted programs has been linked to subsequent educational opportunities, such as eligibility for advanced placement courses and admission to elite colleges (Wright et al., 2017). According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital (CC) is a form of symbolic wealth attributed to knowledge and learning that can be used to secure wealth and power.

By participating in gifted programs that provide enriching learning opportunities, White students have had access to additional CC, widening the achievement gap (Mansfield, 2015). In 2000, the Clark County School District (CCSD) implemented the Title I Alternative Gifted Services (TAGS) program to extend gifted programming to low-income students who might have qualified for gifted and talented education (GATE) if they had been exposed to learning opportunities similar to those of their more privileged peers (S. Moll, personal communication, May 18, 2022). The TAGS program could potentially impact many Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American learners, as these students are statistically more likely to experience poverty than White students (Paschall et al., 2018).

Over 2 decades later, although many Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American students have participated in the TAGS program, these subgroups have still not been

proportionately identified for the GATE program. The purpose of this qualitative study was to better understand how the phenomenon of racial disparities in gifted programs has continued to exist in CCSD despite the implementation of equity measures, to study how notions of CC might help or hurt Hispanic/Latino gifted students, and to explore possible actions that could be taken to create more racially proportionate outcomes in line with the CCSD goal for equity and access in gifted programming.

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology I, the researcher, used to conduct the study. To begin, the research questions I sought to answer are presented, and an explanation of how those questions align with social justice aims. Next, I provide a rationale for choosing to conduct a qualitative study. Next, the research methodology is detailed, including a description of participants, setting, and steps followed for data collection. I also share my data analysis methods, and measures taken to ensure validity and trustworthiness. Lastly, I describe the limitations and delimitations of this study.

Research Questions

To guide this study about the capacity of CCSD's current equity measures to improve the CC of Hispanic/Latino gifted students and explore possible actions that could be taken to create more racially proportionate gifted services in line with district equity goals, I established the following research questions:

- Central research question: Drawing from Bourdieu (1986) and Yosso (2005), how do notions of capital formatively shape the CCSD gifted program's ability to challenge educational inequities for racially minoritized students?

- Subquestion 1: How do parent and teacher perceptions potentially differ regarding the assets and/or deficits of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students?
- Subquestion 2: In what ways can the gifted program further enhance the educational capital of racially minoritized students in CCSD?

The next section provides reasons for the research approach I selected.

Rationale for Qualitative Approach

This research was designed with a qualitative inquiry approach. According to Patten and Newhart (2018), qualitative research is ideal for studying topics where little information is known. Little research has been published exploring the capital of Hispanic/Latino gifted students or the link between their capital and access to quality gifted instruction. Qualitative research can "provide insights on interpretation, context, and meaning of events, phenomena, or identities for those who experience them" (Patten & Newhart, 2018, p. 22). By analyzing voices of teachers and parents of historically underidentified gifted children in a CCSD Title I school, researchers can better understand the capital gifted Hispanic/Latino students possess and ways gifted education leaders can help nurture and uplift that capital.

Fraenkel and Helen (2019) stated the holistic emphasis of qualitative research enables scholars to describe and analyze the attitudes and behaviors of people. By conducting interviews, I was able to analyze teacher and parent perceptions of gifted Hispanic/Latino students and identify themes of capital that potentially help or hinder the identification of other gifted Hispanic/Latino students attending Title I schools. This study was phenomenological, as the purpose was to understand the essence and underlying structure of a particular phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). CCSD gifted rosters clearly display a phenomenon of racial inequity

despite the implementation of equity measures. By documenting the lived experiences of teachers and parents of Hispanic/Latino Title I students, I hoped to reach the core essence of their interpretation of this phenomenon.

Method

To answer my research questions, I conducted semistructured interviews with teachers and parents of Hispanic/Latino students receiving gifted services in one CCSD Title I school. I also collected unobtrusive public-facing district information to supplement my interview data for this study. I provide further details about the setting, participants, data collection, and data analysis in the sections that follow.

Setting

As the fifth largest school district in the United States, CCSD served a diverse array of students. Hispanic/Latino students represented the largest group, comprising nearly 50% of CCSD enrollment. During the 2022–2023 school year, roughly 21% of students were White, 17% were Asian, and 6% were identified Black/African American by parents. Less than 2% of the district was populated by Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander students, and fewer than 1% of students qualified as American Indian/Alaska Native. Based on the data, 13% of students were coded as belonging to two or more races. Approximately 60% of CCSD elementary schools received Title I funding.

The school selected for the study, Sandy Dune Elementary School, served roughly 550 students in prekindergarten through fifth grade. During the 2022–2023 school year, approximately 75% of the students were identified Hispanic/Latino by parents. One third of its students were designated English learners. Around 20% of the students were Black/African

American, and less than 5% were identified White by parents. All 100% of the students qualified for free lunch.

I chose to study a Title I school because, in addition to the equity measure of offering universal gifted screening for second graders, Title I schools offered the TAGS program, which provided 50 minutes of weekly enrichment for students scoring between the 90th and 97th percentile on either the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, Third Edition (Naglieri, 2018) or Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004). To qualify for GATE, CCSD students must score at or above the 98th percentile on either test. This study sought to explore how teachers and parents at a Title I school perceived gifted services at their school to better understand the program's impact on student CC, and on racial proportionality and equity in CCSD gifted programs.

Participants

As Bourdieu's (1986) notion of CC established knowledge as a socially recognized commodity, I gathered insights on the CC of Hispanic/Latino Title I students receiving gifted services by interviewing adults who worked closely with these students. I did so by conducting a total of nine semistructured interviews using purposive sampling. I used a purposive sample of participants to enable a multifaceted understanding of the CC of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students. Parents and teachers represent the most influential adult figures in a student's formative education, serving as main points of connection between their home and school communities (Reese et al., 2012).

Research has indicated non-White parents often experience a cultural mismatch with White teachers, as differing contextual viewpoints result in mistrust and misunderstanding

(Horsford et al., 2011). Nevertheless, studies have indicated non-White parents have high hopes and dreams for their children, just as White parents do (Chan, 2022; Huff et al., 2005; Huguley et al., 2021; Villaseñor, 2021). By selecting to interview representatives from both groups, I hoped to gain a more complete understanding of how Hispanic/Latino Title I students are perceived in relation to giftedness and CC. By analyzing these potentially contrasting views on the capabilities of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students, this study sought to uncover partial explanations for their persistent underidentification in CCSD gifted programs, despite the implementation of equity measures.

To procure a school site for this research, I used the district website (www.CCSD.net) to access a list of Title I elementary schools and isolate those serving predominantly non-White student communities. My first strategy was to reach out to GATE teachers as a point of contact. I assumed a GATE teacher with enthusiasm for the study would have influence with their school administrator and could help secure approval for my study.

As a former gifted specialist, I contacted two GATE teachers I knew serving in qualifying schools. One teacher immediately responded she was too busy to participate. The second GATE teacher was willing to participate, but the principal did not respond to my emails, even after the GATE teacher made contact. I sent queries (see Appendix A) to five other Title I elementary school principals but did not receive responses. Finally, I contacted the director of CCSD's Equity and Diversity department and asked for names of elementary school leaders who were enthusiastic about equity and diversity initiatives. The school leaders recommended by the director responded to my query in 24 hours. The elementary school featured in this study was led by one of those principals.

To introduce the study to the faculty, the principal permitted me to briefly describe my research objectives at a staff meeting. This formal introduction enabled staff members to know the research had been approved by the district and was, therefore, legitimate. The principal's vetting facilitated my approach with individual teachers later, as six teachers responded to my research request (see Appendix B) and agreed to be interviewed. Unfortunately, the end of the school year was fast approaching, and I was unsuccessful scheduling interviews with two of the teachers. The four remaining teachers presently had students receiving either GATE or TAGS services. Parents were initially contacted through emails written in both English and Spanish (see Appendices C, D, and E). Those emails were followed up with texts. Five parents responded to my queries and agreed to be interviewed. This study was originally intended to include the perspectives of Black/African American parents and Hispanic/Latino parents. However, all parents who responded to my inquiry were of Hispanic/Latino descent. For this reason, the focus of the study was shifted to center the gifts and needs of Hispanic/Latino Title I students.

Subjects were told their perspectives were needed to better understand the impact of the existing gifted equity measures in challenging educational inequities for historically underidentified gifted students. Teacher participants were male and female teachers of third through fifth grade students, ranging in age from mid-20s and up. Parent participants were men and women, ranging in age from 20s and up (see Table 1).

Table 1

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Interview Participants

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Role
Victoria Ramirez	Female	Hispanic/ Latina	Teacher
Jessica Boucher	Female	White	Teacher
Simon Ratliff	Male	White	Teacher
Paul Del Rosario	Male	Asian	Teacher
Susana Garcia	Female	Hispanic/ Latina	Parent
Angela Herrera	Female	Hispanic/ Latina	Parent
Luis Trujillo	Male	Hispanic/ Latino	Parent
Rosalinda Morales	Female	Hispanic/ Latina	Parent
Vanessa Alvarez	Female	Hispanic/ Latina	Parent

Note: (n = 9) Gender and ethnic identities self-described by participants

Data Collection

Interviews

My primary tool for data collection consisted of individual, semistructured interviews of parents and teachers of Hispanic/Latino students receiving gifted services at one elementary school. Six of the nine participants were interviewed via Zoom, an online conferencing platform. One participant was interviewed in person, and two participants were interviewed over the phone. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes each. I used a semistructured interviewing format, formulating questions in advance, but allowing the conversation to flow naturally rather than following the guide verbatim. By creating questions ahead of time and pilot testing them, I was confident the questions were free of bias and worded to yield robust responses (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

I used two different interview protocols according to participant roles, which are found in Appendices F and G. The interview questions addressed themes of giftedness, CC, and community cultural wealth (CCW). Research-related questions addressed each participant's definition of giftedness, purpose of GATE and TAGS, and whether participants believed the services fulfilled their intended purpose. Participants completed a demographic survey (see

Appendix H) requesting information about their racial/ethnic self-identification and their highest level of schooling immediately after the interview while they were in my presence. I chose to present the survey after the interview to minimize my potential for bias as a researcher and the participants' potential for stereotype threat (Fraenkel & Helen, 2019; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Interviews were recorded with interviewees' consent, for audio transcription and analysis.

Analysis Plan

To facilitate analysis of the data, I reviewed each Zoom-generated transcript along with the audio recording of the interviews, checking for accuracy and making corrections as appropriate. To better understand how the gifted program impacted the CC of Hispanic/Latino Title I students through the perspectives of teachers and parents, I analyzed the transcripts using a priori codes (Miles et al., 2014). Codes were assigned for themes related to Bourdieu's (1986) CC and six forms of capital described in Yosso's (2005) CCW. I further developed codes to indicate examples of successful exchanges of capital and incomplete exchanges of capital.

Limitations

This study was limited by the sampling method, as the specific school selected was influenced by the CCSD's Equity and Diversity department and contingent upon a principal's willingness to participate. Based upon these factors, attitudes and opinions of participants could differ at a school with a principal not recognized for their interest in equity and diversity, or from a school with a principal unwilling to participate. Additionally, interview participants were selected partially based upon availability and willingness; thus, their responses may differ greatly from participants who were not available or willing to be interviewed.

Another limitation was the sampling size. As only four teachers and five parents were interviewed, findings cannot be generalized to represent all teachers and parents of Hispanic/Latino Title I students receiving gifted services students in CCSD. This study represents a small yet very necessary contribution to the knowledge base. With a short timeframe to complete the project, participants were interviewed once with limited opportunities for follow-up questions.

Validity/Trustworthiness

Research is considered valid if it completes the task as it was meant to and measures what it intended to measure (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Although I am a Spanish speaker, I consulted a professional translator to ensure accuracy of the interview protocol. I used translation software to verify my understanding of Spanish interview transcripts. Finally, I emailed participants to confirm excerpts used were correctly transcribed and gave participants the opportunity to add to or adjust their statements. Three participants responded and affirmed their data were correct.

Patten and Newhart (2018) warned perfect validity does not exist in research, as measurement practice is not perfect. One barrier to perfect validity can be the elusiveness of traits measured. This study considered the concept of giftedness, a condition or state that has not been singularly defined (Gagné, 2004; Gardner, 1987; Jung et al., 2022; Renzulli, 2016). Therefore, it was impossible for teachers and parents to describe the full essence of giftedness in Hispanic/Latino children. With that in mind, I chose to conduct qualitative research to maximize validity, as interviews allowed participants freedom to provide rich, detailed descriptions (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

Another element that rendered this project challenging to measure was my attempt to address the relationship between giftedness and CC. Questions based upon a framework informed by the writings of Bourdieu (1986) and Yosso (2005) ensured construct validity—confidence that the measure was tapping the set of concepts I intended to measure (Leavy, 2017).

Delimitations

There were intentional boundaries, or delimitations, set for this research. I only interviewed teachers and parents of Hispanic/Latino Title I students who received gifted services during the 2022–2023 school year. Also, the school selected served majority non-White students and had a part-time gifted specialist, indicating a small number of identified gifted students.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a thorough description of the research methodology used in this study. Research questions were stated, along with a rationale for the qualitative approach selected. The setting and participants were described, as were plans for data collection and analysis. Limitations were listed, validity and trustworthiness were considered, and delimitations were outlined. The next chapter contains the findings for this study.

CHAPTER 4

PARTICIPANT NARRATIVES AND EMERGING THEMES

The primary purpose of this chapter is to share teacher and parent perspectives on gifted Hispanic/Latino students attending a Title I school and explain major themes that surfaced during interviews exploring gifted students' gifts and needs and differentiated services they receive. This chapter presents data collected through in-depth one-on-one interviews with teachers and parents of Hispanic/Latino students receiving gifted services at Sandy Dune Elementary School (SDES), a Title I school in Clark County, Nevada. Interview data were supplemented at times with unobtrusive data collected through school and district websites.

Interview questions and analytic codes were created to address the following research questions:

- Central research question: Drawing from Bourdieu (1986) and Yosso (2005), how do notions of capital formatively shape the Clark County School District (CCSD) gifted program's ability to challenge educational inequities for racially minoritized students?
    - Subquestion 1: How do parent and teacher perceptions potentially differ regarding the assets and/or deficits of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students?
    - Subquestion 2: In what ways can the gifted program further enhance the educational capital of racially minoritized students in CCSD?

The first section of this chapter contains data pertaining to Subquestion 1, displaying parent and teacher perspectives on the concept of giftedness and gifts and needs of the Hispanic/Latino children they knew. The second section addresses Subquestion 2 by highlighting parent and

teacher perspectives on the quality of education gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students received, the impact of gifted services on these students, and what could be done to enhance their educational opportunities. The third section ties the study to its theoretical framework by identifying the connections to cultural capital (CC) and community cultural wealth (CCW) discovered through coding and analysis. I sought to honor participant voices by including direct quotes as much as possible.

Presentation of Data

Perspectives on Gifted Hispanic/Latino Students

The purpose of this section is to explore the manner teachers and parents described the Hispanic/Latino students receiving gifted services at a Title I school. Past studies have indicated teachers see non-White students through deficit perspectives, undervaluing their academic abilities and potential (Aganza et al., 2015; Hargrove & Seay, 2011). Subquestion 1 sought to uncover differences in how teachers and parents describe the students they share. The interview questions devoted to this research aim were as follows. Teachers were asked the following questions:

- How would you define or describe giftedness?
- How would you describe the gifts and needs of your Hispanic/Latino gifted and talented education (GATE) or Title I Alternative Gifted Services (TAGS) student(s)?
    - Follow-up for teachers: What differences do you observe in the skills, attitudes, and learning styles of TAGS-identified students and GATE-identified students? Of these students and other students?

- Do you recognize strengths of Hispanic/Latino students that are not identified through the GATE testing process?

Parents were asked the following questions:

- How would you define or describe giftedness?
- How would you describe the gifts and needs of your child receiving gifted services?
    - Follow-up: What differences do you observe in the skills, attitudes, and learning styles of this child and other children?
- Do you recognize strengths in your students that are not identified through the GATE testing process?

Teacher responses are presented in the following section, immediately followed by parent responses to the corresponding questions. A summary of findings for Subquestion 1 concludes this section.

Teacher Perspectives on Subquestion 1

To gain insight on teachers' conceptualization of giftedness, I asked each teacher to define or describe the term in their own words. They provided the following responses.

Victoria Ramirez. Victoria Ramirez described giftedness as a good working memory and "a way to think about things differently than others." Ms. Ramirez pointed to the ability of GATE students Daniel and Luis to "break apart numbers and put them together like no one [she'd] ever met," and said TAGS students Sunny and Emily "have a very good sense of describing things and being able to like, imagine it in their heads." Ms. Ramirez also described Daniel and Luis as "analytical thinkers."

Ms. Ramirez reported some gifted students she worked with exhibited social emotional difficulties. Ms. Ramirez described a current student who was twice-exceptional (e.g., identified with both giftedness and a learning disability) and was prone to throwing temper tantrums due to underdeveloped social skills. Ms. Ramirez also noticed gifted students struggling with perfectionism, stating these students were hard on themselves when they did not understand or made mistakes.

When asked about strengths in students who did not qualify for GATE, Ms. Ramirez described an emergent bilingual student she referred for testing that year. A Spanish-speaking representative from the gifted department administered the verbal test to the student, as students were permitted to respond in their native language. The proctor reported the student's responses in Spanish were clever and demonstrated verbal strength. However, as the test was administered in English, the student struggled to understand and respond as the test became more complex, an obstacle Ms. Ramirez suspected was true for several of her emergent bilingual students. She claimed, "When we're talking, they'll tell me something in Spanish, or there's prefixes or suffixes that are in Spanish and, you know, like they make those connections." Ms. Ramirez suspected those students were verbally gifted; however, she said, "I don't know if it's like the tests are missing it." Ms. Ramirez also suspected "trust issues" were at play when her students tested for GATE, an issue explored more fully in the next section.

Ms. Ramirez expressed frustration with not receiving feedback on her students' performance on GATE tests, stating:

> We don't receive the scores so I have no idea, like where he placed or how I can help him so that he can be part of GATE. Because for the boys, it's more that verbal, like they

can't express their, you know, their ideas. But Joseph is great with numbers. And so, I don't know where the disconnect was.

Jessica Boucher. Like Ms. Ramirez, Jessica Boucher believed gifted children think differently. Ms. Boucher added a caveat gifted thinking must be useful, stating "It's different in a good way and that needs to be worked on so that they know how to flourish and to bring it out." Ms. Boucher also mentioned a social emotional component, asserting gifted children have different ways of connecting with peers, often exhibiting sensitivity that may lead to behavior issues. Stress and perfectionism were listed as characteristics that needed specialized support, because, as Ms. Boucher said, "If they're having this much stress about creating a line or, you know getting something wrong now at such a young age, what is that going to do to them later in the future?"

Ms. Boucher asserted gifted students were not always high achievers, stating, "I think it's because they think so differently that they're not being taught in the way that they should be taught." When asked about qualities unidentified gifted students might have, Ms. Boucher suggested "really crazy ideas" that were outside the norm but had a certain logic or plausibility to them so they "just might work." Ms. Boucher also saw puzzle-solving, stamina, and methodical thinking as gifted traits. Not all students with those traits have qualified for gifted services. Still, Ms. Boucher insisted, "I know there's a lot going on in there. You can tell." When asked to speak about the difference between her GATE and TAGS students, Ms. Boucher stated she believed her TAGS-eligible students were "already high to begin with," and deserved full GATE services.

Simon Ratliff. Like Ms. Ramirez and Ms. Boucher, Simon Ratliff viewed giftedness as "out of the box thinking," insisting, "I think there's a processing difference in a lot of my students who are gifted." Like Ms. Boucher, Mr. Ratliff mentioned potential emotional issues because of these differences. Mr. Ratliff also reported working with "bright but misunderstood" gifted students who exhibited asynchronous skills. He said, "For example, you may really be strong in math or sciences, but you don't show that as well in reading." As a veteran teacher, Mr. Ratliff emphatically stated giftedness existed in all populations, "no matter what school they go to or what zip code they live in."

Mr. Ratliff was asked to describe one student, Daniel, in particular. Daniel participated in TAGS, the program created as an equity measure for Title I schools, before ultimately qualifying for GATE. To Mr. Ratliff's recollection, Daniel was the first student he had ever taught who participated in the TAGS program.

When asked to talk about Daniel's giftedness, Mr. Ratliff described him as an "enthusiastic learner," a voracious reader, and an all-around excellent student. Mr. Ratliff stated Daniel was even-tempered and reflective. If he made a mistake, "he kind of almost recalibrates in his thinking to figure out why." Mr. Ratliff considered Daniel a role model, reporting other students frequently invited him to join their sports and academic teams. Mr. Ratliff reported Daniel stood out in his mind as exceptional even among gifted children, leading the teacher to question the actual definition of giftedness. He said:

> I don't know what are the synonyms of giftedness, but he's incredible at all aspects of school. And I don't know if that's necessarily what I've always seen in giftedness. I've seen gifted kids who are going to ask questions, or may get frustrated, or like challenges,

> or like competition. A lot of times when I've seen gifted kids though, if they don't get their way or they don't win something, then they get a little more internal, and upset. And sometimes they're upset because they're, you know, they're not used to missing out or missing things. I don't know if that's just the particular kids I'm thinking of, or if that's an actual attribute of giftedness.

Daniel did have areas for growth. Mr. Ratliff observed Daniel found figurative language particularly challenging, stating, "It's been like the first thing that I've noticed that he doesn't automatically have. . . . Like he's really having to think about it." Mr. Ratliff attributed this challenge to Daniel's experience as an emergent bilingual, explaining "He's from El Salvador. . . . They may have different idioms or different kinds of expressions than obviously folks in the United States do. So that's kind of a language issue." Figurative language notwithstanding, Mr. Ratliff had no doubt Daniel was gifted in English language arts, as evidenced by his rapid reading growth. He said, "So now he's basically a sixth-grade reader going into fourth grade, and he made those 2 years of growth this year." This drive to learn and grow was a characteristic Mr. Ratliff considered Daniel's primary gift. He said:

> I had other kids who were just as strong as he was who didn't make the growth that he did. So, I think that, as far as a characteristic, is that internal drive that pushes you. . . . If we do it the right way, these kids who have the drive will achieve in ways we can't even believe.

Mr. Ratliff mentioned another student in his class who has made rapid progress. The child arrived midyear from Cuba and had made great strides, but Mr. Ratliff expressed doubt the

child would ever be considered for the gifted program due to his journey as an English learner. He said:

> He had no English at all and is now at a first- to second grade reading level. And a lot of that is, I understand, language acquisition . . . but he obviously was educated in Cuba and is making connections. But he's a kid who I think would probably never even be considered for the gifted program because of his language skills.

Mr. Ratliff demonstrated awareness SDES received less gifted services than other schools, saying, "I don't understand why we have a GATE teacher 1 day when, like, I've got some really bright kids." When asked to talk about student qualities not recorded by the GATE tests, Mr. Ratliff described "brilliant" students who did not qualify as gifted, but exhibited the following traits:

> They're asking tough questions. Their vocabulary is high. They're right in it as far as their writing skills and their divergent thinking. They're making connections between subjects. There is some emotion in these kids, and I think they're trying to figure out how they fit in the regular classroom. They like to be challenged more and they want to be challenged more and they get bored if they're not challenged.

Mr. Ratliff believed so firmly in the gifts of these students he questioned the testing process itself, stating:

> I would be curious about how those kids scored and where they were low? And did they have a bad day? Were they nervous? You know that kind of thing. Like, I'm personally interested in figuring out what happened to my students who didn't qualify.

Mr. Ratliff referred to strong student data apart from GATE test percentiles that might warrant retesting, as he said:

> What I hear is that kids have to be at a certain percentile. But I'm looking at their data and their data is strong, too. But I don't know if there's a time when, you know, they get retested. Because I know Daniel got retested. I don't know if it was only the kids who were in the TAGS program got re-tested? I don't know.

Mr. Ratliff indicated certainty in the existence of a gifted equity issue, stating, "I think historically at our school, there is major underrepresentation of giftedness." When asked about possible causes, Mr. Ratliff said, "That's probably a priority, maybe for admin, or admin pushing the GATE program to do more. Or training for teachers on what does giftedness look like? I don't think I've had a training on giftedness for probably 20 years."

Paul Del Rosario. Paul Del Rosario suggested giftedness was a combination of intelligence, curiosity, talent, and focus. Mr. Del Rosario insisted engaging gifted students "can create products that are above their realm of knowledge or their grade level." Mr. Del Rosario established a distinction between gifted students and high achievers, stating:

> I've had book smart kids in my class before and I'm like, okay, they're very smart, but they're not a GATE student because this person is just well-studied. And then they'll do things just to do them. So, I can tell the difference between that and the one who actually has that interest, the one who asks those extra questions that dig deep into material. So that's GATE to me.

When asked about unique needs, Mr. Del Rosario replied, just like their typical peers, gifted learners wished to feel safe and seen in the classroom, and to learn. "They have the same needs,"

Mr. Del Rosario insisted, “they’re just quicker at things.” On the other hand, the ability to learn more rapidly could lead to boredom in the general education classroom for gifted students. Mr. Del Rosario described social–emotional needs of twice exceptional students on the autism spectrum, who “might have a fit or a panic attack or a meltdown” if they made a mistake. In the end, gifted students were “just kids,” wishing to impress their teacher and do well.

Mr. Del Rosario suspected a current student was gifted, based on exhibited characteristics of stubbornness, boredom, and not working to his full potential, stating, “He gets in his head that like, oh, this is sufficient.” Although Mr. Del Rosario referred the student for testing, the request was dismissed. Mr. Del Rosario reported being told the GATE teacher prioritized testing younger students, as their potential participation was more long-term.

Mr. Del Rosario described this as an equity issue negatively impacting his older students, who had already been overlooked for 2 years and needed enrichment just as much as their younger schoolmates. For this reason, Mr. Del Rosario said, “I try to test anyone that I can, even the book smart ones, just to see.” This year, of the seven students Mr. Del Rosario referred for GATE, only one was tested. Mr. Del Rosario reported the student scored in the 99th percentile, “so I knew what I was talking about.”

When asked about gifts not captured by gifted testing, Mr. Del Rosario insisted students have “a lot to offer” culturally, and said he encouraged students to embed their culture into their learning, which allowed their gifts to emerge. He said:

> I think, you know, anyone’s background can be used in their own learning. Like in your creative writing you can use like things that happen in your culture. I try to encourage that. I encourage that with the texts that we read. We’re currently reading *Esperanza*

Rising [Ryan, 2000]. And a lot of my Latino students, which like my class is mostly Latino, they can connect and reflect, and they talk about what they do with their families, their traditions, and then they have a lot to offer.

Parent Perspectives on Subquestion 1

Parents were asked to verbalize their definitions of giftedness and to describe the gifts and needs of their own children. Their responses are outlined in the following section.

Susana Garcia. Susana Garcia described giftedness as "the ability of learning maybe a little bit faster than other kids or understanding it better." Ms. Garcia also believed gifted children were "always open to have anything more coming into their knowledge." Her son, Daniel, was "always trying to learn more. Like he's always active and engaging and trying to gain more."

Mrs. Garcia also spoke about academic excellence and discipline when discussing her son's giftedness, indicating Daniel was reading at a sixth-grade level in the third grade, success that motivated him to keep achieving. Daniel was also a fluent Spanish speaker, and Ms. Garcia was teaching him to read and write the language at home. Mrs. Garcia reported Daniel had a positive attitude about school, stating, "Today I have him home sick . . . and he was crying this morning because I wasn't taking him to school."

Angela Herrera. Like Ms. Garcia, Angela Herrera described her daughter, Sunny, a TAGS student, as enthusiastic around school. She said, "She wants to participate in stuff. If there's something at school, she wants to do it. If they have something after school, she wants to stay after school. Like anything that they have after school she wants to participate."

Sunny was also motivated and conscientious about her work. Ms. Herrera said, “I don’t really have to tell Sunny to do her homework or anything. She just takes out her stuff and she starts doing homework.” Sunny enthusiastically gave reports on her school days, as Ms. Herrera said, “I think today she said they were learning about vertical and horizontal and stuff like that.” Ms. Herrera also described her daughter as curious, recalling lots of questions after learning about tsunamis at school and said, “She was just asking questions that I wouldn’t think someone her age would ask.” Finally, Ms. Herrera claimed, “I always kind of saw [giftedness] in her vocabulary, the way that she speaks and some things that she says.”

Luis Trujillo. Luis Trujillo described his daughter, Ximena, as an advanced student who was performing beyond her grade level in math. Like the other students, Ximena was characterized as an enthusiastic learner, concentrating and studying as much as possible. Mr. Trujillo reported spending a lot of time at the school because Ximena wanted to participate in everything offered, stating “*Quiere siempre quedarse en las cosas de escuela* [She always wants to stay for school things].” Mr. Trujillo also mentioned that Ximena helped her younger sister with homework and was able to read and write fluently in Spanish.

Rosalinda Morales. Rosalinda Morales, mother of a GATE student named Jose, was also interviewed in Spanish. Mrs. Morales described intelligence as an ability to learn rapidly, express understanding, and help other students; all qualities demonstrated by her son, who had always been “*sobresaliente* [outstanding].” Mrs. Morales illustrated her son’s dedication to learning by sharing neither Jose nor his brother had ever missed a day of school, a detail she attributed to competitiveness.

Jose also excelled in math, as "*ayer hubo una competencia en la escuela de matemáticas y ganó el primer lugar de los de todo desde el verano* [yesterday there was a mathematics competition in the school, and he won the first place of all students since the summer]." Another strength Mrs. Morales spoke about was Jose's ability to read and write in both English and Spanish. Jose's first introduction to English was when he entered school, as Spanish was the only language used in the home.

Vanessa Alvarez. Vanessa Alvarez, mother of three gifted students, expressed she considered her children "pretty normal," and "they just do what's needed of them," but they excelled in their classes. Mrs. Alvarez wondered if "maybe the school should maybe require more of the students," but acknowledged she may not be an accurate judge. She said:

> You know, it feels good, you know that I've had all three of my kids go to [GATE]. I was a bit shocked because I was like, okay, we're not doing, you know, anything out of the normal or anything. But maybe I'm just minimizing the situation because my fifth grader son, he was recommended for the GATE program because he was reading at the ninth-grade level. So maybe I just need to look at it different. But I feel like we're just kind of doing what's asked of us.

Mrs. Alvarez described school as easy for her oldest and youngest child; however, her middle child, Alejandro, struggled with math and was the last of her children to be identified as gifted. He took the universal GATE screener in second grade but did not score highly enough to warrant further testing. In fifth grade Alejandro's teacher referred him based on his reading skills. Mrs. Alvarez stated GATE helped her son improve in math, stating:

> My fifth-grade son was having a hard time in math and actually he was just explaining to me this morning that the GATE program has actually helped him in his math because in the GATE program, they were doing math problems that were ahead of what they were teaching him. That really improved his grade a lot.

Emerging Themes

The purpose of Subquestion 1 was to identify similarities and differences between teacher and parent perspectives on gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students. Analysis of participant responses to the interview questions dedicated to Subquestion 1 revealed themes, which can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Participant Themes for Subquestion 1

Question	Teacher themes	Parent themes
How would you define or describe giftedness?	Thinking differently (4/4) Social emotional intensity (4/4) Curiosity (3/4) Drive/ Focus (3/4)	Good student (5/5) High achiever (4/5)
How would you describe the gifts and needs of your Hispanic/Latino child/student receiving gifted services?	Perfectionist (3/4) Advanced (3/4) Not always achieving (3/4) Fast learner (2/4)	Enthusiastic learner (5/5) Above grade level (4/5)
Do you recognize strengths in your child/students that are not identified through the GATE testing process?	Testing process faulty (3/4) Cultural gifts (3/4)	Fluent in Spanish (3/5) Don't know about the program (3/5)

Note: Numerators in parentheses reflect the number of participants represented by the theme, denominators represent the total number in the participant group.

Teachers and parents interviewed for this study used similar descriptors for giftedness in their participant groups. All four teachers described students whose thinking processes were different from their peers. All four teachers also stated gifted students may exhibit social emotional intensities, such as perfectionism or behavioral outbursts. Three of the four teachers mentioned academic perseverance either as "stamina," "drive," or "focus." One parent

mentioned her daughter "talked different" than others, but overall, parents mostly described their children as high achievers. For example, three parents described children as "above grade level" in reading, and three mentioned the same regarding math.

All parents also described their gifted children being enthusiastic about school and learning. The mother of three gifted children reported one child had only started loving school since joining the gifted program, but the other two children had always loved school. Teachers recognized scholarly excellence as signs of giftedness, along with rapid English acquisition for emergent bilingual students. Three teachers acknowledged gifted students were not always high achievers. One parent and one teacher mentioned interpersonal skills as an indicator of a student's giftedness. All four teachers expressed a belief there were gifted students not recognized through the current testing system, either due to lack of testing or discomfort testing with a stranger.

Through careful study of student descriptions by participants for this subquestion and Subquestion 2, a pattern regarding the linguistic capital of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students began to emerge. Mr. Ratliff described a gifted reader who qualified for TAGS before later qualifying for GATE. Mrs. Alvarez's son, also a gifted reader, was not referred for GATE testing until fifth grade. Ms. Ramirez described a verbally gifted Spanish-speaking student who did not qualify for GATE. This finding was further explored in the central research question analysis. The next section describes the findings for Subquestion 2.

Perspectives on Current Educational Capital and Ideas for Improvement

Subquestion 2 invited ideas for improving the educational capital of gifted Hispanic/Latino students at Title I schools. In this subquestion lies an implication the education

of this subgroup is not currently satisfactory. This assertion was derived from literature highlighting the undereducation of non-White students in high-poverty U.S. public schools, and district data confirming inequitable education opportunities along racial and economic lines in Clark County (Clark County School District [CCSD], 2020; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Peters, 2022). As a researcher, I sought participant perspectives on the quality of education for this subgroup of students both in and out of the GATE/TAGS classroom. To gain insight in this area, participants were asked the following questions. Teachers were asked the following questions:

- What do you know about/ think about the GATE and TAGS programs?
- What impact do you notice GATE/TAGS having on participating Hispanic/Latino students? Do you notice changes in their attitudes or abilities after participating for several months?
- What educational hopes do you have for your Hispanic/Latino GATE/TAGS students?
    - Follow-up: Do you think gifted services can help students achieve those hopes? Why/Why not?
- What obstacles prevent other student(s) from qualifying for GATE/more services?
- How do you think gifted services could improve to help your Hispanic/Latino student(s) reach their educational potential?

Parents were asked the following questions:

- What do you think about the school? Are you in contact w/ teachers, how often are you there, etc.
- What do you know about/ think about the GATE and/or TAGS program?

- What impact do you notice GATE/TAGS having on your child? Do you notice changes in their attitudes or abilities after participating for several months?
- What educational hopes do you have for your child?
    - Follow-up: How do you think GATE/TAGS can help them achieve those hopes?
- What obstacles prevent your child from qualifying for GATE/more services?
- How do you think GATE/TAGS could improve to help your child reach their educational potential?

The following section includes teacher responses, followed by those of the parents. A summary of Subquestion 2 completes this section.

Teacher Perspectives for Subquestion 2

Victoria Ramirez. Victoria Ramirez reported, in her 5 years of teaching at the school, she had never had formal training on giftedness or gifted programming. Ms. Ramirez had personal experience with GATE, as she was identified as gifted in third grade herself. Born in Mexico, Ms. Ramirez was referred for gifted testing based on her rapid acquisition of the English language. Ms. Ramirez asserted based on her awareness of the GATE program, she knew to contact the gifted specialist to refer students. Ms. Ramirez was comfortable with GATE referral paperwork and scoring students based on learner characteristics. Without training on the gifted program, Ms. Ramirez wondered if other teachers at the school would know how to look for potential giftedness, or how to refer candidates.

Ms. Ramirez had limited knowledge about gifted programming at SDES beyond the fact all classes were held in 1 day. This meant once per week, TAGS and GATE students would be out of class in the morning, and all GATE students would be gone in the afternoon.

Ms. Ramirez reported her students looked forward to going to GATE and TAGS classes, saying on GATE/TAGS days they were "more excited to go or like to be here in school." Ms. Ramirez also noticed a student struggling with self-confidence demonstrated higher self-esteem once she began participating in TAGS. Ms. Ramirez believed her TAGS students needed more services than the 50 minutes per week allotted in the current schedule, saying "I don't think that's enough."

Ms. Ramirez expressed a desire to provide supplemental activities in her classroom to further enrich her gifted students and to engage other students, stating:

> It'll be nice if [the gifted specialist says], "Oh, we're doing a unit on outer space or, like, a unit on something." And maybe I could just touch upon some of those things so that way they could, you know, be excited about it. And so that some of my kids here can be excited about it, too, when they come back. So, they have something to talk about.

Collaborating or even communicating with a 1-day gifted specialist was difficult for Ms. Ramirez; thus, she rarely knew what her gifted students were studying. She said:

> I have to ask [students] like, "Hey, what are you guys doing in GATE?" and they'll be like, "Oh, we, we looked at this," and I'm like, "Okay." But it's never something that they bring up on their own. . . . I know one time it was human bones and then another time it was something about outer space. But it was very vague, you know what I mean? I

> don't like it. I say, "Can I see any work or something that you did?" And they don't have any. So, I really don't know what they're doing over there.

Ms. Ramirez reported her gifted students had dreams of becoming doctors, scientists, and even the President. Ms. Ramirez expressed the belief her students could achieve such goals, affirming, "They're going to have a bright future. I know that they're smart kids."

On the other hand, Ms. Ramirez acknowledged some gifted students needed more help with social–emotional issues to promote success. When asked if gifted services were helping students move toward their goals, Ms. Ramirez could not answer the question. Ms. Ramirez stated it would "be hard for [her] to tell if they're receiving what they need," reiterating she did not know enough about the services her students were receiving.

Ms. Ramirez pointed out another obstacle presented by the limited presence of a gifted specialist—the lack of time to test prospective gifted students. She said:

> Since she's working with the kids, she can't have time to test kids. So, it's just a lot, and I'm sure it's a lot for her, too. . . . And then we can't get or ask for more days for GATE if we don't have enough kids, and we can't have enough kids because there's not enough testing time for GATE. So, a lot of kids are just not being able to even qualify for GATE because they're not tested. Even if we nominate them to be part of GATE or TAGS.

According to Ms. Ramirez, the gifted screener administered to all students in second grade was not a sufficient equity measure to identify more Hispanic/Latino gifted students in Title I schools. Ms. Ramirez pointed out second-grade children may not be mature enough to focus on the GATE test or even understand what they are doing. Ms. Ramirez suspected several students would qualify for services once they were a bit older, saying, "There are some kids in fifth grade

that didn't make it in third grade. But they would have definitely made it now, because they were close to doing it."

Ms. Ramirez asserted the final consequence of having a 1-day gifted specialist was an absence of trust between the specialist and students. She said Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino Title I students "don't open up easily to people" because "a lot of teachers, like, either quit or they leave, and a lot of these students are already dealing with that abandonment issue." When SDES students participated in testing, the gifted specialist was essentially a stranger, which Ms. Ramirez believed could impede student performance. She said:

> If you're only here for 1 day and 1 hour it's hard for students to earn your trust and to be like, "Oh, like you're a person that I could feel comfortable making mistakes [with] and learning from." Especially if you just gave me a test and you just saw me for like 15 minutes, you know?

Ms. Ramirez insisted she often heard students make very clever points in class, observations she attributed to her proximity and familiarity with them. She said:

> It is building relationships. Some of the things that my other students tell me, I'm like, "Well like you're brilliant!" and it's like, "Why don't you say that to the GATE teacher?" But they don't have that same level of familiarity with her that they do with me.

Ms. Ramirez's main suggestion for improved gifted programming at SDES based on the reasons she presented was the presence of a gifted specialist multiple days per week. If possible, Ms. Ramirez also wished the 150 GATE minutes were broken up so her gifted students would not miss an entire day of class.

Jessica Boucher. Jessica Boucher stated gifted programming was important to address the social–emotional needs of gifted students, as these students had a hard time "fitting in" with their general education peers. As stated earlier, Ms. Boucher disapproved of the TAGS program due to the few minutes of service the program offered, believing the program did not have a significant impact on students. Ms. Boucher posited TAGS eligibility could have a negative psychological effect on students, having heard some say "I'm just not that good enough" upon learning they qualified for TAGS instead of GATE.

Students who qualify for TAGS score at or above the 90th percentile on gifted tests, which Ms. Boucher insisted was high enough to merit full GATE services. Ms. Boucher correctly pointed out the threshold for gifted qualification (i.e., scoring at or above the 98th percentile) was higher than average in the state of Nevada, and suggested the threshold be lowered so TAGS students could have more instruction. She said, "They would definitely benefit from those additional minutes because we could probably push them more . . . with that 150 minutes."

Ms. Boucher asserted working closely with students who scored higher on the GATE tests would motivate and inspire TAGS-eligible students. Ms. Boucher insisted if given more gifted programming minutes, TAGS-eligible students would excel and move forward. Ms. Boucher reported some TAGS students struggled with self-worth, feeling inferior to their GATE peers who received triple the service minutes. Ms. Boucher stated, "I've had kids literally have a meltdown and cry."

When Ms. Boucher was asked to share hopes for her gifted students, she expressed a wish they "use their strengths and talents for something good in the world." According to Ms.

Boucher, knowledge was not valuable unless it was used to better one's community and the world. When Ms. Boucher was asked about barriers to identification of more historically underrepresented students, she suggested parents and home environment were a factor, saying:

> Are you spending time with your kid? Doing homework with your child? Having conversations with your child? I mean, a lot of times the kids don't even have a conversation cause they're so busy. Do you know what I mean? Moms or dads are working nights and I understand that, but what can we do like on the weekends if that's the case? Or the time that you are spending with them, asking them questions, being curious about things. The importance of education, what it means for you and your future.

Simon Ratliff. Simon Ratliff reported a lack of consistency in gifted programming at the various schools where he had taught. Mr. Ratliff surmised administrators had a large influence on the robustness of a school's gifted programming, stating, "It seemed like availability was different from school to school depending on probably admin focus." Mr. Ratliff also made a connection between socioeconomics and gifted programming by saying, "When I was in more affluent schools or higher star schools, there was more focus on your gifted kids." When asked about the TAGS program in particular, Mr. Ratliff described the program as "an effort to ensure, like language learners, who are also gifted but just aren't caught up on language acquisition to be able to identify their giftedness regardless of language acquisition."

Mr. Ratliff acknowledged the initiative as an "honorable effort," but insisted he had never heard of the program before coming to SDES, although he had taught at another Title I school. "If the teachers didn't know about it or it wasn't in their schools," Mr. Ratliff said, "I don't know

if it was actually implemented." Now teaching at a school with the two programs, Mr. Ratliff compared the TAGS/GATE arrangement to that of neighborhood students attending a magnet school. He said, "There's like a separation between what magnet kids are doing in their classes versus the neighborhood kids. It kind of feels like a little bit of the same thing. Like you didn't quite make it, so you don't get all of the activities."

Mr. Ratliff believed the division between the two programs was frustrating for TAGS students, leading them to wonder, "Am I gifted or am I not gifted? Do I get to do this or not?" When asked about barriers to identification of more gifted Hispanic/Latino students, Mr. Ratliff suggested attending low-performing schools where the main emphasis was on proficiency and improved test scores inhibited bright students from honing their potential gifts.

Mr. Ratliff explained schools like SDES were atmospheres of "just getting through," rather than focusing on quality of instruction and student engagement. He said:

> I don't think the emphasis is on creativity. I don't think the emphasis is on making sure that instruction is hitting all of the aspects of kids who could be gifted. . . . They're doing a lot of just reading language arts. I see a push like in science that we're just going to read a book on science rather than doing labs or doing hands-on science. I think when you're in a low-achieving school—and I know that doesn't necessarily identify just our Black and Brown kids—but I think the emphasis is more on just getting through, like reading, writing and standards and those kind of things rather than really giving a vibrant instruction, on being a vibrant instructor, but also giving an education to these kids where they can really see themselves being successful in life.

According to Mr. Ratliff, high-achieving students were not a priority in low-performing schools, which consequently limited their potential for growth. Mr. Ratliff reported administrators in such schools focused on compliance and test scores rather than engagement and challenge, stating:

> Are you thinking about that kid who's bored in the corner or are you just expecting them to be, you know, a test score that makes the school look good? I wish we would get pushed more to make sure that we are [delivering] engaging lessons and higher-level thinking and challenges and project-based and a lot more options rather than more rote kind of instruction. . . I mean we spend a lot of time just on what educators call Tier 1 instruction, just getting information to kids and engaging them. But it's not necessarily how to do that in a meaningful, challenging way.

Mr. Ratliff referred 10 students for gifted testing that year, so an additional specialist was brought from the GATE department to get them tested. Mr. Ratliff wished for feedback on the students who did not qualify for services, stating, "I'm also really curious about the assessments that the kids get because the couple kids who didn't qualify this year are like, they're brilliant. They're equals to Daniel." Mr. Ratliff wished the gifted specialist could report feedback such as, "Here's the gap. Here is something that you can do in the next year before they get retested or before you put their name in again." Mr. Ratliff made a comparison between GATE and the other end of the education spectrum, claiming special education teachers were far more communicative and collaborative with general education teachers. He said:

> I meet and I talk to the resource teacher about, "Hey, I'm working on this skill, this skill, this skill. I'm not seeing that kind of partnership on the other side of special ed, on gifted. It's understanding how kids qualified or didn't qualify. "What should I be doing in the

> classroom? What are some strategies I can do to make sure that they're not bored in my classroom?" Those kinds of things. I mean, I think there's definitely missed opportunities in the interaction between the gifted program and the regular ed program.

Mr. Ratliff believed his gifted student, Daniel, could go far in life, saying, "I think he could be a NASA scientist, an astronaut doing those kinds of scientific things. But I also think he could be an amazing writer." Like Ms. Boucher, Mr. Ratliff mentioned a potential contribution to society, believing Daniel "could be involved in impacting and making change in the world." For this to happen, Daniel would need to have every educational opportunity possible. Mr. Ratliff believed he had "overwhelmed" Daniel's mother by regularly asking her "What are you thinking about for middle school? Where are you thinking about for high school? What are your plans?" Mr. Ratliff expressed hoped Daniel would be spared from yet another low-performing school, stating:

> I just want to make sure he's in the best programs. . . . I want him to be in schools where he can really shine. . . . I don't want him to go to a school where it's just gonna be like a pull-out kind of program and he doesn't really get to reach his potential.

Paul Del Rosario. Paul Del Rosario described the gifted program as a necessary support at low-performing schools, addressing the needs of advanced students as teachers attempted to bring the majority of the class to grade-level proficiency. Mr. Del Rosario reported he regularly completed testing referrals, hoping to secure enrichment for students who might have gone unnoticed in earlier grades. Mr. Del Rosario typically had one to five gifted students in his class. The teacher accurately described the criteria for TAGS eligibility but stated he rarely had TAGS students.

Mr. Del Rosario noticed the gifted program had a positive impact on student engagement, especially for students struggling with motivation and work habits. He said:

> I've had students who get into GATE but are not the best students in class, like when it comes to getting their work done. But when I use that, I hold that over them like, "Oh, well, you can't go to GATE today if you don't finish this assignment." Then they'll be like, "Okay," and they'll finish the assignment. So, it's something that they want to do, and it motivates them because they like the engagement there. They like that smaller group attention because, I believe that a class of GATE is like, you know, 15 or 16 kids. So, they're able to be seen with their peers that are around their level.

When asked to share his hopes for his gifted students' futures, Mr. Del Rosario expressed a wish for success that uplifted their communities. He said:

> I want to see them in the public eye as like, you know, politicians and doctors and lawyers and whatnot. And successful, because I know that they can be. Like there's this one kid I tell him like, "You should be a lawyer. Like the way you argue with me every day, you should be a lawyer. I would hire you to defend me if I ever have the need for it!" So, I mean, I want to see them succeed because there aren't enough people of color like them in those positions and I'd like to see more of that.

Mr. Del Rosario was pragmatic when asked if participating in GATE would help students achieve those goals. His gifted students already had a "leg up" compared to classmates because of their intellect. They were "ready for more challenges and enrichment." However, Mr. Del Rosario believed GATE motivated at-risk gifted students to stay "on the straight and narrow" academically. He said:

> For the ones that are easily distracted, or like those on the [autism] spectrum, getting that 1 day of engagement with that kind of GATE material allows them to keep thinking critically. And they're able to be successful at the end of the school year when it comes to those state tests.

Mr. Del Rosario described efforts to engage and challenge advanced learners in the general education classroom by having them read complex novels, but he needed more support to keep his advanced students growing. He said:

> I had them reading, like *The Hunger Games* [Collins, 2008] and *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* [Boyne, 2006], basically middle school level books and then doing like a small group with them and discussing the themes. And so that was something that was engaging to them, but after a while that got old, too. Right? So, I need some interactive stuff, you know?

For obstacles preventing other gifted students from qualifying for services, Mr. Del Rosario adamantly pointed to a "system" that prevented SDES from having more robust gifted programming. He said:

> So, schools will share a GATE teacher. One school will get them 3 days a week, and another school will get them 2 days a week. Or you're a four-one school. One school will get them 4 days a week, one school will get them 1 day a week. And that's based on, like, the amount tested and seeing who qualified for GATE. And I get the numbers, but it's the system that is unfair. The way it's done keeps those schools—like our school—who only has a GATE teacher for 1 day a week, to stay at 1 day a week, because the GATE teacher that's here doesn't have enough time to test new students. . . . And that's what kept us as

a 1-day GATE school. Because the thing is like, you're not going to get more kids if you don't test more kids. We're kind of at a standstill.

Mr. Del Rosario expressed suspicion that socioeconomics impacted the distribution of GATE resources, proposing, "Maybe because we're the low-income neighborhood, they just categorize us." The teacher also suggested that race was a factor, stating, "We are in [a neighborhood], where there's diversity. It's highly Latino and African American in these neighborhoods, and we're the ones that have to share."

Parent Perspectives for Subquestion 2

Parent responses surrounding Subquestion 2 were quite different from those of teachers, likely due to their vastly different vantage points in the education system. To understand parent perspectives on the impact of their child's gifted programming, I began by asking about their overall thoughts on the school. By uncovering parent perceptions of the quality of their children's general education at a Title I school, I hoped to learn what parents believed the role gifted services played in students' overall attainment of educational capital. The following section includes parent responses surrounding the impact of gifted programming on their children, and the hopes they had for their children's future.

Susana Garcia. Susana Garcia held a favorable opinion of SDES, calling the school more rigorous than another school in the same district. Ms. Garcia reported being in close contact with her son's general education teachers, receiving updates daily when picking him up from school. Mrs. Garcia expressed satisfaction with teacher efforts to challenge Daniel.

When asked about GATE, Ms. Garcia stated her son enjoyed doing math activities that were "a little bit harder and a little bit challenging for him," and Daniel also described reading

and writing lessons. Although she did not specifically name the TAGS program, Ms. Garcia was aware her son's gifted services had increased, stating, "They said he was in need of advanced classes, so they took him a little bit more now." Ms. Garcia had never met or spoken with the gifted specialist.

Ms. Garcia was not able to comment on whether GATE had an impact on her son, saying, "I haven't talked to any of the GATE teachers. So, I really don't know, like, what they actually see, or how much has he improved being there." Her knowledge about GATE came from her son. She said, "The teachers told him that he was doing really good on certain things, so they put him in a different class so he could learn better." Ms. Garcia did believe gifted programming had inspired her son, observing GATE "motivates him to do a lot more," and "he puts himself as more disciplined on learning other subjects." Ms. Garcia valued motivation, as Daniel had experienced a "downfall" 2 years earlier when his father was deported. She said, "He got a little depressed and scared because he was in the car with his dad when he got pulled over." Ms. Garcia reported Daniel did not eat solid food for 8 months, and he still refused to eat fruit. Daniel had made a lot of progress emotionally and had recovered his positive attitude. Ms. Garcia did fear Daniel's enthusiasm would wane as he grew, as she said:

> I have high hopes that he actually keeps going like this. You know, sometimes kids kind of change their attitude once they become like, almost in the middle of I think like seventh or eighth grade. Their attitudes kind of start to change a little. And then when they get to high school, they kind of start pushing themselves sometimes back instead of going forward. So, I really hope he doesn't.

Ms. Garcia was determined to support her children and encourage their various interests, which was sometimes challenging as a working single mother.

Ms. Garcia used strategy and compromise to not "pull them down," saying, "I try to kind of make a solution for it, so I won't say 'No, I'm sorry you can't do that'" when her children asked to participate in extracurricular activities. Ms. Garcia also described supporting her children's learning from home by having them all gather at the table for designated homework time. If at work, Ms. Garcia's children called her for help or visited free tutors at the library.

Ms. Garcia wished to give her children the educational support she lacked as a child. According to Ms. Garcia, completing high school "was a little struggles, but [she] got through it." Ms. Garcia was grateful GATE helped Daniel maintain academic focus, saying, "I think if he keeps going into those programs and they keep him motivated the way he's learning, and teaching him a little bit more, then I think he'll push himself through."

When asked about ideas for improvement, Ms. Garcia expressed a desire for more communication with the GATE teacher. Ms. Garcia wanted to know more about what Daniel was learning and how to support him from home. Ms. Garcia also expressed the wish that her son could have more time in the gifted program.

Angela Herrera. Angela Herrera and her children lived right "next door" to SDES, where her daughter, Sunny, had been enrolled since kindergarten. Ms. Herrera expressed appreciation for after school activities offered on campus, reporting Sunny had participated in science fairs, a play, and arts and crafts sessions. When asked about communication with teachers, Ms. Herrera indicated she had been more informed in previous years, when Sunny's teachers used a messaging app to share pictures and information with parents.

As a single mother, Ms. Herrera worked two jobs and was unable to pick her daughter up from school, a time when most SDES parents and teachers interacted. Ms. Herrera also surmised as Sunny was a well-behaved, good student, her teachers did not need to call home. She said, "I don't really get any phone calls or anything like with my son, which gets in trouble in school, and I have to interact more because of those things." Ms. Herrera stated she would like to know more about her daughter's education.

As for gifted programming, Ms. Herrera had never communicated with the gifted specialist, reporting she only knew Sunny was involved in TAGS because of the paperwork. Ms. Herrera did not know much about the TAGS program aside from the fact her daughter enjoyed participating, or at least "she doesn't say anything negative or anything." When asked if she noticed an impact from TAGS participation, Ms. Herrera noted Sunny's growing academic vocabulary, saying, "She's more proper with the way that she speaks."

Ms. Herrera believed participating in TAGS has instilled confidence in Sunny, enabling her to see herself as a successful student, saying, "I think that's a major part of it because it gives her more confidence to do that, and do better. . . . I think confidence really helps her." Sunny wanted to be a teacher when she grew up, a dream Ms. Herrera also had as a child. She hoped Sunny would be able to go further than she did in that pursuit, as she said:

> I hope she keeps going. I didn't have that opportunity. So, I mean, sometimes, she says she wants to, you know, be a teacher. I remember when I was her age, I wanted to be a teacher, so maybe she can get to do that. And actually graduate high school and go to college and all that stuff. . . . Nobody in my immediate family finished school.

Ms. Herrera expressed a desire for "a peek inside" the TAGS program to "just to see what she's doing in there." Ms. Herrera also hoped she was not missing important information about supporting her daughter. She said:

> If she is in that program and if there's something additional that we can do at home or you know, if she gets any additional homework or anything or somewhere that she needs to go or meet up or anything like that, that's something I would like to know about.

When asked about improvements the gifted program could make, Ms. Herrera requested more transparency about the purpose of the program in general, such as its proposed advantages and how it could help Sunny in the long run. Also, as a parent who did not complete schooling herself, Ms. Herrera expressed an urgent desire for parenting classes or informational workshops to help maintain Sunny's educational engagement. "I want to be there for Sunny and just keep pushing her," Ms. Herrera explained, "Cause I didn't feel like I was pushed."

Ms. Herrera expressed confusion regarding the best academic setting to ensure Sunny's academic success, stating many of her coworkers sent their children to charter schools. Knowing her daughter was participating in the TAGS program "kind of gives [her] hope." Sunny was in good hands, but Ms. Herrera said, "I kind of wish I knew more" about the TAGS program, as "that will help [her] feel like, 'oh, she's good there at SDES.'" Furthermore, Ms. Herrera expressed anxiety about Sunny's schooling down the line, stating:

> What scares me is when she gets into high school, and I didn't finish high school. When she gets into those subjects, and I can't help her. I mean, what am I going to do? Sometimes there's math stuff that she needs help with, and I try to do my best. I can still help her but when she gets to a higher grade than I got, or into even middle school or

> some stuff that I don't understand . . . I just want to be there and push her as far as she'll go and just keep her motivated.

Ms. Herrera craved a "partnership" with Sunny's educators and expressed willingness to "participate in and learn also" to ensure her daughter's success. Ms. Herrera believed in the power of education, regularly telling her children:

> If I would have finished school, I probably would have been doing something else, not working as physically hard out in the sun. Just stay in school so you're not like your mom, you know, working 50 hours a week and just getting home at a certain time. So, you have more opportunities to do stuff that you want to do.

Luis Trujillo. Luis Trujillo said he was pleased with his daughter's school. Ximena's teachers contacted him from time to time with positive reports of his daughter's achievement. Mr. Trujillo also recounted a time he worked with the principal to address a morning traffic issue at the start of the school year, a matter which was resolved to his satisfaction. Despite the fact he did not speak English, Mr. Trujillo felt comfortable navigating his daughter's school.

When asked to report what he knew about the GATE program, Mr. Trujillo answered, "*La verdad no sé nada* [I honestly don't know anything]" beyond the fact it was for advanced students with good grades. Nevertheless, Mr. Trujillo believed the GATE program was beneficial for his daughter, commenting on improved focus and enthusiasm after Ximena had joined. Mr. Trujillo observed Ximena *"pone más atención en lo que está hacienda* [pays more attention to what she is doing]." Mr. Trujillo also believed GATE was a vehicle for further scholastic opportunity, having heard the program might help Ximena get into a magnet school.

Mr. Trujillo went to school in Mexico and did not complete high school. He expressed hope that his daughter would go to college, and "*ya como vaya estudiando, pienso que sí va a ir* [the way she studies now, I think she will go]." As a parent, Mr. Trujillo supported his daughters by helping them with homework and taking them to after school events. Also, Mr. Trujillo valued the family's Mexican heritage, and although people had advised against it, he insisted his daughters preserve their Spanish:

> *En la casa se habla español porque nosotros venimos de una familia de mexicanos y toda mi familia habla español. . . . La regla mía es de que hablan español en la casa. De afuera hablan inglés, lo que quieren. Incluso las películas que vemos nosotros con ellas las pongo en español. . . . ¿Para qué? Para que ella habla bien español y escriba en español*. [Spanish is spoken at home because we come from a family of Mexicans and my entire family speaks Spanish. . . . My rule is that they speak Spanish at home. Outside they can speak English, whatever they want. Even the movies that we watch with them I put in Spanish. . . . Why? So that she speaks Spanish well and writes in Spanish.]

When asked how the GATE program could improve to support Ximena further, Mr. Trujillo reiterated he did not know enough about the program to comment. After the interview had officially concluded, Mr. Trujillo asked for a brief explanation of the program, inquiring, "*¿Qué es lo que es?* [What is it?]"

Rosalinda Morales. Mrs. Morales described herself as very involved at SDES, picking her children up every day and participating in multiple school events with them. Mrs. Morales rated most of the staff highly and said she felt comfortable approaching her gifted son's teacher, especially as her older child had also been in her class.

Mrs. Morales reported her only contact with Jose's GATE teacher was through the permission forms for testing and participation in the program. Mrs. Morales was under the impression Jose participated in GATE for 30 minutes weekly. Mrs. Morales knew Jose enjoyed GATE, reporting, "*Yo le pregunto que si cómo le fue en la clase y dice que bien*. [I ask him how class went, and he says fine]." Mrs. Morales was not able to identify specific impacts of the GATE program, stating she had always been pleased with her son's academic performance. She said:

> *Como yo no he tenido problema con él, de que no le guste la escuela o de que no haga tareas. Siempre hace todo lo que tiene que hacer de la escuela. No ocupo hasta le diciendo. Yo siento que no batallo en ningún aspecto con él*. [I haven't had a problem with him, like that he doesn't like school or that he doesn't do homework. He always does everything he has to from school. I don't even have to bother myself by telling him. I don't struggle with him in any way.]

Mrs. Morales and her husband both went to college in Mexico, and their goal was for all three of their children to become "professionals." During our conversation, Mrs. Morales said, "*Quiere ser doctor, pero. Yo que estudie lo que él quiera, pero nosotros como padres los vamos a apoyar. Sí, pensamos nuestra meta de papá, mi esposo y mía es que los tres sean profesionales*. [He wants to be a doctor. But I want him to study what he wants. We as parents are going to support them. Yes, we think our goal as parents, my husband and me, is that we have three children that become professionals]." I asked, "¿*Y profesional quiere decir que?* [And what do you mean by professional?]". She answered, "*Una carrera universitaria* [A college career]."

Like the other parents interviewed, Mrs. Morales desired communication from the gifted specialist. Specifically, Mrs. Morales expressed interest in detailed messages to parents so they could follow progress made in the GATE program, stating:

> *Yo creo que la maestra encargada del programa si pudiera comunicarse con los padres como aparte de mí, pues de los otros niños que están en el programa. ¿Cuál es ese [programa]? ¿Sí? ¿La mejoría que tienen de cuando iniciaron? Debe mandar un correo electrónico. . . .* [I think that the teacher in charge of the program could communicate with me, and the other parents of children who are in the program. What is that [program]? Have they made improvement from when they started? She must send an email . . .

Mrs. Morales expressed she was more interested in her son's progress than in his GATE enrollment. Without regular updates, it was difficult to know whether the program was helping Jose or not. She said:

> *Realmente no solo porque estar en el programa, verdad, sino que si sí avanzan. Porque pues yo como ahora que me está preguntando, pues le estoy poniendo más atención, pero pues yo sabía que iba al programa, pero realmente pues no sé qué tanto es lo que avanzó, y sí la diferencia es con la maestra*. [Really not just that they are in the program, right, but if they are advancing? Because well, of course, now that you are asking me, I am paying more attention to it, but well, I knew my son was going to the program, but I really don't know how far he has progressed. And if the difference is with the teacher.]

Mrs. Morales did not believe her son had any obstacles standing in the way of his academic success. As she was fortunate to stay home and attend to Jose, Mrs. Morales was confident she could address any needs that came up.

Vanessa Alvarez. Vanessa Alvarez described SDES as a "neighborhood school," where many of the teachers knew her children's names, and she knew theirs. Mrs. Alvarez said she and her children had participated in many activities offered by the school, and even recalled a helpful parenting class.

Mrs. Alvarez did not know the gifted specialist's name. She had never heard of the TAGS program and was not aware one child had participated in it. She remembered her two elementary age children once had different service schedules. She said, "And then I guess they conjoined the afternoon and the morning class." Mrs. Alvarez said her older child described experiments when she participated in GATE, but her middle child said he "mostly does math." All three children reported they enjoyed participating in GATE, and Mrs. Alvarez believed participation boosted their confidence. Mrs. Alvarez observed the most significant attitude shift in her middle child, who had always been the least enthusiastic about school and had struggled with underachievement. She said:

> My fifth-grade son, like I said, he's always been pretty smart, but he kind of would doubt himself at times. And once I mentioned that he was going to GATE just like his little brother and his older sister, I feel like he saw it in himself: "I think I'm capable of doing more." And I saw the change in him. He's a little bit more difficult to work with. But yeah, I feel like he really saw that in himself.

According to Mrs. Alvarez, the GATE program rekindled her son's interest in school, as evidenced by his morning routine. She said:

> A lot of the times he would just not look forward to waking up. And just he was already mad and didn't want to go to school and just very down and negative. . . . So, this was his first year—well, I guess his only year with GATE. But this year, he's really changed his outlook, you know, I guess about school now. He wakes up and is like, "Hey, you guys, time to get up!" And he'll be the first one to get up and brush his teeth and get ready.

Mrs. Alvarez wanted her children to "just continue to keep doing the best that they can," and hoped they would go to college, an opportunity she did not have. Mrs. Alvarez described bringing college into family conversations, so her children were aware of that opportunity. She said:

> And I already tried to put it in their head that, you know, "*When* you go to college," you know, not "*If* you go to college." Just kind of already trying to put that idea in their head. Which is not, you know, something that a lot of us have growing up. And so, I just always try to open up their mind to new ideas.

Mrs. Alvarez expressed gratitude her husband's earnings enabled her to stay home with her children during their first few years. "At a very young age I took them to the library," Mrs. Alvarez recalled, "And we would go and just pick a lot of books and whatever activities they had." Mrs. Alvarez attempted to give her children the academic support she missed as a child. She said:

> I never had parents that were involved, or there. Most of the time they were always working. We kind of just had to basically, you know, do our homework on our own kind

> of thing and just kind of raise our own selves. Get up in the morning, catch the bus or walk to the school. . . . So, the last grade that I actually completed was the eighth grade. And then I went to the ninth grade but flunked a lot of times. And finally, I just stopped going to school. Got my GED and went to a couple of trade schools. Got, you know, a couple of certificates and yeah.

Mrs. Alvarez was pleased with the opportunities her children were getting through GATE, saying they were already surpassing her knowledge. Mrs. Alvarez recalled the day her daughter dissected a cow's eye in GATE and was able to teach her about the activity, stating:

> So, she came home that day, and she was drawing the eye and the retina. And she was explaining to me all the parts of the eye that I was shocked I didn't know myself. So, it's amazing to see them know so much information. I feel like they have surpassed me way, way, way. "You know so much!" And so, it's amazing to see them. You know, and so this program, I feel like it really has opened up their eyes to new things. I appreciate that a lot.

Mrs. Alvarez reported her daughter continued to love learning and thrived in advanced courses in middle school.

Like each of the other parents interviewed, Mrs. Alvarez wished for information from the gifted specialist, if only to find out "What have the kids been up to?" As the mother of three GATE participants, she was certain it was a positive program and her children benefited from it. Mrs. Alvarez did mention one of her younger children wanted to do the hands-on activities that his older sister reported doing when she was in GATE several years ago. Mrs. Alvarez reported her son questioned "how come his sister got to dissect, you know, a cow's eye and he hasn't

done that?" But overall, Mrs. Alvarez believed GATE was "great already how it is," and "it feels good as a parent [my children] are doing a great job and they're being recognized for it."

Mrs. Alvarez's main concern for her children's future was financial; thus, she was planning to reenter the workforce to become prepared. Mrs. Alvarez imagined she would have to "start from the bottom" as, "[her] resume, it's not looking too good." Mrs. Alvarez expressed determination to do whatever it took to "be there for them," as her children were already doing their part. Mrs. Alvarez also planned to go back to school herself, explaining, "Since I'm trying to push, you know, the whole college thing, I think it's only right for me to set the example and also go to college and study."

Emerging Themes

Subquestion 2 sought to reveal ways gifted programming could further enhance the educational capital of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students in CCSD. Teacher and parent perspectives on students' current level of educational capital were also gathered. Through analysis of the interview transcripts, several patterns emerged between teachers, between parents, and among both. These patterns are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Participant Themes for Subquestion 2

Question	Teacher themes	Parent themes
Parents: What do you think about the school?	n/a	Activities/ events (4/5) "Pretty great teachers" (3/5) Challenging (2/5)
Parents: Are you in contact w/ teachers?	n/a	After school pickup (4/5) Regular feedback (4/5)
What do you know about/ think about the GATE and TAGS programs?	No training (2/4) Necessary in low-performing schools (2/4) TAGS insufficient (3/4)	No contact (5/5) Child enjoys going (5/5) Only info from paperwork (2/5)
What impact do you notice GATE/TAGS having on participating Hispanic/Latino students?	More focus/motivation (3/4) Self-confidence (2/4)	More focus/ motivation (3/5) Academic Improvement (2/5)
What educational hopes do you have for your Hispanic/Latino GATE/TAGS students?	Important jobs (4/4) Help the community (3/4)	Go to college (5/5) Maintain motivation (4/5)
What obstacles prevent other student(s) from qualifying for GATE/more services?	1-day GATE teacher (3/4) Lack of testing (3/4) Testing procedures (2/4)	School-based (2/5) Family-based (2/5) No obstacles (1/5)
How do you think gifted services could improve to help your Hispanic/Latino child/student(s) reach their educational potential?	More GATE teacher days (3/4) Communication/ Collaboration (3/4)	Communication/ Collaboration (5/5)

Note: Numerators in parentheses reflect the number of participants represented by the theme, denominators represent the total number in the participant group.

A notable finding was parents held favorable views on the quality of education their gifted children were getting, but 3 of the 4 teachers indicated their gifted students needed more challenge and engagement. One recurring reason for parents' positive perceptions was the frequent communication they had with teachers, and frequent after school activities provided for students and parents. Both parents and teachers noticed increased self-confidence in students who qualified for GATE. Two teachers stated belonging to the TAGS program did not always boost confidence. According to the participants, students were aware they did not qualify for the superior program, and were left wondering "Am I gifted or am I not gifted? Do I get to do this or not?"

Both groups of participants had high hopes for these gifted learners. Parent goals centered around going to college, something most parents had not had the opportunity to do. Teacher goals centered around powerful careers requiring degrees, such as doctor and scientist. Three teachers also expressed a belief these gifted learners could impact positive change in their community and the world. Hopes for Hispanic/Latino Title I students' futures will be discussed further in the central research question discussion, as a vibrant yet vulnerable form of aspirational capital. Finally, both teachers and parents called for improved communication with the gifted specialist. The next section presents data to inform the central research question.

Notions of Capital in Participant Responses

The central research question of this study aimed to uncover how notions of capital shaped CCSD's ability to improve equity in identifying and educating racially minoritized gifted students. The study was designed according to a conceptual framework in which CC (Bourdieu, 1986) and CCW (Yosso, 2005) represented the ends of a continuum of educational capital. Interview questions and a priori codes were crafted to study participant perceptions from this theoretical perspective. Participant transcripts were coded using Dedoose (Dedoose software tool version 9.0.107 [2023]), a program for qualitative data analysis.

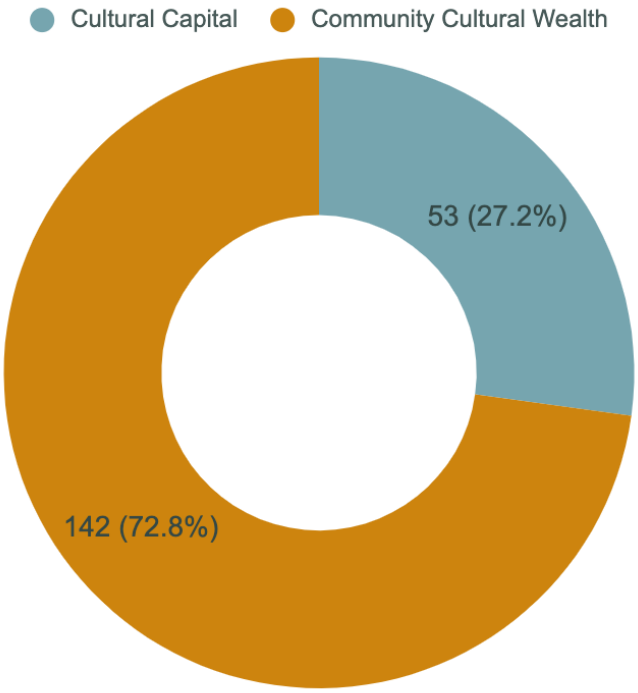
This section contains data regarding the application of codes according to the continuum of educational capital. Participant names are not referenced in this section in an effort to move away from personal stories and instead focus on framework themes. The next paragraph explains how codes were applied in this study.

For researcher transparency, it is important to explain the thought processes I, the researcher, used when coding. As the theoretical framework centered around notions of capital, I

studied the transcripts through the lenses of having or not having a resource necessary for educational success. For instance, the social CCW code was applied to excerpts describing frequent communication between parents and teachers, as those relationships facilitate educational success. Social CCW was also applied to excerpts indicating parents' lack of communication with the gifted specialist, as in those cases, lack of contact was a potential barrier to further educational opportunities. In the following paragraphs, the code application data from this study are revealed.

Figure 4 displays the distribution of 195 a priori code applications representing components of CC and CCW. A total of 142 excerpts were coded according to aspects of CCW, and 53 excerpts were coded in alignment with CC. The three most frequently used codes were social CCW, embodied CC, and familial CCW. Descriptions of each form of CC and CCW appeared in the data multiple times. The least coded capital from the continuum was institutionalized CC. The next paragraph contains code application data for CC.

Figure 4
Participant References to Notions of Capital



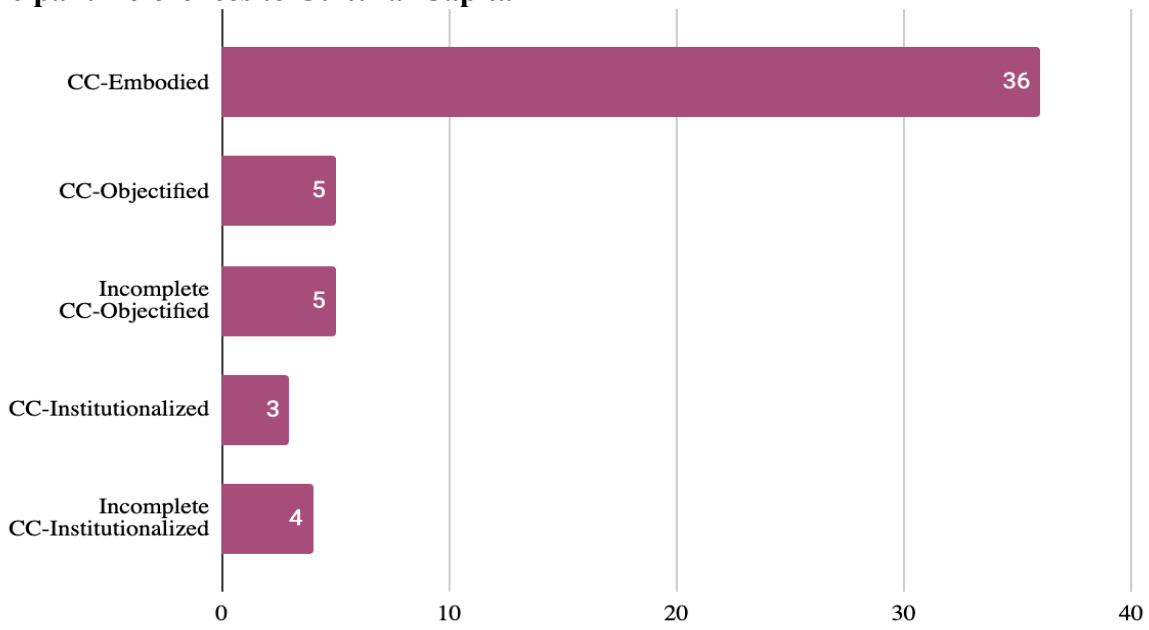
Embodied CC was the most frequently used CC code with 36 applications. Table 4 contains sample excerpts coded as CC. Objectified CC was coded 10 times, with five references to both successful or incomplete objectified CC. Institutionalized CC was represented least in the data with three references. Figure 5 demonstrates the positive and negative references to forms of CC. The next paragraph reviews the code application data for CCW.

Table 4

Sample Excerpts of Coded CC

Type of capital	Sample responses
CC: Embodied	• "He's incredible at all aspects of school." (Teacher) • "Like he could break apart numbers and put them together like no one I've ever met." (Teacher) • "When it comes to reading, he's in third grade and he is already reading in a sixth-grade level." (Parent) • "Ella, de hecho, como en matemáticas, debería de estar en otro grado más avanzado. / In fact, in mathematics, she should be in a more advanced grade." (Parent)
CC: Objectified	• "So, there is a big issue with like Title I schools and GATE because you have to share her with another school. And she's at that school 4 days out of the week and she's only here once." (Teacher) • "I see like a push like in science that we're just going to read a book on science rather than doing labs or doing hands-on science." (Teacher)
CC: Institutionalized	• "I don't think we have nobody in my immediate family finished school." (Parent) • "So, the last grade that I actually completed was the 8th grade." (Parent)

Figure 5
Participant References to Cultural Capital



Each form of CCW was identified through the coding process, either as a resource possessed or lacking. Social CCW was the most frequently used code with 39 applications. The familial CCW code was applied 32 times. Aspirational CCW was applied 26 times, and

navigational CCW was coded 19 times. References to positive or negative were coded 17 times, and the resistance CCW code was applied 9 times. Figure 6 shows participant references to CCW. Table 5 shows sample excerpts for each form of CCW identified in participant responses. Figure 7 shows overall a priori code application data for all participants.

Figure 6
Participant References to Community Cultural Wealth

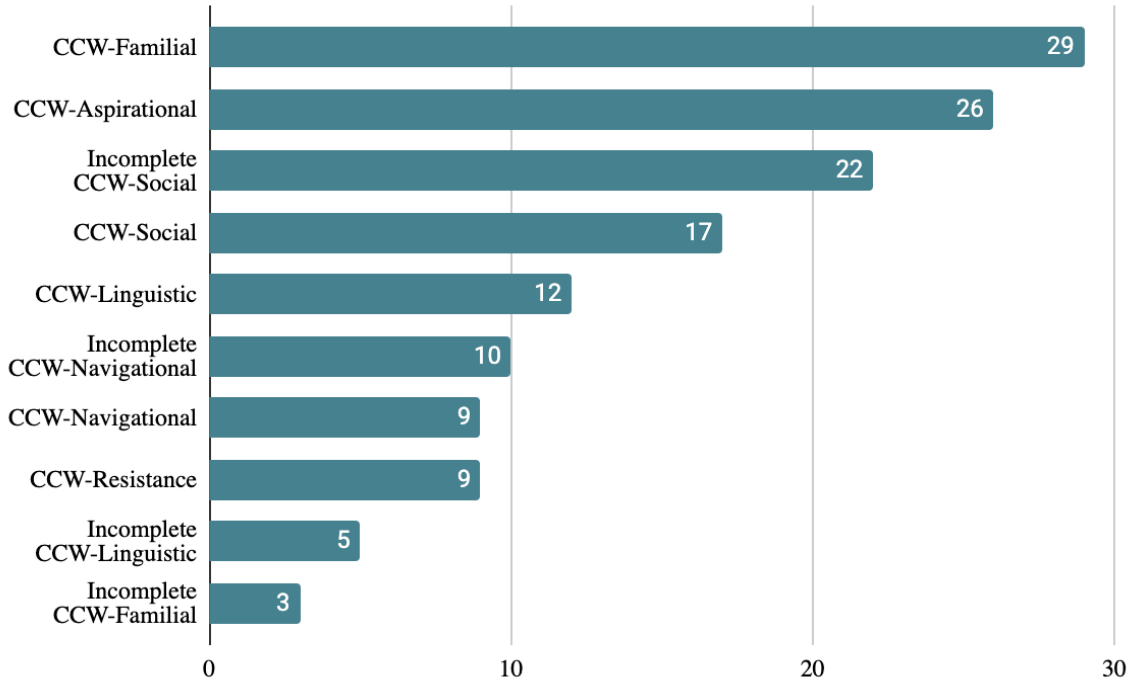


Table 5

Sample Excerpts of Coded CCW

Type of CCW	Sample responses
Aspirational	• "I think he could do anything. I think he could be a NASA scientist astronaut doing those kinds of scientific things. But I also think he could be an amazing writer. . . I think he could be involved in impacting and making change in the world." (Teacher) • Luis says he wants to be a doctor, and Daniel is trying to be like some type of scientist. Sunny, same thing. They're very into science, very into math. Valeria . . . wants to be the President. There's these careers that they know about and like that, they're like excited about." (Teacher) • "*Pues que vaya al colegio, me gustaría. Y ya como vaya estudiando, pienso que sí va a ir*" ["Well, I would like her to go to college. And the way she studies, I think she will go"]. (Parent) • "I hope she keeps going. I didn't have that opportunity. She says she wants to be a teacher. I remember when I was her age, I wanted to be a teacher. So maybe she can get to do that." (Parent)
Familial	• "*Nosotros le motivamos, le decimos que siempre lo que haga trata de hacer lo mejor que puedo, no ser el mejor, sino que lo que hacer lo mejor que pueda él*" ["We motivate him, we tell him that whatever he does, he always tries to do the best he can. Not to be the best, but to do the best he can"]. (Parent) • "Every morning, we have a little pep talk and it's like, 'You guys are doing great. Keep up the good work and I'm proud of you guys.'" (Parent) • "A lot of my family . . . growing up, they were involved with, you know, a lot of gangs, drugs, alcoholism." (Parent) • "I want to be there for Sunny and just keep pushing her, cause I didn't felt like I was pushed." (Parent)
Linguistic	• "I always kind of saw it in her vocabulary the way that she speaks and some things that she says." (Parent) • "*Y el puede leer y escribir en español*" ["And he can read and write in Spanish"]. (Parent) • "Like when we're talking, they'll tell me something in Spanish, or there's prefixes or suffixes that are in Spanish and, you know, they make those connections. . . . It's like the tests are missing it." (Teacher) • "I think he got here in December…and he's made a year's growth. He had no English at all and is now at a first to second grade reading level. . . . But he's a kid who would probably never even be considered for the gifted program because of his language skills, and so I do think there's a gap." (Teacher)
Navigational	• "Instead of saying, 'No it makes it too difficult for me. I'm sorry I can't do it.' I actually try to solve it and see what I could do so [my child] won't be left with a 'No,' you know?" (Parent) • "What scares me is when she gets into high school, and I didn't finish high school. When she gets into those subjects and I can't help her, what am I going to do?" (Parent) • "I don't think I've had a training on giftedness for probably 20 years from the district or the GATE program." (Teacher)

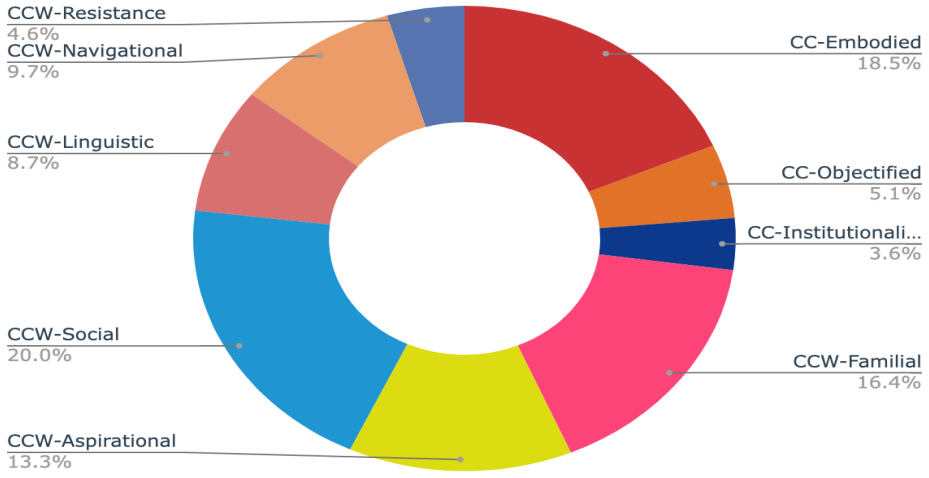
Table 5 (*continued*)

Sample Excerpts of Coded CCW

Type of CCW	Sample responses
Resistant	• "Growing up was pretty difficult for me and once I got older I realized like, 'Okay, the problem is not really me.' And I realized that the problem was having to do a lot with the toxicity, I guess you could say coming from my family, so I kind of had to get away from that and kind of make up new traditions and new things to do." (Parent) • "*La gente dice que pues que no está bien, pero sí está bien, eso es algo bien para ellos, que sepan los 2 idiomas*." ["People say that it is not good, but it is good, that is something good for them, that they know both languages"]. (Parent) • "My parents were actually never involved in my education, so I kind of had to push myself a little bit. So, it was a little struggles but I got through it." (Parent)
Social	• "I get feedback from [classroom teachers] almost every day or weekly on how much progress he's been doing during the week." (Parent) • "*Debe mandar un correo electrónico que indica tan progresando, que si les gusta a ellos, realmente no solo porque estar en el programa, verdad, sino que si avanzan*." [The gifted teacher] should send an email that indicates how much they are progressing, if they like it. Not just that they are in the program, right, but are they advancing?"]. (Parent) • "I talk to the resource SPED teacher about, 'Hey, I'm working on this skill. . .' I'm not seeing that kind of partnership on the other side of special Ed. . . .What I should be doing in the classroom. What are some strategies I can do to make sure that they're not bored in my classroom. . . . I think there's definitely missed opportunities in the interaction between the gifted program and the regular ed program." (Teacher) • "There's a general lack of knowledge for parents, understanding that [gifted services] would be good for their kids. . . . Parents need to understand what giftedness looks like, and what this could look like at home. Because I don't know if that conversation has ever happened." (Teacher)

Figure 7

Participant References to Cultural Capital and Community Cultural Wealth



Emerging Themes

Analysis of participant responses revealed notions of CCW were far more relevant when discussing the education of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students. The only form of CC that consistently emerged in the data was embodied CC, which is discussed in the following section.

Embodied Cultural Capital as the Dominant Gifted Paradigm

Bourdieu (1986) described embodied CC as "long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body" (p. 17) that provided an advantage for acquiring wealth and power. According to Bourdieu (1986), embodied CC was "no doubt the best hidden form of hereditary transmission" (p. 19) because *habitus*, or disposition, of an intellectual took so long to cultivate. Long-term parental sacrifices, such as giving one's child an early exposure to education, remained well-disguised; thus, the outcomes appeared to be "legitimate competence" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 18) rather than an advantage passed along through incremental deposits from parent to child (Bourdieu, 1986).

It stands to reason embodied CC would be the primary CC discussed by participants, as gifted education is geared toward students possessing elite intellectual capacities. As stated in the discussion for Subquestion 1, participants described habitus of giftedness at SDES as high achieving in mathematics, English language arts, or both, along with an unflagging enthusiasm for school. According to Bourdieu's (1986) logic, students embodying the gifted label might have received symbolic advantages from their parents over time.

Traditional transmission of economic capital was not discussed frequently in interviews, but an adjacent transmission of capital was detected in time. Two mothers expressed gratitude for the financial luxury of being able to stay home and nurture their children. Mrs. Alvarez mentioned taking her children to the library to hear stories and participate in activities during

their early years, which could be considered a head start by Bourdieu's (1986) standards. Mrs. Morales stated as a stay-at-home mother, she could dedicate herself to her children's needs; thus, her children did not have any academic obstacles.

Notably, Mrs. Morales was also the only parent who had gone to college. Perhaps the possession of institutionalized CC provided a sense of security that her children would also succeed academically. Multiple parents reported spending time nurturing their children's learning through homework help and by attending extracurricular activities at the school.

On the other hand, Ms. Herrera attributed her long working hours as the main reason she did not know enough about her daughter's schooling and expressed fear she would not be able to help her daughter academically because she did not complete school herself. These perspectives aligned with a study conducted by Huff et al. (2005) in which college-educated parents acknowledged their schooling as navigational capital, surmising less-educated parents would likely not know about or be able to procure the same opportunities for their children. These data supported Bourdieu's (1986) theory showing parental advantages can be transferred to children to support the acquisition of embodied CC. Many of these data points were also coded as familial CCW, aligning with Yosso's (2005) suggestion that Hispanic/Latino families are tight knit, teaching their children through "lessons of caring, coping and providing (*educación*), which inform our emotional, moral, educational and occupational consciousness" (p. 79).

Descriptions of giftedness that strayed from the embodied, high-achiever model were presented mainly in teacher anecdotes. Examples of alternative gifted traits were uneven strengths, emotional intensities, behavior issues or disengagement, and limited English proficiency. Giftedness of these learners was evident through their thought processes rather than

their product. Transcript analysis suggested these students were often referred later than their peers, qualified for TAGS only, or did not qualify for any gifted services at all. These distinct concepts of giftedness have been well-represented in gifted literature, often as opposing sides of a debate over who gifted education is meant to serve (Ford et al., 2020; Gagné, 2011; Hodges et al., 2018; Hollingworth, 1926; Terman, 1916). Early theorists asserted giftedness is fixed and can be quantified (Hollingworth, 1926; Terman, 1916), whereas later theories considered the potential of a learner, which could develop differently depending on that learner's circumstances (Gagné, 2011; Gardner, 1983; Renzulli, 1978).

Based on participant responses, it appears SDES students exhibiting the former, embodied model of giftedness were more apt to test and qualify for gifted services. As these students had access to rigorous specialized instruction, these students possessed the most educational capital at SDES. Gagné (2011) and Hollingworth (1926) would have affirmed high achievers were the rightful gifted students, as they had risen to the top in a fair, meritocratic system. However, teacher participants and multiple scholars have asserted the system was far from fair, and other gifted learners were being undereducated due to several factors, including inequitable opportunities to learn, unfair testing practices, and deficit perspectives regarding emergent bilingual students (Andreadis & Quinn, 2017; Ford et al., 2020; Gentry et al., 2019; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Hodges et al., 2018; Peters et al., 2019; Siegle et al., 2016). The next section focuses on references to gifted students missing educational capital at SDES, which could impact their ability to demonstrate the embodied giftedness most acknowledged at SDES.

Inequitable Opportunities to Learn Impacting Embodied CC

All four teachers expressed a belief advanced learners had inequitable opportunities to learn (OTL) as students in low-performing, Title I general education classrooms. Much research exists that blames inequitable OTL for the underidentification of gifted minoritized students (Peters, 2022; Peters & Carter, 2022; Siegle et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). Title I students often have lower achievement outcomes, including lower average performance on gifted eligibility tests (Gentry et al., 2019; Peters & Engerrand, 2016; Welsh, 2018). Low-income families lack the traditional capital necessary to access resources such as private schooling, extracurricular programs, and educational computer programs for their children (Plucker et al., 2017).

According to Peters (2022), it is a combination of missed OTL for low-income non-White students and supplemental OTL for middle-class White students that compounds to widen racial gaps in gifted identification and achievement overall. Data depicted SDES as a low-achieving school, as test data from the previous school year revealed nearly 80% of students performed below grade level in English Language Arts, and over 80% performed below grade level in Math (Nevada Department of Education, n.d.a). Inequitable OTL identified in this study emerged in anecdotes coded as incomplete social CCW, incomplete navigational CCW, and incomplete linguistic CCW.

Teacher excerpts coded as incomplete social and navigational CCW centered around the limited interaction they had with the gifted specialist. According to teachers, need for in-class differentiation could be addressed by a gifted specialist, a designated faculty member devoted to supporting students at the high end of academic standards. One teacher explained, due to so

much pressure from above to raise test scores, “I’m not able to create all the bells and whistles” for his four advanced students when the rest of the class was struggling.

The teacher expressed the need for support from a gifted specialist in helping to address those learners in a more meaningful, interactive way. However, as the gifted specialist was only on campus once per week, teachers lacked both social and navigational capital to meet the academic needs of students needing more rigor. This, two teachers stated, was an unfair “system,” designed to undereducate their gifted students indefinitely. Although equity measures were in place, they did not provide substantial access to GATE/TAGS.

Another example of incomplete navigational CCW was found in gifted testing procedures at SDES. CCSD implemented a second-grade gifted screener to narrow the equity gap by ensuring all students were given an opportunity to test for the program. One teacher did not believe the screener was sufficient, as many second-graders lacked focus, thus “it’s hard to see if there’s a gifted student because you don’t know if it’s a behavior or you don’t know if the student understands exactly.” Beyond the screener, many students were never retested, although a teacher believed some students would qualify after maturing a bit. Both the limited time for testing and the priority to qualify younger students left older students forgotten, “which is a disservice to the fifth graders.” As one teacher said, “That’s a whole year that they didn’t get GATE, right?” Without equitable access to testing, Hispanic/Latino Title I students lacked the navigational capital to be considered for more challenging educational opportunities.

Hispanic/Latino Title I students also lacked social capital, as they were unfamiliar with the gifted specialist. One teacher pointed out SDES students were a vulnerable demographic, as they regularly faced teacher turnover and abandonment. Pressure to perform at a high level when

testing with a teacher they did not recognize could be daunting. The teacher described the commitment required to gain trust of her minoritized students, so they could feel comfortable making mistakes in front of her. There is literature surrounding *stereotype threat*, internalized bias by non-White students, leading to self-doubt when faced with the possibility of confirming a negative stereotype (Baker, 2011; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Walton & Spencer, 2009). To raise gifted test scores, the teacher suggested, "I think just being here more would help." The next section describes the barriers gifted emergent bilingual Hispanic/Latino Title I students face.

Linguistic Capital Ignored

According to Yosso (2005), linguistic capital of emergent bilingual students has been unrecognized and underappreciated. Three parents mentioned their children were fluent Spanish speakers, but three teachers also brought up linguistic strengths of their students as evidence of their giftedness. These statements were a departure from Allen's (2017) findings that lack of English language fluency negatively impacted teachers' referral of emergent bilingual students for gifted testing. Regardless, situations were described in which linguistic capital that teachers recognized was found insufficient for gifted qualification, aligning with existing literature (Castellano, 1998; Ford et al., 2014).

Two teachers described linguistically talented emergent bilingual students who did not qualify for gifted education. One teacher recounted a bilingual proctor from the gifted department acknowledged a student's clever responses in Spanish, but the student simply did not understand enough English to complete the entire verbal linguistic test. Another teacher spotted giftedness in the speed of students' English acquisition or reading progress, but those emergent bilingual students lacked sufficient mastery to excel on a test meant for native English speakers.

These teacher anecdotes bring to light the complicated positionality of linguistically gifted emergent bilingual Title I students, who are over 15 times less likely to participate in gifted programs (Yaluma & Tyner, 2018).

One teacher expressed appreciation for CCSD's adoption of a nonverbal testing measure. Proponents of nonverbal gifted tests have hailed nonverbal tests as the bias-free solution for testing diverse gifted learners (Gentry et al., 2019; Hodges et al., 2018; Mun et al., 2020; Naglieri & Ford, 2015). However, critics have insisted nonverbal tests do not close the gifted gap, as native English speakers consistently outperform emergent bilinguals even on nonverbal tests (Giessman et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2021; Lohman, 2005). It is recommended emergent bilingual students be considered for gifted programs through various measures that consider a range of abilities and their scores be compared with those of local peers (Lohman, 2005). Throughout the state of Nevada, public gifted programs assess prospective students using the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, Third Edition (Naglieri, 2018) and the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004) of verbal knowledge and reasoning. Scores may be boosted for students narrowly missing eligibility through other data on a multiple criteria matrix (Clark County School District, n.d.). According to the voices of these participants and district gifted participation data, this particular set of criteria does not adequately identify emergent bilingual gifted students.

Vibrant and Vulnerable Aspirational Capital

As Figure 6 indicates, aspirational CCW was a prominent wealth possessed by gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students at SDES. According to Yosso (2005), "Aspirational capital refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and

perceived barriers" (p. 77). Teachers, parents, and gifted students themselves had big hopes and dreams at SDES. Teachers hoped their gifted Hispanic/Latino students would grow up to do important work for their community. Students reportedly wished to become scientists, teachers, and even the President. Parents hoped their children would go to college. This section explores the positive effects of aspirational CCW for students and their families. Then obstacles are highlighted that threaten the promise of this capital.

Discussed in the previous section, parents often described their gifted children as enthusiastic learners, sharing evidence such as never missing school, participating in many extracurricular activities, and doing extra homework. Some scholars have believed attitude toward learning is a critical component of giftedness (Gagné, 2004; Renzulli, 1978). Renzulli (1978) posited giftedness is a behavior demonstrated when students possessing above average ability combine creativity with task commitment. Therefore, students' aspirational CCW is a key form of capital to harness and develop. Transcript analysis revealed gifted program qualification positively influenced aspirational CCW, even for nontraditional gifted learners.

Participants from both groups shared anecdotes about disengaged students becoming more academically motivated upon beginning gifted programming. For example, one parent reported GATE motivated her son to try harder in nonpreferred subjects, saying, "He puts himself as more disciplined on learning other subjects." Another parent said her son used to resist waking up in the morning, but now was the first one ready for school. Teachers described students being more excited about school on GATE/TAGS days. One teacher said, "Students who get into GATE but are not like the best students in class" finish their classwork on time because they do not want to miss a moment of GATE. As a result, the same teacher reported,

those students did well on end-of-year state tests because GATE "keeps them on the straight and narrow." All participants acknowledged student enthusiasm as valuable capital that needed protecting.

Analysis indicates parental aspirations were positively impacted by their children's academic success. Three of five parents did not complete high school, and two parents stated no one in their family had finished high school. Parents expressed a hope their children would go further educationally than they had, much like Hispanic/Latino parents interviewed by Guzmán et al. (2021). All parents expressed commitment to helping their children succeed academically. Parents offered *consejos,* or advice to their children, using their own hardships as cautionary tales. One mother said:

> I kind of always tell them that because I work a lot of hours and stuff. . . . If I would have finished school, I probably would have been doing something else, not working as physically hard out in the sun, and doing something that I like to do. Like I did want to be a teacher when I was young. . . . So, I kind of just tell them that all the time. Just stay in school so you're not like your mom, you know, working 50 hours a week and just getting home at a certain time. So, you have more opportunities to do stuff that you want to do.

One parent said having three children accepted into the GATE program was impactful for her, as it indicated their family was on the right track. She said, "Three out of three in GATE class, I feel like that's really, it says something. And it feels good as a parent that, you know, they're doing a great job and that they're being recognized for it." Seeing her children succeed academically inspired this mother to go back to school herself. In that case, gifted programming

enabled children to transmit aspirational CCW to their parent, thus uplifting two generations of a family that had been marginalized before.

However, one mother expressed concern she would not know how to support her daughter's education, as she had not finished school herself. In other words, this parent had aspirational CCW but needed navigational support to ensure her daughter achieved her dreams. Parents who described their own academic journeys as difficult expressed concern about keeping their gifted child on track academically. One mother feared her son's enthusiasm would begin to wane as he grew older. Another mother expressed frustration at the distractions of social media, stating she would love parenting workshops on helping children "stay engaged in school instead of being on TikTok [tiktok.com] all day." Teachers also expressed concern about maintaining educational enthusiasm.

Teacher interviews suggested aspirational CCW in the form of engagement was a vulnerable capital. Transcript analysis indicated gifted students were not the target learners for general education instruction at SDES; thus, advanced students were apt to become bored. One teacher explained, at low-performing schools like SDES, "the emphasis is more on just getting through." Little emphasis was placed on encouraging students to "really see themselves being successful in life." The teacher's perspective was supported by Hill and Torres (2010), who claimed schools serving large Hispanic/Latino populations are often under-resourced and do not provide academic opportunities that support mobility. Without sufficient resources, training, or support from a gifted specialist, "what do I do with my kids who are not being challenged?" one teacher wondered. "How do I, you know, keep that fire built in them?" As the teacher pointed out, disengaged bright students can easily fall through the cracks, becoming "the kid that's

having a meltdown in the hallway . . . because you know, their academic needs aren't being met."

In summary, a combination of CC and CCW was detected in this study. Teachers and parents saw many gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students through the lens of embodied CC, but also acknowledged valuable forms of CCW in the students and their families. Incomplete exchanges of capital threatened students' educational potential, mainly by allowing students' vital aspirational CCW to languish. Without access to rigorous instruction, and support navigating the education landscape, participants feared gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students would not reach their academic potential.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from a qualitative study on teacher and parent perspectives on the identification and education of Hispanic/Latino Title I students. Summaries of nine semistructured interviews were provided highlighting participant voices. Analysis of the transcripts revealed patterns to help answer Subquestions 1 and 2. Using Dedoose and Google sheets (workspace.google.com), coding data based on a priori codes were filtered and displayed as figures to facilitate understanding of how notions of capital influenced the education of these learners. The next chapter provides a summary of the findings, a description of the significance of this research, ideas for equitable improvements in Title I gifted programming, and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, SIGNIFICANCE, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how gifted programming in Title I schools impacted the educational capital of gifted Hispanic/Latino students, and how gifted and talented education (GATE) programming might be enhanced to reach more of this historically underidentified and underserved population. The questions I sought to answer were:

- Central research question: Drawing from Bourdieu (1986) and Yosso (2005), how do notions of capital formatively shape the CCSD (Clark County School District) gifted program's ability to challenge educational inequities for racially minoritized students?
    - Subquestion 1: How do parent and teacher perceptions potentially differ regarding the assets and/or deficits of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students?
    - Subquestion 2: In what ways can the gifted program further enhance the educational capital of racially minoritized students in CCSD?

To answer these questions, four teachers and five parents of gifted Hispanic/Latino students at one Title I elementary school were interviewed using questions informed by notions of cultural capital (CC; Bourdieu, 1986) and community cultural wealth (CCW; Yosso, 2005). The interview transcripts were analyzed and coded, and data were reported in Chapter 4. This chapter presents a summary of the findings and an exploration of their significance to the field of gifted education. Recommendations for improved programmatic impact are provided, and suggestions are made for future research on this topic.

Summary of Findings

This section highlights the main findings of the study. Findings for the subquestions are summarized first, followed by a discussion of the central research question findings according to the major themes discovered.

Subquestion 1: Perspectives on Giftedness

Subquestion 1 sought to uncover differences in teacher and parent perceptions of Hispanic/Latino students. Several studies have indicated teachers hold biases against non-White students at low-income schools and are less likely to recognize their strengths (Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012; Ford et al., 2020; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Siegle et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). In this study, although two teacher participants reported most of the Sandy Dune Elementary School (SDES) students were performing below grade level, all four teachers spoke highly of their gifted students' abilities and expressed beliefs these students could attain high levels of professional success. Most teachers were also quick to acknowledge the cultural gifts and linguistic capital of emergent bilingual students, contrary to literature reviewed (Castellano, 1998; Ford et al., 2020). There was a notable difference in how teachers and parents defined giftedness as a concept.

Despite similarly describing the gifted learners they had in common, parents and teachers emphasized different qualities when defining giftedness. Parents described their children and thus giftedness in terms of high achievement and enthusiasm for learning. For example, parents mentioned their children were "above grade level," had won awards, were in advanced classes, and liked to participate in school-related activities. Parents' achievement-centered descriptors of giftedness aligned closely with Gagné's (2004) definition of *talented,* referring to people

performing in the top 10th percentile in a given field. The parent participants' definitions also aligned with the most recent federal definition of giftedness, which referred to students "who give evidence of high achievement capability" (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015).

Although teachers also described some of their current gifted students as working "above grade level" in reading or math, all four teachers stated gifted students "think differently," and two teachers mentioned high achievement did not necessarily equate giftedness. One teacher encapsulated this view by saying "book smart kids" are "very smart, but they're not a GATE student because this person is just well-studied." On the other hand, according to the teacher, a GATE student is "the one who actually has that interest, the one who asks those extra questions that dig deep into material."

This description of students aligned more closely with Gagné's (2004) definition of *giftedness*, referring to a student's natural abilities and potential, as opposed to the academic output, or *talent*, as the parents referenced. In recognizing potential in addition to high achievement, teacher definitions of giftedness more closely resembled the 1993 federal definition of giftedness that acknowledged students "who perform *or show the potential for performing* at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment" (emphasis added; U.S. Department of Education, 1993, p. 26).

Teachers also brought up emotional characteristics such as perfectionism and extreme sensitivity, which many districts have recognized as components of giftedness (Subotnik et al., 2011). A possible factor in the differences between parent and teacher perceptions may be the participants' frames of reference regarding gifted students. Parents were describing children currently accessing gifted services at SDES. Teachers' paradigms may have been informed by

former students, students from other schools, or even gifted SDES students who had not been formally identified.

In all, the differing participant perspectives did not suggest teachers and parents appraised Hispanic/Latino Title I students' intellect differently. Teachers and parents spoke about their gifted learners with similar tones of admiration and concern. Teachers had more robust and varied descriptions of giftedness, possibly because these teachers had worked with more gifted students than parents had; thus, they had witnessed a larger variety of traits. Teachers' descriptions of gifted students were more flexible than those of parents, as all four teachers unanimously believed SDES had more gifted students than those currently being served.

Significance of Subquestion 1 Findings

Literature has indicated giftedness is not a settled concept, as theorists and researchers have disagreed on definitions and criteria (Gagné, 2004; Gardner, 1983; Hollingworth, 1926; Renzulli, 1978; Terman, 1916). Literature has also clearly established Hispanic/Latino students have been historically underidentified for gifted programming (Andreadis & Quinn, 2017; Ford et al., 2020; Gentry et al., 2019; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Hodges et al., 2018; Peters et al., 2019; Siegle et al., 2016). CCSD data confirmed this reality, despite the implementation of several equity measures (Clark County School District [CCSD], 2020). Together, these facts suggested the existing definition and criteria for giftedness failed to adequately include the gifts of Hispanic/Latino students. Operational definitions for giftedness vary by state, with some more inclusive than others (Pearman & McGee, 2022).

Approximately half of the United States have recognized latent potential in their definitions of giftedness, language that acknowledges opportunity gaps and makes space for

marginalized gifted learners (Hodges et al., 2018). These perspectives of teachers and parents working closely with a missing subgroup were instrumental in revealing blind spots in the existing definition and criteria, so the gifted programming lens may be redirected toward the missing gifted students who are being undereducated in Title I classrooms.

The fact Title I teacher participants were able to notice giftedness in their Hispanic/Latino students and insist more students existed beyond those currently being served was a detour from literature naming teachers as the primary gatekeepers for gifted identification (Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012; Ford et al., 2020; Grissom & Redding, 2016; Siegle et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). These findings suggest there are also inequities in the identification process itself.

Subquestion 2: Enhancing Educational Capital

The purpose of Subquestion 2 was to gather firsthand feedback surrounding ways to enhance the educational capital of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students. Participants requested improved communication with the gifted specialist, increased gifted specialist presence at SDES, and expanded services for Title I Alternative Gifted Services (TAGS) students. These requests are described in the following section.

Participants from both groups brought up the need for improved communication with the gifted teacher. Teachers described frustration about not getting feedback on students who had tested and not being updated on students' activities in GATE/TAGS. Teachers also expressed a need for support in challenging and engaging advanced learners in their classrooms. General education teachers' desire for more collaboration and resources from their gifted specialist aligned with other studies (Haberlin, 2017; Mofield, 2020).

Furthermore, Hispanic/Latino parents often did not know what the gifted program was; thus, they were reluctant to have their children participate. Not a single parent had ever met or spoken with the gifted specialist, citing only the qualification letter as communication. Parents expressed curiosity regarding the program as a whole and wished for more transparency regarding their children's progress in the class. Parents also wanted guidance navigating future educational decisions for their gifted children. These findings aligned with literature suggesting minoritized parents experience exclusion regarding their children's education (Huguley et al., 2021).

It is imperative to note 80% of parents reported feelings of inclusion by the school and their children's general education teachers. The lack of communication surrounded gifted education in particular. It is important to note two teachers specifically stated they did find the gifted specialist at fault for these programmatic shortcomings, but rather the single day she was given to serve the school.

Another recommendation made by all teachers was for increased gifted specialist presence on campus at SDES. Teachers unanimously believed having a gifted specialist visit the school 1 day per week was inadequate. The main reason given for this request was to test more students. Aside from the screener, teachers reported not all students referred were tested for GATE, and very few students were retested. It was also suggested if students were more familiar with the gifted specialist, they might perform better on the test.

Finally, teachers unanimously believed the 50 minutes of instruction provided through TAGS were inadequate for eligible students, and services needed to be expanded. The TAGS program was introduced as supplemental enrichment for low-income students scoring at or above

the 90th percentile on tests used for gifted identification (Clark County School District, n.d.). CCSD introduced this equity measure in response to research linking poverty with lower average performance on tests due to fewer opportunities to learn (Gentry et al., 2019; Peters & Engerrand, 2016; Welsh, 2018).

Gifted program administrators hoped exposure to weekly critical thinking lessons with a gifted specialist would improve participants' scores upon retesting (S. Moll, personal communication, May 18, 2022). However, numerical data surrounding the success of this initiative were not available to the public. The TAGS program was not popular with teacher participants due to the short amount of time participating students were allotted. Teachers indicated TAGS students were not challenged enough in the general education classroom; thus, they would benefit from more rigorous lessons with the gifted specialist. Two teachers described TAGS as having a deleterious effect on self-esteem, as some students internalized feelings of not being smart compared to GATE students. Those teachers believed the best way to support TAGS students mentally and emotionally would be to consolidate the two programs.

Significance of Subquestion 2 Findings

Nevada has been a leading state in gifted programming, earning an "A" rating on a national gifted programming evaluation project conducted by Gentry et al. (2019). Nevertheless, like the rest of the nation, Nevada has failed in terms of gifted programming access in Title I schools, where many non-White students have been enrolled. CCSD gifted program directors acknowledged this disproportionality and implemented several measures to narrow the gap; yet the problem has persisted.

The findings for this research question were significant because they shared the perspectives of teachers and parents who witnessed firsthand the impact of gifted programming at a Title I school. These teacher accounts explained how, despite a universal screener, nonverbal test, and TAGS program, the phenomenon of gifted underidentification has continued to plague their Hispanic/Latino Title I students. These testimonies indicated a major programming gap resulting from limited access to a gifted specialist. As little has been published on school district efforts to reduce the gifted gap, feedback on CCSD's equity measures is very valuable.

The TAGS program is a unique service provided by the CCSD gifted department. The fact that the district has taken the initiative to address the gifted gap is commendable. A study of its impact is essential to ensure the measures taken are sufficient. This study's finding that Title I teachers believed their TAGS students needed more enrichment is quite significant. The finding indicated a necessity for reconsidering the definition of and criteria for giftedness in underserved schools. As discussed in Chapter 2, there has been no fixed definition of giftedness or federal regulation of programming. Leading gifted theorists have suggested 10% or more of students are gifted, and opportunity to nurture potential is critical for gifted students to flourish (Gagné, 2004; Renzulli, 1978).

Parent perspectives were also significant, for these findings revealed the power of dialogue between parents and teachers. Hispanic/Latino parents at SDES described strong social capital regarding classroom teachers, which positively impacted their views on the school. In this sense, these findings aligned with Villaseñor's (2021) study on Hispanic/Latino parent perspectives regarding gifted programming in a district with promising Hispanic/Latino gifted enrollment. However, in Villaseñor's study, parents received resources and support pertaining to

giftedness from the school, which was not reported in this study. Having no communication with the gifted specialist limited parents' ability to support their children's needs as gifted learners. Furthermore, parent participants revealed a need for support planning and navigating their children's academic futures, a finding confirmed by Villaseñor (2021).

Central Research Question

This section provides an analysis on how notions of capital, as informed by Bourdieu (1986) and Yosso (2005), impact the identification and education of Hispanic/Latino gifted students attending Title I schools. Bourdieu (1986) suggested privileged parents covertly used embodied, objectified, or institutionalized CC to ensure their children were prioritized in an educational system that was supposedly free and democratic. Rejecting theories that explained inequities impacting non-White people based on a deficit perspective, Yosso (2005) introduced CCW—six forms of capital possessed by minoritized communities that enabled them to persevere in the face of adversity. This question sought to shed light on forms of CC and/or CCW that may help or hinder the identification and education of Hispanic/Latino gifted students attending Title I schools.

Analysis revealed embodied CC was the primary form of CC discussed, and all forms of CCW were discussed. The major themes related to this question were (a) embodied CC as the dominant gifted paradigm at SDES, (b) inequitable opportunities to learn (OTL) impacting embodied CC, (c) inadequate social and navigational capital for teachers and parents, and (d) the vibrancy and vulnerability of aspirational CCW for gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students. The themes are briefly summarized in the following section.

Embodied Cultural Capital as the Dominant Gifted Paradigm

Through analysis of participant voices, a certain type of gifted learner was described multiple times. As stated in the discussion for Subquestion 1, parents and teachers interviewed repeatedly described current SDES gifted students as high achievers, either mathematically agile or advanced readers, with unflagging enthusiasm for school. This definition aligns with traditional depictions of gifted children outperforming their same-age peers, thus deserving additional educational experiences (Gagné, 2011; Hollingworth, 1926). It also aligns with Nevada's definition of gifted pupils with "outstanding skills and aptitudes" (Gifted and Talented Pupils, 2013).

As high achieving students represent the dominant ideal, they embody intelligence, therefore possessing the most educational capital. Bourdieu (1986) asserted embodied CC only appeared to be naturally acquired. In reality, embodied CC was often the result of small advantages transmitted by parents over time. Parents of gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students interviewed for this study did participate in activities that supported their children's learning, such as communicating frequently with teachers, helping children with homework, taking children to the library, and talking about college. Research has indicated educational support from parents at home leads to higher academic achievement for gifted Hispanic/Latino students (Villaseñor, 2021). Teachers spoke about other bright Hispanic/Latino Title I students who did not qualify for GATE/TAGS, and various barriers that could be factors preventing them from embodying giftedness as strongly. Those factors are described in the following section.

Inequitable Opportunities to Learn Impacting Embodied Cultural Capital

Anecdotes coded as incomplete social and navigational CCW revealed several missed opportunities to learn at SDES that blocked certain gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students from accessing GATE/TAGS. The teachers described a remedial academic atmosphere void of sufficient engagement and rigor for learners needing more challenge, a grim description echoed in other literature on low-achieving schools (Andreadis & Quinn, 2017; Gentry et al., 2019; Oakes et al., 1990). The Title I teachers I interviewed lacked sufficient social capital to collaborate with the gifted specialist to differentiate on the high end, akin to what they already had with special education teachers on the low end. Teachers lacked the navigational capital to have their students equitably tested; aside from the second-grade screener, there was little time to test more students.

Finally, Hispanic/Latino Title I students lacked social capital when testing with a gifted specialist they did not know. One teacher stated SDES students had abandonment issues and did not "open up easily to people." The pressure students feel to think critically with a stranger may be a prohibitive factor in gifted identification. Limited English proficiency can also prevent gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students from embodying giftedness, as explained in the following section.

Linguistic Capital Ignored

Teachers and parents acknowledged the linguistic CCW of Hispanic/Latino Title I students, but verbal linguistic giftedness of emergent bilingual students was not recognized in gifted testing. Teachers recognized linguistic giftedness in students who exhibited rapid English acquisition, made dramatic progress in reading, or made creative, sophisticated connections in

Spanish. Nevertheless, unless gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students speak English masterfully, they can only access GATE/TAGS through the nonverbal assessment.

Although the NNAT3 is nonverbal, thus accessible to students from diverse backgrounds, research has indicated White, middle-class students outperform emergent bilingual Hispanic/Latino students on the measure (Giessman et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2021; Lohman, 2005). Furthermore, native English speakers have the opportunity to qualify for gifted services using both a verbal and nonverbal measure (Clark County School District, n.d.). Emergent bilingual students only have legitimate access to the nonverbal measure. As emergent bilingual students are approximately 15 times less likely to participate in gifted programs (Yaluma & Tyner, 2018), linguistic CCW is an undervalued gift.

Vibrant and Vulnerable Aspirational Capital

Aspirational CCW emerged as a powerful form of capital for gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students and their parents. This form of CCW was detected as a positive factor in both parent and teacher interviews. Descriptors such as enthusiasm, motivation, focus, and stamina were coded as aspirational CCW, as these factors represent determination to maintain hopes and dreams in the face of challenge (Yosso, 2005). The perseverance described by so many participants also aligned with the task commitment necessary for giftedness to emerge in Renzulli's (1978) conception of giftedness. Gagné (2004) also highlighted a student's temperament and attitude toward learning as a necessary factor in the development of talent. For this reason, gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students' aspirational CCW must be protected and nurtured.

Participants mentioned some learners whose aspirational capital was ignited after starting GATE/TAGS. These students reportedly improved in weaker areas and performed well on end-of-year exams. In essence, GATE reportedly helped less motivated students stay "on the straight and narrow." This feedback is an indication gifted programming is impactful for SDES students, as preservation of the gifted learner's engagement and focus is a primary rationale for gifted services in the first place (Hollingworth, 1926; Marland, 1972; Renzulli, 2016). GATE was described as a necessity by teachers because the Tier I instruction in Title I classrooms was well below the learning needs of gifted students.

Parents also acknowledged their children's aspirational CCW and wanted to keep it ignited. Four of five parents had not gone to college and hoped their children would go further educationally than they had. This finding corroborated findings by Guzmán et al. (2021) and Villaseñor (2021), which indicated Hispanic/Latino parents placed importance on education, equating education with the American Dream. In this study, one parent's aspirational CCW was ignited by her children's academic success, inspiring her to go to college. Parents who had not gone to college expressed some worry about their gifted children maintaining focus and successfully completing their education. Parents wanted their children to maintain their aspirational capital and be successful, but felt they needed support to make that happen. Villaseñor also found Hispanic/Latino parents desired navigational support regarding their gifted children's education.

Significance of Central Research Question Findings

By coding the lived realities of teachers and parents according to a theoretical framework based on a continuum of educational capital, several important patterns emerged regarding

values. These findings were significant because of their potential to help gifted education leaders and policymakers better understand nuances of resource allocation and how they impact gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students in CCSD. This research could be used to create more equitable gifted policy, funding, resource allocation, and program design in Title I schools.

State and district policymakers must be aware that gifted identification in Title I schools is frequently tied to embodied CC, which is demonstrated by performing above grade level. If the traditional paradigm of giftedness, embodied CC, is often bolstered by transmissions of parental CC, similar transmissions must be supplemented by schools to ensure equity for historically marginalized student groups. Title I teacher participants in this study explained how transmission was near impossible for them to complete alone due to overwhelming pressures to raise proficiency. Without a dedicated gifted specialist specifically targeting the advanced end of academic standards, advanced opportunities to learn are not provided to Title I students attending low-performing schools.

Research has established though Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American students have been underrepresented in gifted programs, they have been overrepresented in special education classrooms (McDermott, 2006). As one teacher in the current study pointed out, special education teachers were present at SDES, actively supporting students and teachers on the low end. This study showed students and teachers at SDES have not had comparable social and navigational support on the high end. The perspectives highlighted in this study help explain why students attending Title I schools have been nearly half as likely to qualify for gifted services than students in more affluent neighborhoods (Gentry et al., 2019). Based upon the focus of administrators and the resources allocated, students experiencing physical poverty are

destined to also experience educational poverty. CC theory insists inequitable education systems are destined to reproduce societal inequality (Bourdieu, 1986; Nash, 1990). Disparate schooling outcomes along socioeconomic and racial lines will persist unless urgent, targeted action is taken (Ford et al., 2020; Peters, 2022).

Additionally, this study brought Hispanic/Latino Title I students' linguistic and aspirational CCW to the forefront as assets currently undervalued in the gifted identification process. With literature already suggesting nonverbal assessments have been insufficient as the only gifted identification measure for emergent bilingual students (Giessman et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2021; Lohman, 2005), evidence of giftedness offered by teachers should provide program leaders with possible starting points when reconsidering criteria and identification protocols. Finally, the link established between aspirational CCW and the task commitment various gifted scholars have deemed necessary for eminence is certainly significant, as it indicates a wealth of potential that is at risk of being squandered. Without recognizing the unique assets of historically minoritized students, the education debt owed to these students will continue to mount (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Student offerings of vital, productive CCW must be appraised at full value and allowed opportunities to flourish.

In summary, although much has been written about the need for equity measures in gifted education, very little has been written describing the actual implementation of said equity measures. By examining the impact of the universal screener, nonverbal testing, and the TAGS program on the gifted programming at one Title I elementary school, other scholars or gifted educators interested in equity pursuits may learn from this study before solidifying their own

equity plans. Most importantly, CCSD can consider its gifted services from the perspective of those closest to the inequities it aims to dismantle and adjust accordingly.

Recommendations

This section contains recommendations for equitably identifying and serving gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students based on the perspectives of teachers and parents interviewed for this study and connecting literature.

Increased Gifted Programming in Title I Schools

The main recommendation is for more robust gifted programming in Title I schools, especially those currently receiving 1 day of programming. Schools with low numbers of identified gifted students should not be allotted minimal gifted services. Instead, such schools should receive additional support for talent development and testing, provided by a trained expert on giftedness and culturally diverse learners. Recommended supports for schools with low gifted enrollment are described in the following section.

Partnership With School Community

Teachers at low-performing Title I schools require collaboration with a gifted specialist to enhance differentiation and engagement in the general education classroom for gifted and high-achieving students. Teachers who endeavor to bring most students to proficiency are currently following various initiatives to enhance Tier I instruction, which pertains to whole-class, grade level instruction. Students working below Tier I are supported by intervention and special education as needed. Students working above Tier I must also continue to grow, but the human capital required to do this is not currently in the building. Gifted specialists must be

present and accessible thought partners for teachers to challenge advanced learners, and to recognize and nurture CCW in all students.

Title I parents also desire a partnership with the gifted specialist so they can be kept abreast of their children's progress and any opportunities they should know about to support their child's academic development. Hispanic/Latino Title I parents are less familiar with gifted programming than White, non-Title I parents; thus, these parents require outreach to learn how best to support their children from home and advocate for them in life.

Teacher Training in Culturally Responsive Gifted Education

Gifted specialists must also lead teachers in regular staff development to identify traits of diverse gifted learners and strategies to meet their academic and social emotional needs. All teachers must know the referral procedures for gifted testing. Furthermore, faculty must be familiar with Title I school data not just on the low end, but also on the high end of achievement. Per the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), schools must monitor progress of high-achieving students to ensure that growth is being made. Faculty serving historically undereducated subgroups should study and discuss student achievement by subgroup to identify patterns helping or hindering efforts to close the gifted gap. Including excellence in conversations surrounding Title I students can shift educator perspectives toward positive expectations and schoolwide aspirational capital.

Increased Support for TAGS Students

With an increased presence of a gifted specialist, support could be improved for students narrowly missing gifted eligibility. Teachers in this study believed students participating in the TAGS program needed more opportunities to be challenged. Based on participant feedback, I

recommend reevaluating the program structure at schools with low gifted enrollment so more students can receive the full benefit of gifted and talented services. This could be done in a variety of ways, including merging the TAGS and GATE programs, using schoolwide norms for GATE eligibility, or adopting a talent-development program that supports the whole school, such as the schoolwide enrichment model and U-STARS~PLUS (Coleman, 2016; Harradine et al., 2014; Reis & Renzulli, 2010).

Funding for gifted programming has often been limited, but the *Every Student Succeeds Act* of 2015 specifically stated Title I funds may be used to identify and serve gifted students. This act ordered school leaders track scores of high achieving students; thus, states would benefit from allocating a portion of Title I monies toward talent development (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015; National Association for Gifted Children, 2015).

Equitable Access for Gifted Emergent Bilingual Students

Gifted eligibility criteria must be adjusted to recognize the linguistic CCW of emergent bilingual students, as CCSD gifted eligibility protocol currently favors native English speakers. Scholars have suggested using multiple strategies to identify gifted emergent bilingual students, including use of portfolios, class tryouts, and cultural assets identifiers (Aganza et al., 2015; Mun et al., 2020; Siegle et al., 2016). Teachers in this study described rapid language acquisition and reading growth as indicators of linguistic giftedness in their emergent bilingual students. Perhaps indications of rapid growth on tests administered at CCSD schools, such as the Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA, 2000) benchmark assessment or the annual ACCESS for English language learners (ACCESS for ELLs; World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment, 2006) can be used as evidence on the gifted eligibility matrix. If native English speakers have the

opportunity to demonstrate giftedness using both nonverbal and linguistic measures, then emergent bilingual students must be afforded comparable opportunities. Longitudinal data provided by ACCESS assessments (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment, 2006) and Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA, 2000) scores could reveal linguistic strengths that otherwise remain hidden.

Culturally Inclusive Language in Gifted Policy

As local policy influences the distribution of resources, it is imperative to eliminate biases that may perpetuate inequitable educational outcomes (Horsford et al., 2018). Nevada's operational definition of giftedness was introduced in 1993 and has not changed since. Much research has since been written about differing ways giftedness can be expressed in historically underidentified populations (Peters, 2022). Swanson and Lord (2013) suggested, "Educators must understand, guide, and utilize policy changes" to provide a support system for gifted students (p. 200). For example, Colorado has modified its definition to be more inclusive, asserting "(g)ifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e., twice exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socioeconomic, ethnic, and cultural populations" (Colorado Office of Gifted Education, 2022, para. 1). Establishing a more multifaceted picture of the gifted learner can help diversify gifted programs and "build understanding and support statewide" (Swanson & Lord, 2013, p. 206).

Suggestions for Future Research

To make a more complete assessment of CCSD's progress toward equitable gifted programming for historically underserved populations, the following research is recommended:

- Retroactive longitudinal research on the efficacy of the TAGS program in increasing representation of historically underidentified subgroups.
- Retroactive longitudinal research on the efficacy of the universal screener in increasing representation of historically underidentified subgroups.
- Interviews with parents and teachers of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino gifted students from various school settings.
- Interviews with teachers of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students who were nominated for gifted testing but did not qualify for services.

To address issues of equity, it is paramount to gather perspectives from the communities equity measures are meant to serve. Gifted identification disproportionality exists in every locale—urban, suburban, and rural alike (Gentry & Whiting, 2021). This study gathered teacher and parent voices from one Title I school serving a large Hispanic/Latino population. It is probable teacher and parent insights on student needs may vary according to the unique circumstances of each school community. This possibility was supported by analysis of a pilot interview I conducted with the mother of a Black/African American gifted student who had attended a non-Title I elementary school. The next few paragraphs summarize key takeaways from comparing this mother's responses to those of SDES parents.

Like SDES parents, Stacey Davis linked giftedness with high achievement and enthusiasm, saying, "It's for kids that are academically strong that are able to demonstrate that autonomously, like without having to be pushed." Mrs. Davis maintained regular communication with her son's teachers and devoted time and energy supplementing his learning from home. Her son, James, much like gifted students at SDES, was very active at school and participated in

many extracurricular activities. Also like SDES parents, Mrs. Davis did not feel supported as a student and was determined to give her children the opportunities she never got. For instance, Mrs. Davis said, “I made it my mission to create a space for my children to never have to be told by their counselor that they don’t qualify for an AP class or a GATE program.” Unlike SDES parent participants, who evaluated their children’s education highly, Mrs. Davis indicated doubt her children would reach their educational potential without her additional instruction after school.

This finding aligned with Huguley et al. (2021), who reported Black/African American parents believed without home-based supports, their children would be undereducated by public school teachers. Mrs. Davis knew participating in GATE was a “building block,” and without it, her son might not have access to the subsequent educational opportunities he was currently enjoying, such as accelerated and pre-advanced placement courses in middle school. On the other hand, Mrs. Davis brought up different concerns connected to an environment where GATE was a large part of the school culture, such as the “elite” status of GATE students and pressure to ensure her children were “GATE material.” Mrs. Davis also spoke about the pressures of raising a Black son in a predominantly White neighborhood, suggesting her efforts to protect him by molding him into a high achieving, well-mannered, nonthreatening young man had robbed James of a typical childhood.

I have shared details from this interview to demonstrate, although a non-White parent and child might have more social and navigational capital at a non-Title I school, embodied CC is still necessary to thrive as a minoritized student, and one’s aspirations are dependent on the perceptions of the school system. Details also showed this work is not only in identifying

students from historically undereducated subgroups, but also in scaffolding their academic and emotional journeys. A gifted program that centers cultural responsiveness would benefit from gathering more diverse perspectives such as the ones depicted in this study. By amplifying voices from underrepresented communities, CCSD can streamline its gifted programming to truly close the gifted gap.

Conclusion

Ladson-Billings (2013) referred to the hypocrisy of an education system that suggests the underperformance of minoritized students is solely in the student's control. Without sufficient exposure to learning opportunities, gifted Hispanic/Latino Title I students are less likely to demonstrate the embodied CC necessary to access learning opportunities through gifted programming. Without sufficient social and navigational capital, teachers of these students are also denied access to academic support necessary to challenge and engage these learners. This conundrum, as two teachers pointed out, was the catch-22 of having a 1-day gifted program—"you're not going to get more kids if you don't test more kids." This study provides a concrete illustration of how gifted programming can be offered in most high poverty schools; yet participation can remain so low (Gentry et al., 2019; Peters & Carter, 2022; Yaluma & Tyner, 2018).

In this chapter, I presented a summary of the research question findings and a discussion of the themes I found related to the central research question. I shared implications for the field of gifted education and recommendations for further research. Overall, the study showed teachers and parents at Title I schools have high aspirational capital for their Hispanic/Latino gifted learners. Hispanic/Latino parents are eager to support their children's education, but there

is a need for enhanced social and navigational capital to reinforce their gifted children's future academic successes. Title I teachers wish to challenge their advanced learners; yet, with the pressure from leaders to raise proficiency as a schoolwide goal, they are overwhelmed. Title I schools need gifted specialists on campus regularly to build relationships with students, teachers, and parents and to support historically undereducated school communities to close the gifted gap and thrive.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL SITE REQUEST

Dear (SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR):

My name is Jasmin Churchill, and I am a doctoral candidate at Loyola Marymount University in pursuit of a degree in the area of educational leadership for social justice. I am also a CCSD teacher of 16 years, most recently a GATE teacher at XXXXX Elementary School. As the final component of my studies, I am writing a dissertation on the perceptions of teachers and parents on the unique gifts and needs of Black and Hispanic/Latinx TAGS students. I am writing to request permission to conduct research on the XXXXX ES TAGS program. This project is supported by the director of the CCSD GATE program.

For my data collection, I hope you will allow me to interview five teachers currently working with Black and/ or Latinx TAGS students and five parents of Black or Latinx students. My estimated data collection window will be April 10–May 19, 2023.

Participation by faculty and parents will be entirely voluntary. Participants will be asked to engage in an interview scheduled at their convenience lasting no more than one hour either in person or via Zoom, the web conferencing platform. I would also request access to any data that could be helpful in understanding GATE and TAGS referral and eligibility by race/ethnicity over the past three years. Information obtained from interviews and through documentation along with the results of this study will be held confidential. The school and all participants will be given pseudonyms.

Your approval to conduct this study would be greatly appreciated. It would be my pleasure to adhere to any requirements set forth by CCSD and your leadership team for conducting research

on your TAGS program. No research will be conducted until I have clearance from (1) your school, (2) the CCSD research division, and (3) the Loyola Marymount University institutional review board.

If you will grant access for my research project to be conducted at Sandy Dune ES, kindly use the attached template to create a signed letter of consent on school letterhead acknowledging this fact. If you have any questions, I can be reached via email at xxxxx@lion.lmu.edu or by phone at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

Jasmin Churchill

Loyola Marymount University

APPENDIX B

TEACHER PARTICIPANT REQUEST

Dear (TEACHER),

My name is Jasmin Churchill, and I am a doctoral candidate at Loyola Marymount University in pursuit of a degree in the area of educational leadership for social justice. I am also a CCSD GATE teacher. I am writing my dissertation on the perceptions of teachers and parents on the unique gifts and needs of Black and Hispanic/Latinx TAGS students. Sandy Dune ES has been selected as my research site. As a teacher working closely with Black and/or Hispanic/Latinx students, you have been recommended as a potential participant.

Participation will be entirely voluntary. You will be asked to engage in an interview lasting no more than one hour. Information obtained from your interview will be held confidential. The school and all participants will be given pseudonyms.

The interview will be scheduled at your convenience and can be held either in person or via Zoom, the web conferencing platform.

If you are interested in sharing your perspectives for my research, please call me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or respond to this email with the best method of contacting you.

Thank you in advance,

Jasmin Churchill

Doctoral Candidate

Loyola Marymount University

APPENDIX C

PARENT PARTICIPANT REQUEST (ENGLISH)

Dear (PARENT)

My name is Jasmin Solórzano Churchill, and I am a doctoral student at Loyola Marymount University. I am also a CCSD GATE teacher. I am writing my dissertation on the perceptions of teachers and parents on the unique gifts and needs of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino TAGS students. Sandy Dune ES has been selected as my research site. You have been recommended as a potential parent participant.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You will be asked to engage in an interview lasting no more than one hour. Information obtained from your interview will be held confidential. Your name and identifying information will not be included in my writing. The interview will be scheduled at your convenience and can be held either in person or via Zoom, the web conferencing platform.

It would be an honor if you would join me for a conversation about your child. I believe that educators and gifted program leaders can learn a lot from your wisdom as a parent, and that your voice should be included in education decision-making.

I am happy to discuss any questions or concerns at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

If you are willing to participate, please complete this **interest form**.

Thank you in advance,

Jasmin Churchill

Doctoral Candidate

Loyola Marymount University

APPENDIX D

PARENT PARTICIPANT REQUEST (SPANISH)

Estimado Padre,

Mi nombre es Jasmin Solórzano Churchill y soy estudiante de doctorado en la Universidad Loyola Marymount. También soy maestra de GATE de CCSD. Estoy escribiendo mi disertación sobre las percepciones de maestros y padres sobre las características y necesidades de los estudiantes TAGS afroamericanos e hispanos/latinos. Sandy Dune ES ha sido seleccionada como mi sitio de investigación. Te han recomendado para una entrevista.

Su participación es totalmente voluntaria. Se le pedirá que participe en una entrevista que dure ménos de una hora. La información obtenida de su entrevista se mantendrá confidencial. Su nombre e información de identificación no se incluirán en mi tesis. La entrevista se programará a su conveniencia y se puede realizar en persona o a través de Zoom, la plataforma de conferencias web.

Sería un honor si se uniera a mí para conversar sobre su hija/o. Creo que los educadores pueden aprender mucho de su sabiduría como padre, y que su voz debe incluirse en la toma de decisiones educativas.

Me complace hablar sobre cualquier pregunta o inquietud al (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Si está dispuesto a participar, complete este **formulario de interés**.

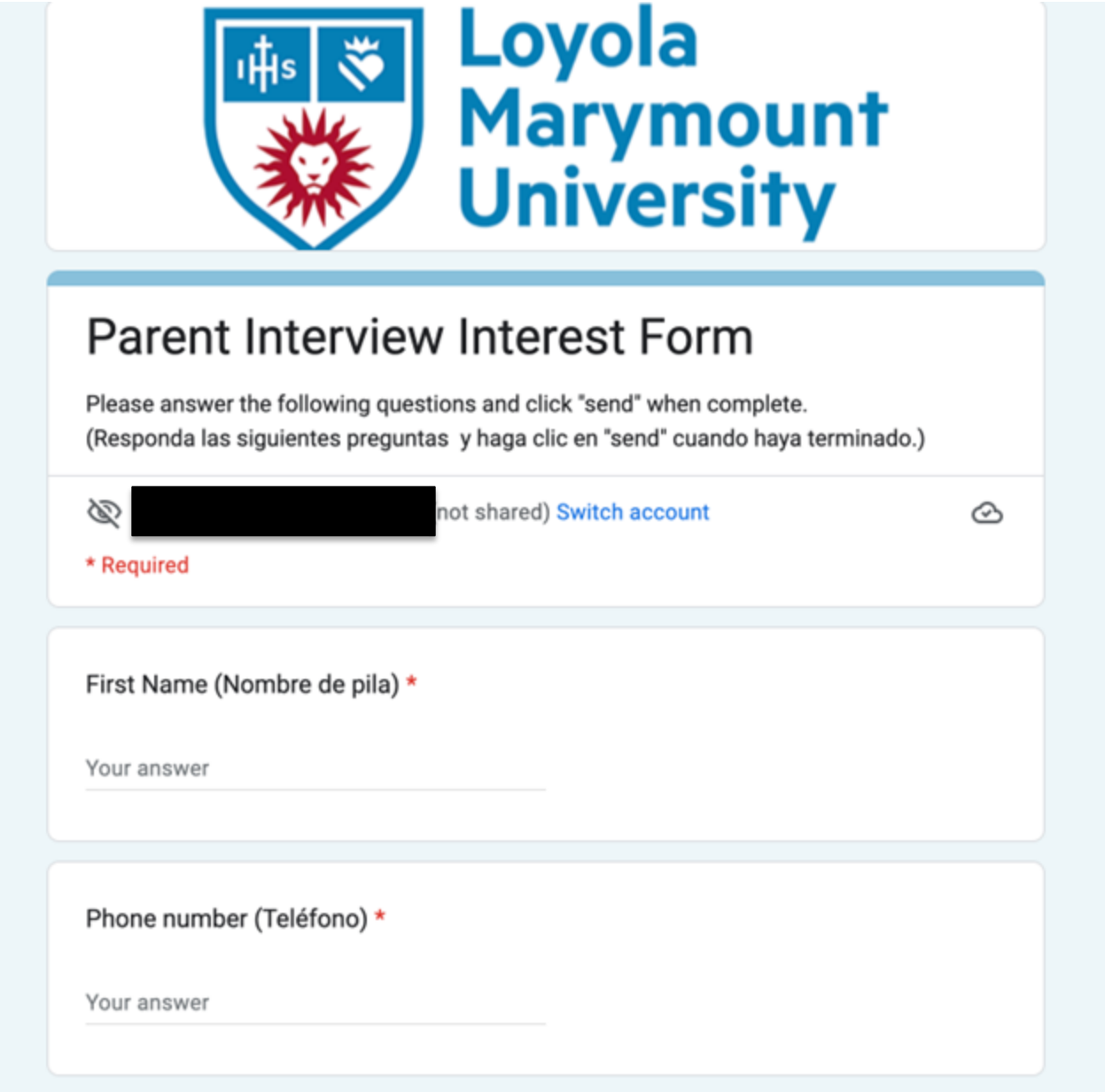
Gracias de antemano,

Jasmin Churchill

Loyola Marymount University

APPENDIX E

PARENT PARTICIPANT INTEREST FORM



Loyola Marymount University

Parent Interview Interest Form

Please answer the following questions and click "send" when complete.
(Responda las siguientes preguntas y haga clic en "send" cuando haya terminado.)

[redacted] not shared) Switch account

* Required

First Name (Nombre de pila) *

Your answer

Phone number (Teléfono) *

Your answer

APPENDIX F

TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Teacher Interview Protocol

Interview Information	
Date:	Time:
Interviewer:	Interviewee (pseudonym):
Location:	

INTRODUCTION	NOTES
Hello, my name is JASMIN CHURCHILL. Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for my dissertation. The purpose of my research is to better understand how racial disparities persist in CCSD gifted and talented education (GATE) programs despite the implementation of Title I Alternative Gifted Services (TAGS). I want to learn more about the students who qualify for TAGS and how the service impacts their education and opportunities.	

During the interview, I'll ask you to tell me about your perspective on the TAGS program and the TAGS students you work with/ your child. These questions are not intended to be intrusive or make you feel uncomfortable, but **if I ask a question that you do not feel comfortable answering, please just tell me that you do not want to answer, and we will move on to the next question.** I anticipate the interview will take approximately 30–45 minutes. With your permission, I will record video and audio via Zoom so that I can transcribe the conversation and use the transcript for analysis. [IF PARTICIPANT DOES NOT AGREE TO BE RECORDED, YOU CAN CONTINUE THE INTERVIEW JUST TAKING NOTES OR YOU CAN CHOOSE TO DISCONTINUE INTERVIEW.] Do you have any questions before we begin? [ANSWER QUESTIONS TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY. IF YOU CAN'T ANSWER OFF HAND ASK IF THEY'D BE COMFORTABLE WITH YOU	

GETTING BACK TO THEM WITH THE ANSWER AFTER THE INTERVIEW]	

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	NOTES
Introductory • What do you think about the GATE program? • What do you think about the TAGS program? • How would you define or describe giftedness? TAGS Student Gifts/Capital • How would you describe the gifts and needs of your Hispanic/Latino TAGS student(s)? ◦ *Follow-up for teachers:* What differences do you observe in the skills, attitudes, and learning styles of TAGS-identified students and GATE-identified students? • Do you recognize strengths of Hispanic/Latino students that are not identified through the GATE testing process? TAGS Program Impact • What impact do you notice TAGS having on participating Hispanic/Latino students? Do you	

notice changes in their attitudes or abilities after participating for several months? ◦ *Follow-up:* What differences do you observe between the outcomes of TAGS-identified students and GATE-identified students? • What educational hopes do you have for your Hispanic/Latino TAGS students? ◦ *Follow-up:* Do you think TAGS can help them achieve those hopes? Why/Why not? Barriers to Educational Capital • What obstacles prevent your Hispanic/Latino TAGS student(s) from qualifying for GATE/more services? • How do you think the TAGS program could improve in order to help your child/ Hispanic/Latino TAGS student(s) reach their educational potential?	

CLOSING	

We need to start wrapping up our interview now, but before we do, **is there anything you would like to add that I didn't ask about?** [STOP RECORDING.] Thank you for your time and your thoughtful responses. My next step is to transcribe this conversation so I can use it in my data set for analysis. **Is it ok if I reach out to you if I have questions or need clarifications about this conversation?** [BE SURE TO MAKE A NOTE OF THEIR ANSWER.] Thanks again. If you think of any questions or have any concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch.	

APPENDIX G

PARENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Information	
Date:	Time:
Interviewer:	Interviewee (pseudonym):
Location:	

INTRODUCTION	NOTES
Hello, my name is JASMIN CHURCHILL. Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for my dissertation. The purpose of my research is to better understand how racial disparities persist in CCSD gifted and talented education (GATE) programs despite the implementation of Title I Alternative Gifted Services (TAGS). I want to learn more about the students who qualify for TAGS and how the service impacts their education and opportunities. During the interview, I'll ask you to tell me about your perspective on the TAGS program and the TAGS students you work with/ your child. These questions are not intended to be intrusive or make you feel	

uncomfortable, but **if I ask a question that you do not feel comfortable answering, please just tell me that you do not want to answer, and we will move on to the next question.** I anticipate the interview will take approximately 30–45 minutes. With your permission, I will record video and audio via Zoom so that I can transcribe the conversation and use the transcript for analysis. [IF PARTICIPANT DOES NOT AGREE TO BE RECORDED, YOU CAN CONTINUE THE INTERVIEW JUST TAKING NOTES OR YOU CAN CHOOSE TO DISCONTINUE INTERVIEW.] Do you have any questions before we begin? [ANSWER QUESTIONS TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY. IF YOU CAN'T ANSWER OFF HAND ASK IF THEY'D BE COMFORTABLE WITH YOU GETTING BACK TO THEM WITH THE ANSWER AFTER THE INTERVIEW]	

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	NOTES

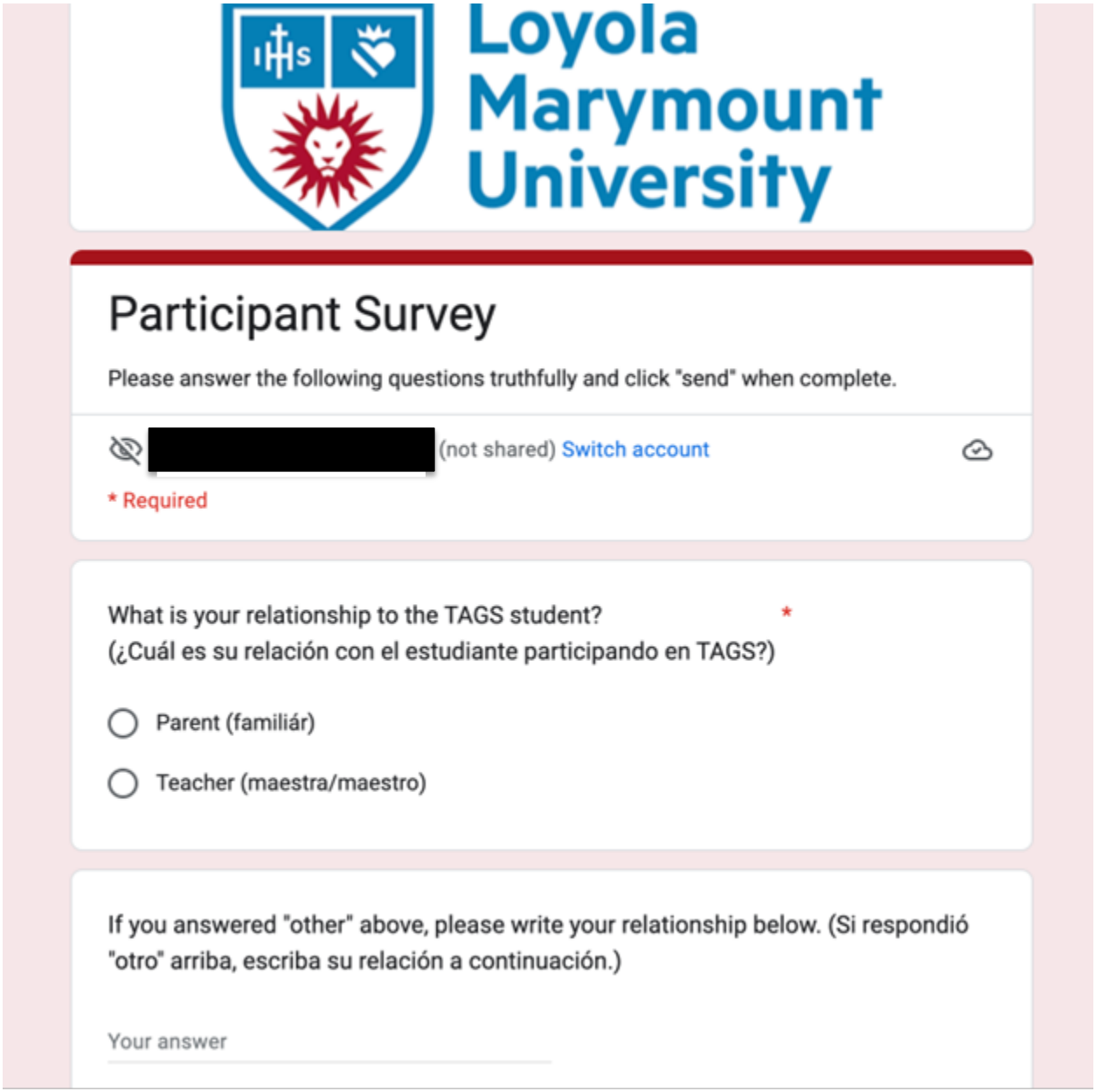
Introductory • What do you think about the GATE program? • What do you think about the TAGS program? • How would you define or describe giftedness? TAGS Student Gifts/Capital • How would you describe the gifts and needs of your child in TAGS? ◦ *Follow-up:* What differences do you observe in the skills, attitudes, and learning styles of your TAGS-identified child and other children? • Do you recognize strengths in your child that are not identified through the GATE testing process? TAGS Program Impact • What impact do you notice TAGS having on your child? Do you notice changes in their attitudes or abilities after participating for several months? • What educational hopes do you have for your child? ◦ *Follow-up:* How do you think TAGS can help them achieve those hopes? Barriers to Educational Capital	

• What obstacles prevent your child from qualifying for GATE/more services? • How do you think the TAGS program could improve in order to help your child reach their educational potential?	

CLOSING	
We need to start wrapping up our interview now, but before we do, **is there anything you would like to add that I didn't ask about?** [STOP RECORDING.] Thank you for your time and your thoughtful responses. My next step is to transcribe this conversation so I can use it in my data set for analysis. **Is it ok if I reach out to you if I have questions or need clarifications about this conversation?** [BE SURE TO MAKE A NOTE OF THEIR ANSWER.] Thanks again. If you think of any questions or have any concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch.	

APPENDIX H

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY



Loyola Marymount University

Participant Survey

Please answer the following questions truthfully and click "send" when complete.

[redacted] (not shared) Switch account

* Required

What is your relationship to the TAGS student? *
(¿Cuál es su relación con el estudiante participando en TAGS?)

- ◯ Parent (familiár)
- ◯ Teacher (maestra/maestro)

If you answered "other" above, please write your relationship below. (Si respondió "otro" arriba, escriba su relación a continuación.)

Your answer

Age range (rango de edad): *

- ◯ 18-25
- ◯ 26-35
- ◯ 36-45
- ◯ 46-55
- ◯ 56+

Racial/ ethnic identification (Raza/ Etnicidad) *

- ◯ Afro latino
- ◯ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ◯ Asian
- ◯ Black / African American
- ◯ Hispanic/ Latino
- ◯ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
- ◯ White / Caucasian
- ◯ Other

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