The house and Senate have both approved versions of the 2017-2018 biennial state budget. Funding for the *Gifted and Talented Program* is found in both budgets**. In the House budget, the *Gifted and Talented Program* is funded at $6,622,300** in each fiscal year, the current level. **The Senate budget funds the *Gifted and Talented Program* at $6,026,300** in each fiscal year, a loss of $596,000 for each year of the biennium.

A conference committee has been convened to work out the differences in the two budgets. The budget must be completed next week if the session is to end with a completed budget.

**It is critical that the budget conference committee hears from you about the importance of maintaining *Gifted and Talented Funding* at the current $6,622,300 level as found in the House budget.**

**Please contact your state senator and representative to voice your support for keeping the *Gifted and Talented Program Funding* at $6,622,300 as found in House version of the budget and to maintain the *Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education* as found in both versions.**

Phone calls to the message line will have the greatest impact but emails can be sent, if you prefer.

**To leave a message on the legislative message line, call 1-800-372-7181:** You will be asked for your name, address, and message.

**To speak with your senator or representative, call 502-564-8100:** If not available, leave a message with the legislative assistant.

If you are unsure who your senator or representative is, please go to <http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/home.htm> and click on the tab at the left, *Who’s My Legislator*. Type in your address and a map will show. You may have to click on it several times for the information to show. There should be a pop up screen with names and contacts for both your senator and representative.

**Contacting your Frankfort lawmakers is crucial. They must know that maintaining Gifted and Talented Program Funding is important to you. Please share this information with others who also need to know. The more who call, the more impact there will be, the greater the chance of maintaining the funding at $6,622,300.**

Thank you for all you do for gifted and talented children.

Lynette Baldwin

Executive Director

Kentucky Association for Gifted and Talented Education