

# NAGC Approves Special Interest Group for Profoundly Gifted Learners

*Initiative led by pioneers Melissa Bilash and P. Susan Jackson to serve the most exceptional students*

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EINPresswire.com/ -- In a landmark move for the global gifted education community, the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has approved the formal application for its first-ever Special Interest Group (SIG) dedicated exclusively to Profoundly Gifted (PG) learners. This

groundbreaking effort is led by two internationally respected pioneers: Melissa Bilash, Founder of [The Grayson School](#) (Philadelphia), and P. Susan Jackson, Founder of [The Daimon Institute](#) (British Columbia). The PG population represents an elite group, less than 0.13% of the global IQ distribution, whose unique cognitive and emotional needs have historically been underserved.



Melissa Bilash (L) and P. Susan Jackson (R) are leading this initiative to address the historically underserved needs of profoundly gifted learners.

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*F. Richard Olenchak, PhD, PC*

The Profoundly Gifted SIG represents a new chapter in NAGC’s 70-year history, where the needs of profoundly gifted learners will be addressed through a structured, research-backed platform within the organization. F. Richard Olenchak, PhD, PC, Former President of NAGC and Professor at Purdue University, commented on the significance: “To regard all gifted and talented persons as the same is as farcical as to view all planets as being identical. I salute the efforts of Sue Jackson and Melissa Bilash in orchestrating the development of a Special

Interest Group at NAGC that is laser-focused on the unique educational and psychological needs of the profoundly gifted population. These efforts to undergird policy and practice are not only important but critical to optimizing the personal development of children and adults who possess the most exceptional talents.”

The SIG application emerged from the clear, urgent need voiced by attendees at the 2024 NAGC Conference: sustained programming, advocacy, and community for those with the highest abilities. Profoundly gifted individuals differ not just in degree but in kind, exhibiting rare intensity, cognitive complexity, and social-emotional depth. Without intentional support, these children often struggle with anxiety, underachievement, and isolation. These children are not simply more gifted—they are differently wired. Empirical research points to unique neurodevelopmental patterns in PG learners, requiring targeted strategies for educational and psychological support. This SIG will serve as a collaborative hub for:

- Global research initiatives
- Development of clinical and academic best practices
- Cross-cultural advocacy and networking
- Community-building for PG youth, adults, families, and all stakeholders worldwide

To learn more about the goals and initiatives of this groundbreaking group, or to inquire about membership and collaboration opportunities in the National Association of Gifted Children, [please visit the NAGC site](#).

#### About the Leaders

Melissa Bilash is a national education policy expert and Founder and Head of School of The Grayson School, an independent day school in the Philadelphia area exclusively serving gifted students in grades PreK-12. Melissa is a global speaker on gifted education and has co-authored chapters in the Guide to State Policies in Gifted Education (NAGC) as well as the University of Denver's 2017 monograph series, Perspectives in Gifted Education: Legal Issues (Vol. 7). She is a recipient of the Pennsylvania Association of Gifted Children's Educator of the Year Award.

P. Susan Jackson, is a clinical counselor, author, researcher, and Founder and Director of The Daimon Institute for the Highly Gifted, a therapeutic, clinical, and research center based in British Columbia, known for its international leadership in gifted counseling and work with profoundly gifted children, youth and adults. A keynote speaker and mental health thought leader, Susan is the author of the forthcoming book, "Excuse Me, Where Do I Park My Whale? The Extraordinary Journey of the Exceptionally and Profoundly Gifted." She is a recipient of the Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG) organization's Mental Health Practitioner of the Year award and was recognized for her outstanding work in the field of neurodiversity by the Twice Exceptional Journal in 2021.

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