

Dr. Austina De Bonte, Ed.D.

POSITIONS

Consultant, Smart is not Easy, LLC, www.smartisnoteasy.com (2017 – present)

Private consultant for school district teams, professional development for educators, parent education, and individual parent consulting. UBI: 604-172-702 EIN: 82-2801469

President, WA Coalition for Gifted Education, www.wacoalition.com (2021 – present)

WA statewide organization for legislative advocacy. Board member since 2015.

Past President, NW Gifted Child Association (NWGCA), www.nwgca.org (2010 – present)

WA statewide non-profit organization for families with gifted children. Board member 2010-12. President 2012-21.

Member, WA State OSPI Highly Capable Advisory Committee (2017 – present)

Advising the WA state superintendent of public instruction on matters relating to highly capable programs.

Member, NAGC Public Policy and Advocacy Committee, www.nagc.org (2023 – present)

Member of national advocacy committee on the topic of gifted education policy.

Facilitator, SENG Model Parent/Community Discussion Groups (2013 – present)

Facilitating parent discussion groups for families with gifted or 2e students.

Advisor/Partner, The G Word Film, www.thegwordfilm.com (2017 – 2020)

Member of advisory board to groundbreaking documentary about gifted individuals, equity, and neurodiversity.

Member, NAGC Parent Editorial Content & Advisory Board, www.nagc.org (2016 – 2019)

Reviewing articles for publication in the Parenting for High Potential Magazine, as well as authoring content.

AWARDS

Research & Evaluation Dissertation Award, November 2025 (National Association of Gifted Children)

Carolyn Callahan Doctoral Student Award, November 2023 (National Association of Gifted Children)

People to Watch, Fall 2020 (Variations 2e Magazine)

Advocacy Award, October 2019 (Washington Association of Educators of Talented and Gifted)

PTA Outstanding Advocate Award, June 2018 (Northshore Council PTA)

PTA Outstanding Advocate Award, June 2017 (Leota Middle School PTA)

PTA Outstanding Advocate Award, June 2015 (Bear Creek Elementary PTA)

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AUDIENCES

Dates before 2016 available upon request

December 2025: Portland Access Academy

November 2025: Shoreline PTA

May 2025: Northshore HiCap Parents Council

October 2024: Trillium Academy

October 2024: Seabury School

April 2024: Edmonds School District

January 2024: Bear Creek Campus PTSA

November 2023: Shoreline School District

November 2023: Mount Vernon School District

November 2023: Seabury School, Tacoma

Jan 2023: Lake Washington GEAC (online)

Oct 2022: Equity in HiCap Week (online)

Sept 2022: Inst. for Ed. Advancement (online)

Sept 2022: Seattle Homeschoolers (online)

May 2022: Sumner-Bonney Lake SD
 May 2022: Arc of King County (online)
 February 2022: Bellingham SD (online)
 February 2022: Kent SD (online)
 May 2021: Feynman School, MD (online)
 January 2021: MIT Club of Wash DC (online)
 January 2021: Edmonds CP Assoc. (online)
 December 2020: MIT '98 Reunion (online)
 November 2020: Bellingham Schools (online)
 October 2020: Blaine School District (online)
 January 2020: Central Kitsap School District
 November 2019: MIT Splash Parent Program
 November 2019: Seabury School, Tacoma
 October 2019: Edmonds Challenge Parents Assoc.
 May 2019: Sumner School District
 March 2019: Shoreline School District
 January 2019: Edmonds School District
 December 2018: Seattle Schools, Thornton Elem
 October 2018: Riverview School Dist, Carnation
 October 2018: Marysville School District
 April 2018: International School, Kirkland
 April 2018: Seabury School, Tacoma
 March 2018: Snohomish Public Library
 January 2018: Camas School District
 November 2017: Lake Washington School District
 November 2017: BK Play Academy (Bellevue)
 November 2017: Northshore School District
 October 2017: Shoreline School District
 October 2017: Leavenworth School District
 September 2017: Mount Vernon School District
 May 2017: Federal Way School District
 March 2017: Seabury School in Tacoma
 February 2017: Highline School District
 January 2017: Edmonds School District
 November 2016: Renton School District
 October 2016: Northshore School District
 October 2016: Mount Vernon School District
 October 2016: Kelso School District
 October 2016: Bear Creek Elementary PTA
 October 2016: Lake Washington School District
 October 2016: Shoreline School District
 June 2016: Highline School District
 May 2016: Lynden School District
 April 2016: Centered in Wellness, Kirkland
 April 2016: Mukilteo School District
 March 2016: Issaquah School District
 March 2016: Leota Middle School Honor Society
 January 2016: Lake Stevens School District
 January 2016: Mount Vernon School District

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATORS

February 2026: Seattle Public Schools, Thurgood Marshall Elementary (series of 3 sessions for all staff)
 February 2026: Aberdeen School District, Full day session on neurodiversity for all district staff
 January 2026: Guest speaker for Pacific Lutheran University course, Current Trends in Special Education
 January 2026: WA State Educational Service District 189
 December 2025: Portland Public Schools, Access Academy, Half day session for all school staff
 May 2025: Seabury School, Half day session for all school staff
 May 2025: Kenmore Middle School, 2-hour session for all school staff
 April 2025: Colorado BOCES (online)
 February 2025: Northshore Middle School HiCap Committee
 February 2025: Seabury School, Half day session for all school staff
 February 2025: Colorado BOCES (online)
 October 2024: Seabury School, Half day session for all school staff
 November 2023: Battle Ground School District, 2-hour session
 February 2023: WAETAG Monthly Webinar
 Getting to the Root of 2E: Beyond the Usual Suspects
 December 2022: North Carolina Association for Gifted & Talented, Talent Unleashed, invited session

One School District's 6-Year Equity Journey with Universal Screening and Local Norms
May 2022: Sumner/Bonney Lake School District, 2-hour PD session
Smart is not Easy – What Research Says about Highly Capable Learners
January 2022: North Carolina Association of the Gifted and Talented, Talent Unleashed, invited session
One School District's 5-Year Equity Journey with Universal Screening and Local Norms
September/October 2021: 4-Session PD series for Monroe & Sultan School Districts
Smart is not Easy – What Research Says about Highly Capable Learners
March 2020: Rehab Seminars, Full day PD in Seattle, WA
Smart is not Easy – What Research Says about Highly Capable Learners
March 2020: Blaine School District, Half day consult
Program models & equitable identification strategies
February 2020: NW ESD 189 (Anacortes), Full day PD for Hi-Cap Cooperative (Districts across the ESD)
January 2020: Northshore School District, 1-hour PD for Canyon Park Middle School, all staff
January 2020: Central Kitsap School District
2-hour PD session
Parent evening presentation
January 2020: Lynden School District
3-hour PD for HiCap specialists
1.5-hour PD for superintendent leadership team
Parent evening presentation
November 2019: Multicare Behavioral Health, Puyallup, PD session
October 2019: Shoreline School District
Presentation and consult with HiCap Committee
August 2019: Central Kitsap School District, Three 90-minute PD sessions
June 2019: Central Kitsap School District, Two 3-hour PD sessions
May 2019: Sumner School District, 2-hour PD session
January 2019: NW ESD 189 (Anacortes), Full day PD for Hi-Cap Cooperative (Districts across the ESD)
January 2019: Arlington School District
3-hour PD, all elementary staff
2-hour consult, HiCap Committee
December 2018 – February 2019: Central Kitsap School District
Two consultation site visits, phone consultation, data analysis for administrators & HiCap Committee
August 2018: Mount Vernon School District, 1.5 hour PD session, LaVenture middle school staff
August 2018: Kent School District, Full day PD for all school counselors
February 2018: ESD 113 (Olympia/Tumwater), 3-hour PD session
January 2018: Camas School District, 2-hour PD session for all staff
January 2018: Shoreline School District, 2-hour PD session for elementary staff
January 2018: Burlington-Edison School District, 2-hour PD session, district offices
October 2017: NW ESD 189 (Anacortes), 3-hour keynote presenter, plus breakout session
What Educators and Administrators Need to Know About Smart Kids
Peeling the Onion: Equity in Highly Capable (HiCap)
October 2017: Leavenworth School District, 2-hour PD for all staff, Cascade School District

September 2017: Mount Vernon School District, PD for elementary and middle cluster group teachers
August 2017: Mount Vernon School District, PD for Jefferson Elementary, all staff
June 2107: Seattle School Board, presentation on Equity in HiCap for school board study session
March 2017: Mount Vernon School District, 3-hour PD session for Elementary PD Day
March 2017: Lake Stevens School District, 2-hour PD session for Lake Stevens Middle School, all staff
January 2017: Federal Way School District, 2-hour PD session for Highly Capable staff
October 2016: Leota Junior High School, Science Department
August 2016: Lake Stevens School District, 3-Hour PD session for Highly Capable staff
March 2016: King County Juvenile Court, 2-hour PD session for King County truancy officers
January 2016: Madison Middle School, PD session Madison Middle School, all staff

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS GIVEN

March 2026: Thinking Outside the Box: Identifying, Supporting, and Advocating for the Unique Needs of the Gifted and Twice Exceptional (Hudson, NY)

Getting Students Writing: How to Support Twice Exceptional Students and Other Reluctant Writers

March 2026: Washington School Counselors Association

What Highly Capable and Twice-Exceptional Students Need from their School Counselor

February 2026: National Association of Independent Schools

Leaning in to Twice Exceptionality with Seabury School in Tacoma, WA (with Rob Scotlan)

November 2025: Washington State School Directors Association

Addressing Equity in HiCap Programs – Integrating Legislative Changes in the WAC (with team)

November 2025: NAGC 2025 Convention, Full concurrent session (Pittsburgh, PA)

How Blockbridge Increased Identification of Historically Underrepresented Groups by 16x

October 2025: WAETAG 2025, Breakout presenter (Bellevue, WA)

Leaning in to Twice Exceptionality (2e) at Seabury School in Tacoma (with Rob Scotlan)

September 2025: Left Behind Movie Screening & 2e Dyslexia Panel (Shoreline, WA)

September 2025: REEL2e Webinar (online)

Getting Students Writing: How to Support Twice Exceptional Students and Other Reluctant Writers

May 2025: NWGCA Webinar (online)

Getting Students Writing: How to Support Twice Exceptional Students and Other Reluctant Writers

April 2025: NAGC Webinar (online)

Equitable Identification Best Practices: Making Sense of the Research (with PPAC)

March 2025: California CAG Annual Conference

The 4 Types of Local Norms: Which Strategy to Use in which Situations?

Beyond Universal Screening: Practices and Attitudes that Promote Equity in Identification for an Accelerated Program

Getting to the Root Cause(s) of Twice Exceptionality (2e): Beyond the Usual suspects

February 2025: William & Mary 2e Conference (online)

Getting to the Root Cause(s) of Twice Exceptionality (2e): Beyond the Usual suspects

Beyond Universal Screening: Practices and Attitudes that Promote Equity in Identification for an Accelerated Program

February 2025: Gift-a-Palooza 2025, Breakout presenter (online)

Getting to the Root of Twice Exceptionality (2E): Beyond the Usual Suspects
January 2025: REEL2e Webinar (online)
Writing Solutions for 2e Learners (panel presentation)
November 2024: NAGC 2024 Convention, Full concurrent session (Seattle, WA)
October 2024: Colorado CAGT Annual Conference
How Blockbridge Increased Identification of Historically Underrepresented Groups by 16X
Four Types of Local Norms: Which Strategy to Use
October 2024: University of Hawaii PIER Webinar Series
Recognizing and Supporting Hidden Disabilities and 2e in High School and College Students
September 2024: NAGC Equity Symposium (online)
Four Types of Local Norms
July 2024: SENG Annual Conference 2024 (Berkeley, CA)
Getting to the Root Causes of Twice Exceptionality (2e): Beyond the Usual Suspects
May 2024: Gifted Homeschoolers Forum
Quirky? Asynchronous? Sensitive? Opinionated? Uncovering Hidden 2e in Our Kids
February 2024: University of Denver 2024 Gifted Education Policy Symposium and Conference (online)
The Devil is in the Details: Mandating Universal Screening (with Dr. Nancy Hertzog)
February 2024: Gift-a-Palooza 2024, Breakout presenter (online)
It's Probably Not (Just) ADHD: Teasing Apart APD, VPD, ADHD, and Stealth Dyslexia (with Hilary Wisdom and Megan Locke)
January 2024: Seattle Homeschoolers Group, keynote presentation (online)
What Grit and Growth Mindset Really Mean for the Smart Student
November 2023: NAGC 2023 Convention, Full concurrent sessions (Orlando, FL)
Getting to the Root Causes of Twice-Exceptionality: Are There Foundational Factors that we are Overlooking?
Beyond Universal Screening: Practices and Attitudes that Promote Equity in Identification
October 2023: WAETAG 2023, Breakout presenter (Bellevue, WA)
Getting Students Writing – How to Support Twice Exceptional Students and Other Reluctant Writers
July 2023: SENG 2023 Conference, Breakout presenter (Philadelphia, PA)
Getting Students Writing – How to Support Twice Exceptional Students and Other Reluctant Writers
February 2023: William & Mary 2e 23 Conference (online)
Getting Students Writing – How to Support Twice Exceptional Students and Other Reluctant Writers
February 2023: Gift-a-Palooza (online)
Getting to the Root of 2E: Beyond the Usual Suspects
November 2022: NAGC 2022 Convention, Full concurrent sessions (Indianapolis, IN)
One School District's 6-Year Equity Journey with Universal Screening and Local Norms
I Think This Student is 2e, But Now What? Getting to the Root Causes of Twice Exceptionality
Drilling Down on Universal Screening and Local Norms (Signature Session invited panel)
October 2022: WAETAG 2022 Breakout presenter x2 (Bellevue, WA)
Smart is not Easy: What Research Says about Highly Capable Learners
October 2021: WA Coalition for Gifted Education, Benefit Event, Keynote presenter (Online)
July 2021: World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, 2021 Virtual World Conference (Online)

January 2021: Let's Talk 2e! Conference (online), with Dr. Amity Butler
 June 2020: NWGCA Webinar, Keynote presenter (Online)
 May 2020: SENG online mini conference (Online)
 What Parents and Educators Needs to Know about Smart Kids
 April 2020: NWGCA Webinar, Keynote presenter (Online)
 March 2020: Rehab Seminars, Full Day Seminar presenter (Seattle, WA)
 February 2020: Whitworth University Gifted Education Institute, Breakout presenter (Spokane, WA)
 October 2019: WAETAG 2019, Breakout presenter (2 sessions)
 May 2019: SENG Regional Conference, Breakout presenter (Olympia, WA)
 I Think It's 2e, but What Kind?
 March 2019: WA School Counselor's Association, Breakout presenter (Seattle, WA)
 December 2018: NW ESD Social Emotional Learning Summit, Breakout presenter (Anacortes, WA)
 November 2018: SENGinar Series, Webinar presenter (Online) – sold out!
 November 2018: National Association for Gifted Children, Full concurrent session (Minneapolis, MN)
 October 2018: WAETAG 2018 Conference, Breakout presenter (2 sessions)
 July 2018: Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG), Breakout presenter (San Diego, CA)
 March 2018: WA School Counselor's Association, Breakout presenter (Seattle, WA)
 November 2017: National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), Full concurrent session (Charlotte, NC)
 October 2017: WAETAG 2017 Conference, Breakout presenter x2 (Tacoma, WA)
 August 2017: Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG), Breakout presenter (Naperville, IL)
 April 2017: WA State PTA Convention, Breakout presenter (Seatac, WA)
 November 2016: NAGC 2016 Conference, Full concurrent session (Orlando, FL)
 November 2016: NW Gifted Child Association (NWGCA) Workshop, (Washougal/Vancouver, WA),
 Keynote speaker
 October 2016: Washington Association of Educators of the Talented and Gifted (WAETAG) 2016
 Conference, Breakout presenter (Tacoma, WA)
 October 2016: Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted (OATAG) 2016 Conference,
 Breakout presenter (Portland, OR)
 October 2015, WAETAG 2015 Conference, Breakout presenter (Tacoma, WA)
 November 2014, NWGCA Regional Workshop, Keynote speaker (Woodinville, WA)
 October 2014, WAETAG 2014 Conference, Breakout presenter (Tacoma, WA)
 March 2014, NWGCA Connections Conference 2014, Breakout presenter (Seattle, WA)
 November 2013, NWGCA Regional Workshop, Keynote speaker (Woodinville, WA)
 February 2013, NWGCA Connections Conference 2013, Breakout presenter (Puyallup, WA)

PUBLICATIONS

- De Bonte, A. (2024). Beyond Universal Screening: Practices and Attitudes that Promote Equity in Identification for an Accelerated Education Program. Doctoral Dissertation, Bridges Graduate School of Cognitive Diversity in Education. <http://tinyurl.com/beyonduniversalscreening>
- De Bonte, A., McCaffrey, C. A., Wisdom, H. K., Locke, M. E., Torgerson, N. G., & Lucero, T. (2024). Auditory Processing Disorders and Vision Processing Disorders in Twice-Exceptionality (2e): Are These

Foundational Factors Being Overlooked? Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 47(1), 30-53.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/01623532231214568>

Featured in the short film "Highly Capable," The G Word (2020), <https://vimeo.com/414816589>

Accelerated Learning and Enhanced Instruction (2020), <http://tinyurl.com/acceleratedinstruction>

Beyond the Neuropsychological Evaluation, NAGC Parenting for High Potential Magazine (2019)
<https://tinyurl.com/phpdebonte>

What do Seattle and NYC Have in Common?, Joint publication with WAETAG (2019)
<http://tinyurl.com/seattlenyc>

NAGC Parent TIP Sheet: Making Friends (2017) <http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents/parent-tip-sheets>

Peeling the Onion: Equity in HiCap (2017), <http://tinyurl.com/PeelingTheOnion>

Peeling the Onion: Equity in Hicap – Abridged for Educators (2017), <http://tinyurl.com/PeelingTheOnionA>

James and Susie: An Allegory about Smart Kids and Grit (2015), <http://tinyurl.com/nwgcaJamesAndSusie>

EDUCATION

M.Eng., S.B., Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), 1998

Masters thesis completed in the MIT Media Lab, Epistemology and Learning Group, on the topic of constructionist learning environments for elementary age students to learn computer programming. Thesis advisor: Dr. Mitchell Resnick, Mentor: Dr. Amy Bruckman

Bridges Graduate School of Cognitive Diversity in Education, 2024

Certificate in Twice Exceptional Education, 2022

Doctor of Education, 2024

Concentration in Educational Leadership with a focus on equitable identification and twice-exceptional students.

Advisor: Dr. Susan Baum. Doctoral Committee: Dr. Matt Fugate (chair), Dr. Joy Lawson Davis, Dr. Sally Krisel

BIO

Dr. Austina De Bonte (she/her) is a consultant, researcher, and advocate for gifted and twice-exceptional students with Smart is not Easy, LLC (smartisnoteasy.com). She is also President of the WA Coalition for Gifted Education (wacoalition.com), Past President of NW Gifted Child Association (nwgca.org), member of the WA State Highly Capable Advisory, and member of the NAGC Public Policy and Advocacy Committee (nagc.org). A dynamic and engaging presenter, Dr. De Bonte speaks regularly at regional and national conferences, as well as conducts professional development workshops for educators, and provides consulting for individual families. She works with school district teams to develop and fine-tune their highly capable program models, especially concerning equitable identification and service strategies. Her signature style combines synthesized research, current district practices, and cutting-edge neuroscience

alongside her experience as a parent and family consultant. She has particular passion for supporting gifted and twice-exceptional students in public schools and helping families get to the root causes of their child's challenges, looking beyond the usual suspects. She received an NAGC Research & Evaluation Dissertation Award (2025), NAGC Carolyn Callahan Award (2023), People to Watch by Variations 2e Magazine (2020), WAETAG Advocacy Award (2019), has won three PTA Outstanding Advocate awards, and is a trained SENG facilitator. She has a Masters degree from MIT (1998) and a Doctoral degree in twice exceptional education from Bridges Graduate School of Cognitive Diversity in Education (2024). Contact Dr. De Bonte at austina@smartisnoteasy.com