

THE G WORD

IMPACT MANIFESTO

Version as of October 15th, 2020

PREAMBLE:

Whereas the filmmakers behind the film are producing the most ambitious and comprehensive film ever undertaken on the topic of gifted, talented, and neurodiverse education in the United States, one that also seeks to be one of the most mainstream and defining education films of the 2020s; and,

Whereas the filmmakers further see ourselves as **impact producers** who are actively building a robust social change enterprise around THE G WORD documentary that embraces the core values of diversity, inclusion, outreach, engagement, and impact; and,

Whereas those core values are focused on raising unprecedented national awareness of different kinds of intelligence, as well as the unique equity issues, social-emotional challenges, trauma, and stigma being faced by gifted/neurodiverse people at every stage of life; and,

Whereas **THE G WORD documentary** team believes that testing and identification practices for gifted students can be discriminatory and out of step with 21st-century understandings of giftedness, intelligence, twice/thrice exceptionality (2e/3e), and neurodiversity;

Let it be known that as of this day -- **October 15th, 2020** -- THE G WORD sets forth this first published **IMPACT MANIFESTO** that includes an outline of our goals and initiatives for the next three years. That said, this manifesto is designed to be a living and evolving document. We are committed to transparency and a process that welcomes revisions in response to community feedback.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

There is a huge vacuum in funding, leadership, and legislation when it comes to meeting the needs of smart children across this great nation, especially those from disenfranchised zip codes. As such, a dangerously high number of low-income kids are underachieving, affecting our nation's long-term prosperity. Millions are trapped inside schools that treat them as outliers, making them vulnerable to bullying, self-harm, addiction, suicidal ideation, and incarceration. Even when these diverse children with high-potential are discovered, they're often made invisible again by larger political forces driving national education debates, such as growing anti-intellectual sentiment and the mislabeling of gifted programs and services as elitist and racist. In that context, our film aims to speak to the largest possible national audience in a way that keeps people from all backgrounds and political leanings inside the difficult conversations we seek to support.

THE G WORD documentary addresses these problems head-on through informed and empowered storytelling, community organizing, and energetic awareness-building initiatives. Whether it's the gross inequities of gifted programs, inadequate testing, and identification, or the prejudice and misunderstanding surrounding 2e/3e/neurodiversity, THE G WORD has the unique opportunity to shed light on these big societal challenges, offer tangible solutions, and create a long-overdue national discourse about the benefits that will come from identifying, valuing and serving our nation's brightest diverse children.

OUTPUTS

From 2020 - 2023, our documentary enterprise will scale intentionally over time. By late 2021, we will complete the film. In 2022, we will release it at top-tier film festivals followed by a dynamic rollout of community screenings and special events. By 2023, we will develop a large impact enterprise that aims for the following outputs:

- Onboarding an unprecedented number of partners and sponsors, ranging from the field's most significant national players to hyperlocal, emerging grassroots programs, who will work with us on win-win collaborations that help take the film "off-the-screen" and into communities as a tool to support existing initiatives and advocates.
- Screening the film in all 50 states, both virtually and in-person, with a focus on supporting state and local gifted organizations to advance legislation at their statehouses, plus additional events at regional talent development centers.
- Producing a high-level screening event in Washington, DC in the US Capitol Visitors Center to include an Advocacy "Day on the Hill" timed with a National Gifted, Talented and Neurodiverse Awareness Week presented by THE G WORD. Our awareness week program will launch first as a pilot in 2021, then expand in 2022 and 2023.
- Creating a FREE culturally competent learning platform that features 40+ extended expert interviews filmed for the documentary and additional video-based curricula that help parents and educators be effective advocates. A partnership with a major academic partner will allow teachers, therapists, and specialists to receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

OUTCOMES

As filmmakers we are also Impact Producers who believe strongly in the power of film to change hearts and minds. As such, we've cultivated strong relationships with leading national, state, and local gifted organizations as well as influencers who can utilize the film and its wraparound programs to effectuate systemic change across the education system. Our intended outcomes include:

- Strong federal/state mandates for gifted, talented, and neurodiverse education achieved through advocacy and legislation with a special focus on equity across all aspects of the school experience.
- School districts enact comprehensive, expert-guided policy and budget appropriation that consistently funds gifted, talented, and neurodiverse programs and services.
- School districts explore alternate models to educate gifted/2e/3e learners that incorporate talent development and project-based learning.
- School districts incorporate social/emotional learning and support into gifted programs as they do for special ed programs.
- Programs and services are made more equitable with increased representation of marginalized kids, including English Language Learners.

- Improvements and expansion to identification and testing practices, with an emphasis on the universal screening of all children for giftedness that also considers the cultural backgrounds of gifted/neurodiverse students.
- Administrator, teacher, and counselor training to address unconscious bias and culturally relevant leadership concerning giftedness.
- Help close excellence gaps for low-income students.
- Broaden public understanding of intelligence, 2e/3e, and neurodiversity to shed light on the prejudice surrounding giftedness.
- Provide information and resources for families of gifted and 2e/3e students to support their advocacy efforts.

CLOSING STATEMENT

While no one film can be all things to all people, the outreach, engagement, and impact enterprise around THE G WORD documentary seeks to be a safe and welcoming set of programs and initiatives where people of every background and affiliation can find a seat at our table. We aim to keep more people inside our room than less. Our only requirements are mutual respect, civility, and a heartfelt passion for improving the lives of people who fall under the larger umbrella of giftedness, intelligence, and neurodiversity. We know that no program is entirely perfect. Our efforts, however, aim to be polyvocal from the outset and by design. They shall always seek to be inclusive of rural, suburban, and urban voices. They shall actively seek to include the concerns of students from the entire range of school systems and settings. And, they shall contemplate the education challenges being faced by Americans from every kind of zip code across this great nation, regardless of their immigration status or their original spoken language at home.

It is our sincere belief the collective efforts outlined above will not only better address the education needs of the gifted, but will also spill over into how our country supports the needs of all children; a rising tide that lifts all boats where we uncover and encourage excellence in places we don't typically expect.

Signed by:

THE G WORD DOCUMENTARY TEAM | Oct. 15th, 2020

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