



Chairperson's Report – giftEDnz AGM: February 17th 2016

It is with pleasure that I present my first Chairperson's report for giftEDnz The Professional Association for Gifted Education, for the 2015-2016 year. I thank Massey University's Institute of Education for giving us the opportunity to hold our AGM event at their Albany Campus following on from their very successful symposium 'Equity through Education' – a concept that fits well with the goals of our own association. Thank you to our Board member Tracy Riley for facilitating this collaboration between our event and the Massey symposium.

In this report, I would like to share with you the activities and initiatives that have been achieved by giftEDnz for this 2015/16 year.

Board Governance

At the 2015 AGM we welcomed three new Board members, Lynda Garrett, Vanessa White and Jo Dean. The Board co-opted Tracy Riley as past Chair for a one year term and co-opted Emma Scobie - Jennings and Eunice Guerlin-Price in a shared role as editors of the e-zine. Thus for 2016 the Board consisted of seven elected members, including Chair, Treasurer (Janna Wardman), Secretary (Andi Delaune), Board member Sunny Bush, the three new elected members and the three co-opted members; 10 Board members in total. Throughout the year the Board has worked in a cohesive and supportive way to ensure that the overall governance role has been carried out with efficiency and enthusiasm.

In addition, Board members have taken on various individual roles, some of which I will acknowledge later in this report, but I thank them all for their willingness as volunteers to always step up to the mark and work tirelessly for this organisation. I am truly grateful for all their contributions. It has made my first year in the Chair's role so much easier.

In particular, I would like to thank my right hand woman, our secretary, Andi, who is unfailingly positive and supportive at all times. I also thank our Treasurer, Janna, for her keen eye and attention to detail and it is with regret that we accept her resignation from the position as she takes on a busier role in her working life. I will miss her thoughtful analysis and common sense ideas that I have always found extremely helpful. We will all miss her wonderful hosting of our meetings at her home!

One of our elected members, Sunny Bush has reached the end of her three year term as a Board member and we would like to acknowledge the work that Sunny has done for giftEDnz during her time on the Board. Sunny has admirable vision and passion for gifted education coupled with great event management skills. This was evidenced by her organisation of both the "Working Together" seminar in Gisborne in 2014 and the "Ignited" conference in 2015. She has had a particular interest

in supporting the regions during her time on the Board. Thank you, Sunny, for your tremendous contribution over the last three years.

Membership

2015 has seen a growth in membership for the organisation and this can be attributed to a major push to publicise the benefits of belonging to giftEDnz amongst schools, centres and other institutions, plus our special offer of membership running through until 2017. We employed Eddy van Til from e-events (<http://www.eenz.com/>) to develop a national data base of schools, centres and RTLB clusters for our on-going use. We then sent out emails to all schools, centres and RTLB clusters in Aotearoa New Zealand, excepting those that were already members, telling them about the organisation. There was a pleasing uptake from this mail out and coupled with some other publicity drives we now have **244 members**, made up of 67 institutions, 37 individuals, and 6 students.

One of our aims for 2016/17 is to increase our student membership, particularly as we can offer membership of the Emerging Researchers' Special Interest Group but we of course welcome all new members and value any contributions that members can make to the organisation.

We hope to continue to build on this growing membership base.

Strategic Planning and Goals

At our 2015 AGM the Board asked members present for their ideas on ways that giftEDnz might progress our goals in the future. Much of our Strategic Planning for 2015/16 was aligned around this feedback as we want at all times to be responsive to the needs of our valued members, as well as focusing on our established goals.

Communication, Website and E-zine

We have improved our communication and information sharing with members. This comes under our goal of *creating a professional community for networking, supporting and learning*. These improvements have been ably led by our website manager, Vanessa White, who developed and analysed a survey to find out how you, our members preferred us to communicate with you. This led to a more active and current website which Ness manages brilliantly and an increase in email alerts to inform members of recent happenings. Ness analysed the hits on our page and found that the Resources page is very popular so we have updated this page to include publications and research that have a strong New Zealand flavour. We will try to keep this page as current as possible in line with another of our goals, that of *encouraging the pursuit and sharing of best practices in gifted education*.

Survey results supported the newsletter as a favoured means of communication and our new look e-zine has proved to be very popular. The idea of a theme for each edition has worked well. The theme for the latest edition is "Creativity" and I think that this is exactly what our two editors have bought to the publication. My thanks to Eunice who has been the lead editor of the e-zine over the past year and in true collaborative spirit, Emma will now lead the editorial team for the coming year.

Supporting Professionals

Goals 3, 4 and 5 of our organisation are about *enhancing the profile of gifted education, networking and sharing best practices*. In 2015/16 we have supported professionals who work in the area of gifted education in a variety of ways.

We contributed to Gifted Awareness Week in June 2015, which is led by the New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education. Thanks to Jo Dean, the Board member who led our contribution to this week. We

collaborated with NZCGE and NZAGC on a Position Statement about *Gifted Students in the Inclusive Education System*, and our Early Years SIG also developed a Position Statement on *Gifted Education in the Early Years*. These statements, and suggestions around how they might be used particularly in advocacy issues, are on our website.

We have written for publications, such as He Kupu and Education Review and presented at conferences under the auspices of giftEDnz, as we endeavour to reach beyond the purely gifted sector in education. A special thanks to Andi, for her enthusiasm in supporting the sharing of best practice in gifted education in the early years by publishing and presenting in this area. giftEDnz has continued to support conference attendance for members. We encourage members to apply for our conference scholarships if they have a conference that they wish to present at and would like assistance with funding.

Lynda Garrett has done a wonderful job streamlining and managing the Speakers' Bureau for the Board. We were pleased to support a visit from Tracy Riley to the Taranaki Gifted Community Trust and have approved another visit from Tracy, this time to Wakitipu High School in Queenstown in March. This is an excellent opportunity to have an expert in a range of areas of gifted education come to your area and we are proud to be able to provide this funding and especially grateful to our Speakers from the Bureau for supporting giftEDnz in this way.

Our Special Interest Groups continue to operate and we will be looking at how we can further support these initiatives in 2016.

Collaboration with NZAGC and NZCGE

Lastly, Goal 5 states that we *will provide liaison with other international and national associations for gifted and talented education*. We have focused on collaborating with the two other national associations in New Zealand.

As Tracy stated in her Chair's report last year "By working together, we can combine our strengths, and actually further develop and enhance these". The Board firmly adheres to this philosophy and as such, myself as giftEDnz Chair and Andrew Paterson, President of NZAGC and Deb Walker, the CEO of NZCGE, have been working together over the past year to advocate to the Ministry of Education for progress around "*equitable educational opportunities for gifted and talented students*" as Goal 1 for giftEDnz states. During Gifted Awareness Week in June 2015 the three Chairs wrote to Peter Hughes, the Secretary of Education and thus began a series of meetings with Ministry of Education representatives about the place of gifted education in Ministry planning. I regret that progress has been very slow and apart from several meetings, we feel that little has been achieved but it has been a pleasure to collaborate with Deb and Andrew, and we are determined to continue to advocate on behalf of our organisations and the gifted education sector. In other words, we will not be going away! We are hopeful for a face to face meeting in Wellington with the Professional Learning and Development Providers under Ministry contract next month. I will keep you posted.

Looking Ahead

As always we find at the end of a year that we have achieved a lot more than we can remember and it is with enthusiasm and excitement that I look forward to 2016/17 with giftEDnz. We will be beginning the planning for our giftEDnz Roadshow of 2017, which we plan as an innovative and surprising event that will travel around different venues – in contrast to a conference held in one area. We want to set up giftEDnz 'cafes'; talk fests about gifted education for professionals in areas that are perhaps not well served by professional learning currently, and which are facilitated by

giftEDnz members. There will be an Emerging Researchers' Retreat this year and we will be continuing with all the initiatives we already have in place.

I would like to finish by saying a final thank you to Tracy for being a strong support to me in my first year as Chair. Thanks, Tracy, for sound advice, being there and like any good parent, not helicoptering!

And finally, to all our members - email, suggest, apply, tell others to join us, join the SIGs! We are here for you and we are always thrilled to hear from you with your ideas for our organisation.

Louise Tapper

Chair

February 17th 2016