



Chairperson's Report Annual General Meeting 2013

It is my pleasure to be here in Christchurch with you today as we share our knowledge and ideas about our gifted learners who have dual or multiple exceptionalities. Working with our colleagues in CAGE, the Christchurch Association for Gifted Education, furthers our strategic plan and the need to connect with regional groups, supporting and working together towards our shared goal. Thank you Tania Hawes and the CAGE committee for collaborating with our Board, and especially Louise Tapper who worked so closely with you on our behalf. And thank you, Louise, for once again sharing your conferencing skills in organizing such a fantastic networking and professional development event for our members!

In my report today I will be highlighting the work undertaken by the Board since our last Annual General Meeting. I am happy to take any questions from the floor at the end of my report.

Governance

This year has been a year of renewal for the Board, as well as a year of solidifying the work of giftEDnz as our own. Following last year's election, we welcomed Sue Breen and Anna Meuli to the Board as our newly elected members, working alongside Rosemary Cathcart and Louise Tapper who were re-elected into their positions. Ann Easter continued to work as a co-opted Membership Secretary and Susan Hassall remained in the position of Treasurer (also co-opted). In May of last year we also co-opted Mary St George to support the development of a stronger presence on the web and in the world of social media. Anyone who is ever online will know Mary well and her Internet energies and expertise are much needed in our organization.

I am pleased to announce that Sue Barriball has taken on the editorship of our newsletter, *giftEDnewz*. We will be co-opting Sue onto the Board following this AGM. We are hoping that Sue's skills in writing can be used not only for the newsletter, but also in the development and publication of some position statements on issues in the education of gifted and talented students.

Much of our work this year has been in transitioning the Board and our management processes as we continue to grow and develop as an association. This work is ongoing, but I want to acknowledge our Board members for whom this will be their final AGM:

- Ann Easter served as our Secretary from 2009-2012 in her elected position on the Board. Ann, with the support of her husband Mike, managed our membership database, including the process of renewals. Ann continued this work for the past year. Ann will be passing the baton to Sue Breen after this AGM. I want to thank Ann for her commitment and dedication, as well as her keen eye for detail, near perfectionism, and steadfast professionalism. Ann's depth of understanding of gifted and talented education, and her vast experiences working particularly in professional development, have been key assets to the Board.
- Susan Hassall has served as the Treasurer since 2011. In this role Susan has managed to streamline our financial records and work towards aligning the budget with our strategic planning. Susan will step down as Treasurer following our upcoming election for a position on the Board. I would like to extend my thanks to Susan for the management skills she brought to this role and to the Board, and also for her wisdom and insight as a school leader.
- Rosemary Cathcart has resigned from the Board to pursue other interests, including doctoral study, her consultancy work, and her grandchildren! During her tenure on the Board, which began in 2009, Rosemary has served as the Treasurer (2009-2011) and co-editor of the newsletter. Rosemary has also been a real supporter of me in the role of Chairperson and I am appreciative of her positive energy and sage advice. Thank you Rosemary for your ongoing engagement with the Board; your sheer passion for gifted education meant we have been able to rely on your input for most initiatives.

Over the coming weeks, the Board will be making the changes needed to transition the roles of Susan, Ann and Rosemary to the Board. The upcoming election provides an opportunity for one of our members to join the Board and to support us across all areas, but particularly in the areas of fundraising and financial management. Please speak with me or any Board member if you are keen to be part of the Board. Nominations close on 1 March and elections will be held next month.

As you will be aware, one of the motions for this meeting is a change of Constitution, which would enable the election of the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as four elected members. This would increase our overall size as a Board, but also ensure some stability in the important roles related to

membership and finances. The longevity and sustainability of our association is reliant on our members, and as our webpage has always said, “You need us! We need YOU!” I welcome any input and suggestions for the Board from our members.

Membership

Currently giftEDnz has 259 financial members:

- 96 schools/institutions with 176 members in total
- 72 individual members
- 11 student members

Membership renewals for 2013/2014 will be sent out in March.

Strategic Planning and Development

The Board met in May of last year to work on the strategic planning over the next several years. Our priority areas for development – in 2012 to now – included:

- Review Board processes and portfolios
- Maintain and establish Special Interest Groups
- Increase online profile
- Develop relationships with Government and Ministry of Education
- Strengthen media presence
- Support Gifted Awareness Week
- Facilitate face-to-face networking opportunities
- Provide guidance for professional decision-making
- Support PLD opportunities nationally and internationally

This is an ambitious set of priorities, but I am pleased to say that our association has developed in each of these areas.

As has been indicated, the Board continuously reviews our membership and portfolios. We are working toward sustainability of processes through ensuring giftEDnz ownership and, therefore, transferability. For example, many of you won't know that the webpage has been run on the Massey University server and maintained by staff in the College of Education since 2009. One of our aims this year has been to move the site onto a platform we can manage ourselves, and thanks to Mary and Nikki Gemmell, this transition is 99.9% complete. I am excited about Mary's plans for updating the site, including having Board member blogs

and posts, as well as a stronger presence on other social media like Twitter, Facebook, and mailing lists.

Today is evidence of the ongoing work in developing Special Interest Groups and the Twice-Exceptional Group, which was initiated at our conference in 2012, continues to make steady progress. Thank you to Shirley Taylor, Susan Ng, Angela Bell, Sue Breen and Mary St George for your ongoing work to develop this group by conducting a member survey, contributing to round table discussions today, and preparing goals for upcoming release in our newsletter. Our other Special Interest Groups continue to work together, with the recent publication of two articles on Maori learners and ongoing discussions on young children.

Gifted Awareness Week continues to be a highlight of the year in terms of our advocacy, and particularly with the Government and Ministry of Education. Our involvement in the Blog Tour, promoting local and regional activities with ideas we share online, and our letter writing campaign continue to make a difference. We worked with NZAGC last year, writing a shared letter which got the attention of the Ministry of Education, resulting in meetings and information sharing. I continue to serve on the Advisory Group, which seems to meet only when these letters are sent, so we will continue to remind the Government and Ministry of Education of the needs of gifted and talented learners of all ages.

The newsletter provides guidance and support for teachers with book reviews, resources, and information, but we are looking to develop this further through position statements on key issues (such as educational provisions like acceleration or policies like National Standards).

Similarly, we have worked to support professional learning and development. And this year this was mainly in support of the World Council conference which, as you know, was cancelled here in New Zealand. Rosemary and most of our Board members were actively engaged in the planning and preparation, as well as the winding down once the decision to withdraw was made. Our engagement in this event was a strategic goal, which we now plan to refocus on supporting members to attend and participate in national conferences as speakers through grants.

Looking Ahead

As I prepared this report, I reviewed the strategic plan and was astounded by the progress the association continues to make. There are other goals the Board would like to pursue in the remaining two years of my term as Chairperson and I feel confident we will meet those goals. These include strengthening regional

support, increasing our membership, seeking financial support for our Special Interest Groups, developing partnerships with other organisations, and developing relationships with other groups like the Education Review Office and special education.

These developments will each contribute to the goals of giftEDnz, and, more importantly, will make a difference to gifted and talented learners in New Zealand. But they cannot be achieved without the work required to turn visions into realities. It will be through the efforts of all of us, working together, that we will achieve great things for gifted and talented learners and the professionals who support them. *We need you, you need us!*

Tracy Riley, Chairperson
23 February 2013