



## Chairperson's Report – giftEDnz AGM: April 7th 2018

It is a pleasure being here in Palmerston North to present my Chairperson's report for 2017.

giftEDnz aims to hold a smaller one day event each year alongside the AGM and this year we are pleased to be collaborating with CenGATE. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the CenGATE committee for their work in helping us to prepare for ConnectED. They have been a wonderful team to work with and giftEDnz is pleased to be able to support this committed regional group.

The Board of giftEDnz have again worked very hard this year in their various roles. At the AGM in 2017 Andi Delaune was re-elected as Secretary for a further three year term. Nadine Ballam, who was filling a one year gap as Treasurer was elected unopposed as Treasurer for a three year term. Following the 2017 AGM, the Board co-opted three members for the 2017-2018 year. Viv Russell and Ingrid Frengley-Vaipuna operated in a shared role and we also introduced the idea of having a Youth Intern by co-opting Hannah Hudson to the Board. Thanks to these three Board members for their very valuable contributions over this year.

I would like to thank the entire giftEDnz Board for their commitment to ensuring that a wide range of initiatives have been enacted on behalf of our members.

I will do my best to summarise most of these initiatives in my report.

### Communication

#### E-zines and email alerts

Our editors, Ingrid Frengley-Vaipuna and Hannah Hudson, assisted by Vanessa White and Emma Scobie-Jennings, produced three excellent e-zines during the 2017-2018 year. The themes were *Transitions*, *Professional Learning and Development* and *Collaboration*. These e-zines are very valuable forms of communication for our members and also a chance for members to share their experiences, research, practice and to publicise events or opportunities that may be of interest to professionals working in gifted education. My thanks to the editors for the huge amount of work required to produce these e-zines and to all those members who have contributed this year. I would especially like to thank Emma Scobie-Jennings who spent many hours as e-zine editor for us but who has now left the Board. We appreciated her contributions to the development of our e-zine. We would love to have our members share the e-zines around their school, centre or institution.

In my role as Chair, I have endeavoured to keep members up to date with giftEDnz happenings through regular email alerts and it is hoped that the alerts of May 2017, September 2017 and March 2018 have been helpful and informative.

## Website and Facebook Page

We regularly update our website, thanks to Vanessa, our website manager. The interactive videos she has introduced are fantastic and have enlivened the page considerably. Our Facebook Page has become a valuable area for communication, with information on upcoming initiatives and summaries of what has been happening for our members. The page seems to be growing in popularity. Thanks to Ness and Nadine for managing this social media arm of giftEDnz.

## Supporting Professionals

### PLD survey

Following on from the 2017 Roadshows the Board conducted a survey of members to find out what members' preferences were for professional learning and development events. The results of the survey would help with planning future events. The survey found that the Roadshow format was the most popular, with support for webinars also strong. Barriers to attending PLD events were around location, cost and time. The survey results were published in the August e-zine on Professional Learning and Development.

### Position Statement on PLD

We have made a specific commitment to supporting PLD this year. Along with the special e-zine on Professional Learning and Development, giftEDnz have developed a Position Statement entitled *Supporting Effective Professional Learning and Development in Gifted Education*. We hope that this Position Statement can be useful for professionals who are advocating for increased PLD in gifted education in their school or centre. Our Position Statements are all available on the giftEDnz website, along with some valuable advice about using them.

### giftEDnz You Tube and the Resources Page

The You Tube area on the giftEDnz website was set up following the Roadshows of 2017 and has become another way in which we can support professionals. We have begun to make available presentations on our website by various speakers so that members who were unable to attend a presentation can access this on line. We will continue to grow this You Tube resource as more presentations are developed for giftEDnz seminars and events over time.

We have kept the Resources Page as up to date as possible this year, adding current research from Aotearoa New Zealand around gifted education and we appreciate any suggestions from our members of publications that would be useful to add to this resource.

### Speakers' Bureau

Our regular initiatives to support professionals have continued in the form of the Speakers' Bureau and the Special Interest Groups. It was interesting that requests for speakers from the Bureau were not as frequent in this 2017-2018 year, despite publicity of the Bureau on the TKI Upcoming Events page. The Taranaki Gifted Community Trust held a Speakers' Bureau event in which Brooke Trenwith spoke to educators and parents about "overexcitabilities". The two talks were very well attended. Further applications were received but not followed through. The Board may need to look at further publicity for this initiative among both members and the wider education sector.

### Special Interest Groups

**The Multi-Exceptional SIG** continues to thrive with a core group of members who are passionate about this area. The booklets developed last year on *Identifying Giftedness in the Diagnostic Process* have been hugely popular and we have had to do a reprint of these. Both educators and clinicians have found these useful. Ness and I have worked to provide a list of publications and resources

around multi-exceptionality and these are available on the SIG page on our website. We are always keen to have suggestions for further resources sent to us by members.

**The Emerging Researchers' SIG** applied for funding for another Writing Retreat and this was granted by the Board. These retreats are incredibly worthwhile and it has become obvious that they need to be held yearly. This year three researchers went to Tracy Rileys' holiday house in Otaki and were mentored by Tracy and Nadine Ballam over a weekend. Conference presentations and articles for publications resulted from the work done at the retreat. Feedback on the weekend was extremely positive. Many thanks to Nadine for her organisation and mentoring, and to Tracy for her generous hospitality and also her mentoring skills.

**The Early Years SIG** has a group of committed members who communicate often with each other and advocate for greater attention to the needs of gifted young children.

### National Research Project

This is an ongoing project and both a Parents' Survey and an Early Years' survey have been developed. The aim is to find out the thoughts of parents of gifted learners, and of those who are working in the Early Years sector, around the current provision for gifted children and young people. These will be sent out around as many avenues as possible following this AGM.

### Collaboration with other Organisations

#### Gifted Awareness Week 2017

During Gifted Awareness Week 2017 we supported NZCGE by helping with the development of a Position Statement on *Indicators of Progress and Achievement for Gifted and Talented Learners*. Several giftEDnz Board members wrote blogs for the excellent blog tour which was co-ordinated by Vanessa White and we provided the list of Political Provocations from the Roadshows for the GAW website.

#### Affiliation with AAEGT and WCGTC Conference 2017

A new initiative for us this year as part of our affiliation with AAEGT, has been to offer our members a reduced subscription to the Australasian Journal for Gifted Education. This has been taken up enthusiastically by our members. In July, four Board members attended the WCGTC in Sydney, along with several other giftEDnz members. We presented a symposium at the conference on *Learnings from a national community supporting professionals working with gifted and talented students in Aotearoa New Zealand*. We made further progress with our affiliation with AAEGT at a meeting with the AAEGT committee. We also had great fun let loose in Sydney!

#### Networks of Expertise – Gifted Aotearoa

We continue to collaborate with the other national organisations working to support our gifted learners. We recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NZAGC and NZCGE around our joint advocacy and support.

It is exciting to be able to confirm that very recently a collaboration of four organisations, NZCGE, NZAGC, REACH Education and giftEDnz has been successful in being allocated a Networks of Expertise funding stream by the Ministry of Education, for a project that comes under the working title of *Gifted Aotearoa*. We thank Deb Walker and her team at NZCGE for leading this effort and look forward to working together to develop a successful programme for teachers.

## Advocacy

### Political Change

With the change in government, and the acknowledgement of gifted education as an area of interest in the coalition agreement, giftEDnz has been active in advocating for increased support and attention for our gifted children and young people. In collaboration with NZCGE and NZAGC we wrote to the Minister of Education offering support and requesting a meeting. This meeting has not eventuated but there has been a response from the Associate Minister of Education, as indicated by her presence here today. The giftEDnz Board developed a briefing document for the Ministry of Education which outlined 7 recommendations for policy and practice. This was sent to the Ministry in November. This year, we have also sent the Ministry the Political Provocations from the Roadshow and our Position Statement on *Supporting Effective Professional Learning and Development in Gifted Education*. We are forever hopeful that they might find these documents useful when developing any new policy.

giftEDnz has nominated six members to attend the upcoming Education Summits in Christchurch and Auckland to advocate for the needs of gifted children and young people within the government's future education plans.

### Blogs

We have started to look at the use of blogs across more domains to advocate for the needs of gifted learners. We have begun to write blogs for the NZARE blog, Ipu Kererū. I wrote a first blog on *Where are the gifted learners in "Inclusive education"?* and it is planned to contribute blogs around three times a year in order to raise the profile of gifted education and that of our gifted learners. We are hoping that some of our members may be motivated to contribute as well as Board members. There will be other avenues for blogging that can be explored as well.

### Farewells

giftEDnz has been extremely well served by its voluntary Board members and it has been a pleasure to work with such a committed group of professionals. However, several members have come to the end of their terms at this AGM.

Lynda Garrett has been instrumental in updating our Speakers' Bureau and ensuring that the systems in place are more efficient and accountable. She has been part of several teams organising our PLD events and seminars and has been a generous host of Board meetings in Auckland. I have valued her many wise contributions to Board business and we thank her very much for her wonderful support of giftEDnz and her hours of voluntary time which she has fitted in around busy work commitments, let alone the temptations of living on Waiheke Island!

Vanessa White has been an absolute stalwart for us on the Board and has taken us – or me anyway - into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with her skills in the social media, and IT areas. She is innovative and creative and always willing, despite many demands on her time in both her work and personal life and the many hats she wears. The website has blossomed under her watch and the development of the giftEDnz Facebook page has been great for us – and long overdue. She has also been a passionate supporter of the Multi-exceptional SIG and supported the editors of the e-zine with her skills. Thanks, Ness, for all you have done for giftEDnz.

Jo Dean has flown the flag for the early years in her three years on the Board, making sure that we consider the needs of our gifted young learners and think about how we might support the professionals who work with them. She has always been willing to put herself forward for any role

that has been asked of her. Jo has been a positive, thoughtful and calm contributor to several of our initiatives and someone who can always be relied on to get the job done. We thank her very much for her three years of service to the giftEDnz Board.

Thank you to Andi Delaune who, as always, is a tower of cheery strength in her role as Secretary and gets through a power of work, to Nadine Ballam for her considered and efficient work as Treasurer and to Sunny Bush for her ever willing support around event organisation.

### Moving Forward

giftEDnz is entirely reliant on our membership for funds and although I am very proud of the many initiatives, such as I have outlined today, and of the hard work put in by our Board over the 2107-2018 year, it is disheartening to see that our membership has not increased. Recruiting and maintaining members is an ever present issue and it is one that the new Board will need to address yet again. What more can we do to serve our members and what is it we are not doing that means members either do not re-join or professionals do not want to be part of an organisation like giftEDnz? Is it still the old bug-bear of gifted education being such a low priority for professionals, with very little leadership, still, at Ministerial and government level? How do we get more education professionals to come to events like this?

We have struggled with these questions for years and new government or not, it is apparent that there is still work to be done!

Good luck to the new Board as they continue this work. There are exciting times ahead.

Louise Tapper

Chair giftEDnz

April 7<sup>th</sup> 2017