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Nurturing Gifted Students



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Browns Bay, Port MacDonnell South Australia. Photo Credit: Nicole Farren



THE AURORA AUSTRALIS

Jennie Quinn & Penina Kiss

Welcome to the latest edition of the WorldTalentWeb newsletter. We recently witnessed a spectacular natural phenomenon that captivated the world. The aurora australis, also known as the southern lights, has made rare and vivid appearances across skies far beyond its usual reach.

Dancing ribbons of colour lit up landscapes where such beauty had scarcely been seen before, leaving thousands in awe. Images by professional and amateur photographers flooded social media, scientists marvelled at the strength of the solar activity, and cosmic enthusiasts around the globe communally gathered to capture this rare display of light.

Much like this extraordinary celestial event, talent can emerge in unexpected places. Just as the aurora lit up skies in regions previously untouched by its brilliance, so too can giftedness appear in diverse contexts and communities, when conditions are ideal.

The aurora australis reminds us that awe and wonder are not limited by geography. Its presence, like the sudden recognition of a gifted learner, disrupts our assumptions.

Who would have expected the skies over southern Australia, New Zealand or the far edges of Europe to blaze with colour in the middle of May? In the same way, who expects exceptional potential from a disengaged student, a twice-exceptional learner, or a child in a remote or underserved community? Yet when the right energy aligns supportive environments, informed educators, and meaningful opportunity talent can become visible in ways we never imagined.

One of the most powerful aspects of the aurora is its fleeting nature. You must be watching, paying attention, to see it. So too with giftedness - it can be subtle, complex, and easy to miss if we are not attuned to look beyond traditional measures of success.



The articles featured in this edition shine a light on the educators and leaders who are paying attention, those who have recognised the flickers of brilliance in their students and have acted to magnify it.

To our readers, we hope these contributions by Dr. Lianne Hoogeveen and her team at Radboud University, Dr. Patricia Cummings from Pinellas County Schools and Bernadette Bentley's final instalment on supporting gifted learners, affirm the value of your work and energise your practice.

Talent development is not an isolated act but a collective, intentional process. It calls for vision, to see what others may not; courage to act when systems lag behind, and creativity to build new pathways where none exist.

The recent global auroras also offer a valuable metaphor for equity. Just as no one could predict exactly where the lights would be most visible, the emergence of giftedness is not tied to postcode or privilege. Talent is everywhere. The challenge is whether we, as global communities, have the structures, attitudes, and commitment to recognise and support it.

The aurora reached beyond its expected limits; so too must our educational systems reach beyond conventional boundaries to ensure no brilliance goes unseen.

As we reflect on our authors' contributions in this edition, let us remember that the most powerful light is not the kind that simply dazzles, but the kind that illuminates the path for others. Every child whose talent is seen and nurtured becomes a beacon for what is possible in our schools, communities, and the world.



HOW TO IMPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF GIFTED PEOPLE; RITHA ALUMNI TELL YOU HOW



Marianne Nannings



Lineke van Tricht



Frederique Lampe



Fatima El Hasnaoui – Atiouny



Saskia van Damme-Ferwerda



Lianne Hoogeveen

How can we meet the educational and social emotional needs of gifted students, in school and at the university? How do we motivate students? How does a less favourable background, for example because of a low SES or a migration background, influence the chances to develop your talents?

During the ECHA conference in Karlstad, Sweden, which takes place in June 2025, 5 RITHA alumni will talk about what they found in their research, which they did for their final product in the RITHA programme.

RITHA is one of the ECHA qualified trainings. Other ECHA qualified trainings are offered in the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Sweden. In 2020, more than 1,700 graduates obtained an ECHA certificate or diploma (Mathijssen et al., 2020).

RITHA is offered worldwide. The advantage is that different cultures can learn from each other. This not only applies to RITHA students, but also to their teachers. Talking with students and experts in different countries broadens the view on giftedness and talent development. By broadening our view, looking at other countries and cultures, we need to change our perspectives and we will benefit from that, and so will the people we want to support, be it our students in the classroom or the struggling gifted adults we counsel.

ECHA practitioners and ECHA Specialists distinguish themselves as post-academically trained gifted experts who are capable of consistently implementing educational and counselling resources for gifted students. They are part of an international network of professional gifted experts, who only settle for evidence-based applications and never stop learning.

They change our future, by opening up talent for our society, by optimizing school systems, by improving policy.

In the symposium during the conference in Karlstad, Saskia van Damme-Ferwerda, Frederique Lampe, Lineke van Tricht, Marianne Nannings and Fatima el Hasnoui will show what they do to contribute to the talent development of gifted people.

Parnassos, a fitting alternative?

RITHA Specialist Saskia van Damme-Ferwerda teaches at the Johan van Oldebarnevelt Gymnasium in Amersfoort, The Netherlands. This school offers the “Parnassos class”, a two-year lasting first grade. The fact that it is a two-year lasting first grade is relatively new. Until now most curricula or interventions for young high ability children stretch only one year.



Parnassos, however, provides a lot of extra support for those students who need some more time to adapt to secondary school and includes a way of teaching that is found to be more appropriate for these students. In the framework of her final product for the RITHA programme, Saskia developed brochures and a theoretical framework about Parnassos that can inspire other schools or educational organizations.

A theoretical framework (with the Greek name Pàratima) endorses and explains why this kind of special education is suitable for young children (age 9 or 10) with characteristics of high ability, high cognitive skills, who have, earlier than regular students, finished the curriculum of the primary school. She will tell more about this special programme during the conference.

Peer contact for gifted teenagers during school hours

Frederique Lampe teaches at the Erasmiaans Gymnasium Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Since 2018, the Erasmiaans Gymnasium in Rotterdam has established a dedicated space for peer contact among gifted teenagers.

This peer contact takes place during school hours, with the school allocating two hours daily for these sessions, facilitated by specially selected supervisors. Students are free to engage with one another as they wish during this time.



The goal of the RITHA graduation project was to evaluate these peer contact sessions and develop product ideas to improve them. In-depth interviews and a diary study with 12 students were conducted to gain insight into how students experience peer interactions and what they need during these gatherings in the future. The final outcome of the project was a detailed magazine, which presents an interior design proposal for a new peer contact space.

During a brainstorming session with students, organized as a focus group, initial ideas for the interior design were shared and discussed. The many findings from the diary studies, interviews, and focus group were incorporated into the proposed design for the new peer contact space. The research revealed that peer contact sessions serve as moments of rest where students feel no obligations, as a place to meet others, and as an environment where they can converse with like-minded peers. However, it became apparent that not all students feel confident enough to join in conversations, which can lead to feelings of loneliness. The challenge for the interior design was therefore to create a space that encourages interaction and inclusivity.

During her presentation at the conference, Frederique will talk about her experiences with the peer group, show the special furnished space and hope to convince people that every school needs a space like this.

The motivation of high-ability students from disadvantaged backgrounds

Lineke van Tricht is a researcher at Radboud University in the Netherlands. She has almost finished her PhD study which is focused on the motivation of high-ability students from disadvantaged backgrounds.



Students from families with a low socioeconomic status (SES) are underrepresented in the higher levels of secondary education in general, and in high-ability programs in particular.

One of the reasons seems to be that only a small percentage of these students are high performers (OECD, 2023). Since motivation and performance are strongly related, it is interesting to know whether motivation works differently in low than in high SES students. If this is the case, it is necessary to know what can be done to motivate high-ability, low SES students to perform well at school. Giving these students the opportunity to develop their high academic abilities is important for the students themselves as well as for society.

At the conference, she will present the insights she has gained so far from the first three of her studies.

Specific learning needs of high-ability students in higher education

Marianne Nannings is a PhD student at Radboud University. Her final product for the RiTHA program, which she completed in 2022, was the stepping stone for her PhD project addressing the challenges faced by high-ability students in higher education in reaching their full academic potential.



These students often encounter barriers in higher education due to a lack of recognition and understanding of their unique needs. The central research question is: How can we ensure that high-ability university students achieve their full potential? The project is structured into three phases. The first phase involved a systematic review of existing literature to identify factors contributing to underachievement among high-ability students in higher education. In the second phase, a mixed-methods approach is employed to explore the educational and social-emotional needs of these students.

Insights from the students themselves will be used to uncover specific barriers and facilitators to their academic success. The third phase adopts a repeated-measures design to evaluate the impact of targeted training for university lecturers and study advisors. By increasing awareness and understanding of giftedness, the study examines whether changes in knowledge and attitudes can lead to better support for high-ability students.

This PhD proposal aims to contribute to inclusive education by advocating for institutional policies and practices that address the specific needs of high-ability students. Its findings are intended to ensure that these students receive the support necessary to fulfil their academic potential. Her presentation during the conference will outline the methodology, preliminary results, and implications, providing valuable perspectives for educators, advisors, and policymakers in higher education.

Gifted adults with a migration background

Fatima El Hasnaoui – Atiouny coaches gifted adults in her company Echt Talent (Real Talent), and is affiliated with Hoogbegaafd in Bedrijf (gifted in action), a professional platform focused on gifted adults in the workplace.

She noticed that gifted adults with a migration background remain largely unaddressed in existing research. These adults often face challenges in the early recognition of their giftedness.

These barriers, rooted in systemic and cultural biases, limit access to support systems and gifted education. Western definitions of giftedness tend to dominate, overlooking how giftedness may manifest differently across cultures. During development, parents and teachers play critical roles in shaping their opportunities, yet their support often fails to match the needs of this group.

The resulting disconnection can reinforce barriers and leave gifted potential untapped. Resilience and perseverance are frequently identified as key factors contributing to their eventual success.

Equally important is intrinsic motivation it acts as an inner fuel that drives individuals to keep going, even when external support is lacking. The duality of navigating between two cultures adds complexity to their experience. Many gifted migrants experience internal tension while balancing their cultural heritage and the norms of the dominant society.

Research concerning gifted adults is heavily influenced by Western perspectives, which often fail to incorporate non-Western values.

A broader and more inclusive understanding of giftedness is necessary one that integrates the cultural values and experiences of migrants.



Fatima El Hasnaoui-Atiouny conducted a literature review to explore the barriers and success factors that shape the development and flourishing of this group's talents. Previous studies have predominantly focused on gifted children with migrant backgrounds, leaving gifted adults significantly underrepresented. Strikingly, the search revealed no academic studies combining the terms "gifted," "adults," and "migrants."

To address this gap, and building on the findings of her literature review, Fatima is now preparing a follow-up study in which gifted adults with a migration background will be interviewed across three key themes: identification, development, and environmental factors.

The goal is to bring forward voices and perspectives that remain too often overlooked.

Conclusion

These short summaries show how RITHA alumni contribute to better education and care for people with high (intellectual) abilities, including those groups who are often overlooked. They use their gained knowledge in practice and/or decide to contribute to the (so necessary) research in this area.

Would you like to know more about their products? They are willing to tell you more after receiving your mail:

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For people who are inspired by these stories and consider becoming a RITHA practitioner, specialist or master: this is possible for people all over the world, due to the blended way of teaching (80% online, 20% face-to-face education in seminars at different places worldwide). For more information, visit our website:

<https://www.ru.nl/en/radboud-centre-social-sciences/courses/ritha-specialist-training> (RITHA specialist) or

<https://www.ru.nl/en/radboud-centre-social-sciences/courses/international-advanced-master-in-gifted-education-and-care>

(Radboud International Advanced Master in Gifted Education & Care (iamGE&C), or send a mail to lianne.hoogeveen@ru.nl

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Administrators and Academic Acceleration

Dr. Patricia Cummings, Ed.D.

Gifted Compliance Educational Diagnostician Pinellas County Schools

Introduction

Research has shown the pivotal role principals and administrators play in the direction of their schools and the implementation of programs and strategies.

As evidenced by the body of previous investigations, these stakeholders are a crucial part of the application of policy and approaches used to meet the needs of students (Burch & Spillane, 2005; Donaldson, 2013; Honing, 2003; Schneider, 2006).

One of these researchers, Robinson & Moon (2003), highlighted the significance of principals and administrators in supporting programming and policy for high-ability learners. Perhaps the most well-researched of those programming strategies is acceleration. Acceleration is defined as "educational interventions that move students through an educational program at a faster than usual rate or younger than typical age" (Colangelo et al., 2004a).

Previous studies have demonstrated the weight of a principal's support is a significant factor in their institution's choice to accelerate students (Palacios Gonzalez & Jung, 2019; Rambo & McCoach, 2012).

Building on this, Cummings (2024) further examined this role in the US within a large state with a formal acceleration policy and found that as the cornerstone of facilitation of the acceleration process for students principals felt they needed, and administrators needed capacity, knowledge, and resources to implement acceleration with fidelity.

It is therefore imperative that administrators, as the captain of their school ship, are aware not only of the benefits of acceleration but how it can be utilized by their crew to benefit their passengers.



This article aims to provide a starting point for administrators interested in supporting their staff in enacting this essential practice.

Advantages of Acceleration

Academic acceleration can provide several advantages for students. Acceleration allows students to engage with more challenging material, which can not only help to develop their critical thinking skills but can also keep them more engaged in the content.

These strategies have the added effect of making more efficient use of the student's time. Think for a moment about your education and career; how many professional developments have you sat through that contained information you had already mastered?

What if that time could have been used to advance your skills? Would that not be a better use of your time? Another positive aspect of acceleration is its ability to incorporate students' areas of interest and strength, giving a more personalized education, and fitting their unique set of abilities.

Types of Acceleration

Colangelo, N., Assouline, S., & Gross, M. (2004b), described 17 distinct types of acceleration geared towards meeting the diverse needs of high ability students.

Each one of these strategies, just like the students, is different. Every strategy will not be appropriate for every student, and some students may benefit from more than one type of acceleration.

Below are types of acceleration, which are organized into two groups: those that can be done within the general education classroom, and those that may require a different classroom placement.

School / District based (Usually involving a change of placement)

- Whole Grade Acceleration
- Subject Area Acceleration
- Virtual Instruction at a higher level
- Advanced academic courses
- Combined classes
- Extracurricular programs
- Credit by Examination
- Advanced placement courses

Within the General Education Classroom (Usually, no change in placement is needed)

- Enrichment
- Curriculum compacting
- Telescoping curriculum
- Mentoring
- Self-paced instruction

Considerations in Choosing Acceleration

Acceleration can be a useful strategy, however, each student is different, and so the needs of each individual student should be considered to plan appropriately.

- What programs are already in place to support acceleration at the school?
- What resources does the school have that could be used to support acceleration?
- What acceleration options would need additional resources such as materials, staff, and training?
- Are there teachers and/or staff members training in acceleration options?
- What are teachers' perceptions of acceleration? Is professional development needed to clarify the research on the attributes of acceleration?
- What acceleration options could be best used within the classroom, and which would result in a different classroom placement? How can we implement general education options within the existing classrooms?
- For acceleration within the classroom, how can the school plan to group students to better support implementation in the future?

Questions to Ask when Considering Acceleration

Academics

- Is the student academically ready to accelerate? Within the subject/subjects being considered, are they performing at or above their current grade level?
- Has the student acquired the necessary skills and mastered the content for their grade level associated with the subject area being considered for acceleration?
- What is the student's ideal pace for acquisition of new content? Do they acquire new skills and concepts in the area of acceleration being considered quickly and easily, or will they need a longer timeline?

Social and Emotional Aspects

- How does the student interact with peers? Do they have the capacity to interact well socially with peers and to deal with any challenges that come up, or will they need additional support? If so, what support is needed?
- Does the student work independently? Are they self-motivated in their learning or will they need additional monitoring?
- How does the student feel about acceleration? Are they interested in the option? What are their questions and concerns?

Long-Term Factors

- Are there support systems in place or can be put in place to support the student's transition and adjustment to the acceleration option explored?
- What is the plan for each year going forward? How will acceleration continue as the student progresses through their content?
- Will the student's family support the transition and be part of the student's adjustment?





HELPFUL TIPS

Tips for Implementing Acceleration

- Build a trained team- the data used when deciding to accelerate should be reviewed by a team of individuals trained to recognize the need for acceleration and on its benefits and potential challenges.
- Take data from established empirical tools and methods- criteria chosen and data reviewed should be collected using research-based tools such as the IOWA acceleration scale. Criteria selected should correspond directly to considerations of acceleration and comment only on the factors needed for a student to be accelerated successfully. Opinions of a single individual or story based contextual evidence should not be factored into decisions on acceleration.
- It is important to clearly articulate the acceleration options available at your school including documentation and processes to stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and counselors. Criteria for each acceleration option should be utilized fairly and consistently for all students.
- Teachers who may recommend students or are participating in a team looking at acceleration for a student should be trained prior to collecting data or making recommendations for students.
- The process and criteria selected should go through program evaluation routinely to make sure practices are meeting goals and to address any changing needs.
- Practices should be put in place to establish long-term acceleration plans for students, specifically addressing how the method of acceleration will evolve as the student moves through their educational career.
- Monitor acceleration for students, including a short term of trial, alternative options should change be needed, and consideration of additional support needed to make the chosen method of acceleration successful.

Building a Team

Seminal works on acceleration have showcased the benefit of an established child study team in the process of considering acceleration for any student (Colangelo et al., 2009; Lupkinski-Shoplik et al., 2018).

It is crucial that criteria and data considered should be reviewed by individuals who have an understanding of not only the process, but the methodology and research behind it, avoiding the basis of the decision resting on one opinion.

Below is a potential child study team, including their potential contribution. The potential team is based on research as well as the applicability of the members' skill set.

Table 23
Potential Child Study Team

Staff member	Potential Benefit to the Team
Principal	• Team facilitator • Can help detail what options are available for students • Can comment on resource availability and logistics
Guidance Counselor	• Familiar and can comment on the MTSS process • Can provide background on the students’ progress and potential social emotional considerations. • Valuable partner in planning for monitoring the long-term aspects of the student’s acceleration
Compliance Diagnostician	• Can give certain assessments needed to collect data • Can comment on any compliance aspects of consideration • Can discuss the implications of standardized test data • Familiar with the MTSS process and its application
School Psychologist	• Can evaluate the student using IQ tests or achievement tests. • Can interpret the results of evaluations. • Can provide support and insight into long-term planning and monitoring of the student’s needs during the acceleration process if accelerated.

Classroom Teacher	• Can provide anecdotal evidence and samples of student work to comment on current progress. • Can comment on student motivation, current performance, and affective aspects within the classroom setting.
Parent	• Can provide a different perspective of the student's motivation, strengths, and interests. • Can give information on the student's history of development and any external factors the team should consider.

Other Potential consultants

- Gifted program teacher- If there is a gifted program at your school, then a teacher of gifted could be a great resource not only for ideas within the classroom to differentiate content, but also to discuss potential gifted identification if data shows this could be a possibility.
- The student! - As mentioned previously in this piece, it is important to get the student's perspective on acceleration. Having their thoughts can help you to plan for them.

Conclusion

As the instructional leader of your school, it is within your power to create an environment to support the growth of students, including those with more advanced and diverse needs than general education can support.

By understanding the benefits, tapping into resources, setting clear procedures, collaborating with your team, and advocating to your district and state, you can help to frame the ecosystem of your school to an atmosphere that advances learning.

We hope this article has helped to give a starting point to principals and administrators in supporting their high ability learners.

Resources

Berlin Blank Center for Acceleration:
belinblank.education.uiowa.edu

National Association for Gifted Children Acceleration
Parent Tip Sheet: Acceleration (ymaws.com)
https://cdn.ymaws.com/nagc.org/resource/collection/276055B2-700D-4F8B-9181-F81C5ACAFF30/NAGC-TIP_Sheet-Acceleration.pdf

Davidson Institute Acceleration for Gifted Students-
<https://www.davidsongifted.org/resource-library/gifted-resources-guides/guides-to-acceleration-for-gifted-students/>

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The Australian Council for Education and Research (ACER) has given the WTW permission to publish an abridged transcript for Episode 2 of the Field Notes podcast; Supporting gifted and talented students with Bernadette Bentley



SUPPORTING GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS WITH BERNADETTE BENTLEY (Part 03)

Bernadette Bentley,
Education Officer Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS), Australia

In this episode of the podcast, Marc Kralj speaks with Bernadette Bentley, Education Officer from SCS, about how gifted and talented students may be identified, supported and challenged.

Marc: We never stop learning, do we? My next question is this. You know, we often talk about differences. So in this case, what is the difference between students who are higher-order thinkers, or higher performers, against those who are gifted and talented?

Bernadette: This is a really good question, and illustrates why it is so important to have access to data indicating both ability and achievement.

So, higher performing students may work hard and be capable of extension work and achieve highly in standardised tests and assessments. Gifted students may demonstrate ability, but this does not necessarily translate to high achievement results. So let's first think about higher-order thinking. So higher-order thinking refers to cognitive processes that involve critical analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and creativity, and it goes beyond memorization, and requires the students to engage in complex thought processes.

Students with higher-order thinking skills can analyse information, solve problems, make connections between concepts, and think critically about various subjects.

Analysing a complex text, or solving open-ended maths problems, or designing experiments and engaging in creative problem-solving are some examples of higher-order thinking.



If we turn our attention now to higher performers, they are students who consistently achieve at a high level academically across various subjects.

Their performance is typically characterised by high grades and test scores. So high performing students usually excel in the traditional academic measures and demonstrate proficiency in the content covered in their classes. A student, for example, who consistently earns A grades in various subjects, scores well on standardised tests, and demonstrates mastery of the curriculum is a high performer.

Now we turn our attention to gifted and talented and Gagné's definition of gifted and talented students as those who demonstrate exceptional abilities or potential in one or more areas. So maybe in the intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership or specific academic domains. These gifted students may show advanced cognitive abilities, they may demonstrate a heightened level of creativity, a deep passion for a particular subject or exceptional leadership skills.

For example, a student who excels in mathematics far beyond their grade level, demonstrates exceptional artistic talent, shows natural leadership qualities, or has a profound depth of understanding in a specific area of interest is an example of a student who may be gifted.

In summary, while higher-order thinking, higher performers, and gifted and talented students all share some commonalities, they focus on different aspects of students' abilities and achievements. So higher-order thinking emphasises cognitive processes, higher performers focus on academic achievement and gifted and talented students showcase exceptional abilities in specific areas.

It's important to recognise that a student may fall into one or more of these categories simultaneously, and educators should consider a holistic approach when identifying and supporting students with diverse strengths and needs.

Marc: Bernadette, it's interesting that as you speak, I think back to my own teaching career, and I think back to the students whom I thought may have been gifted and talented.

But those who were high performers, those who you were characterizing in terms of what leadership, what passion they had, and I've got to admit that in my time, I did have 2 students who were identified, but just 2, and that was in 30 years of teaching, or nearly 35.

It is important that we find out where our students sit and how we identify them. And I think you've made that exceptionally clear.

As a teacher, that brings me to my next question: what can be put in place to support teachers and leaders, probably to be more confident and more competent when working with students who are high performing, and who have been assessed as gifted and talented?

Bernadette: Yes, so we really need to support our teachers and our education leaders, and we really want them to be confident and competent when working with high performing and gifted and talented students. It involves a combination of professional development, making sure they have resources and a supportive school culture.

So just unpacking a couple of those: regarding professional development, providing specialized training programs for teachers and our educational leaders and focusing on understanding the characteristics and the needs of high performing and gifted students.

This may include strategies for pre-assessment, making sure our teachers understand what pre-assessment is, and making sure that then they can understand post-assessment and how to measure student growth, how they differentiate instruction – and this includes specific strategies for gifted students, such as the Maker Model, the Bloom and Krathwohl Model, Kaplan, Williams Model – and to make sure that those strategies and models are used in extension activities in enrichment and also addressing social-emotional aspects.

I think also offering regular workshops covering topics such as identification, providing effective provisions, assessment principles, curriculum compacting, acceleration options, and effective strategies for engaging gifted learners are vital.





I also think we should be looking at mentorship programs for our teachers and educational leaders. Establishing mentorship programs where experienced gifted educators work with those who are less experienced and share insights and strategies for effective teaching and support for higher performing and gifted students.

This could include collaborative planning and sharing of resources among teachers to leverage each other's expertise and experience in working with high performing and gifted students.

Our teachers need access to resources, so providing them with access to curricular materials, other resources and teaching tools specifically designed for high performing gifted students is important. This may also include connecting with GERRIC at the University of New South Wales, the Gifted Education, Research, Resource and Information Centre.

The centre was first established by Professor Miraca Gross in 1991, and GERRIC was one of the only substantial centres devoted to gifted education research. In its time it has provided professional development for educators, programs for gifted students, courses for parents, gifted program evaluations for schools and school systems, and they also provide gifted education resources and information.

GERRIC has contributed to many aspects of education and the development of gifted students. Courses such as Mini-COGE in gifted education and workshops for educators have been offered, which has acted as a springboard for studying post graduate opportunities in gifted education. They still hold school holiday programs for gifted students and master classes in gifted education, and they hold gifted education conferences facilitated by experts in the field.

In collaboration with the New South Wales Department of Education, GERRIC hosts the Ignite the Spark Conference which focuses on approaches to differentiation in the classroom, whole school and community context to support student learning.

Another thing that could assist our teachers is ensuring they have access to professional libraries. A school or a school system, making sure that they establish a professional library within the system or school, so that they have books or journals or other resources related to gifted education and teaching strategies.

I also think teachers should have access to individualised professional development plans. Customised training for our teachers to ensure differentiation for students, and differentiation for our teachers as well.

Developing individualised professional development plans for our teachers and leaders based on their specific needs and their goals in supporting high performing and gifted students. This could involve self-assessment, goal setting or targeted training. It also could include peer observations where teachers can observe and learn from each other's practice in gifted education, sharing effective strategies and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

That leads to feedback and establishing feedback mechanisms such as peer reviews or instructional coaching to provide constructive feedback and support for our teachers working with high performing and gifted students.

To be able to establish this, we need to make sure that we have an inclusive school culture, acknowledging and celebrating the achievements of our high performing and gifted students within a school community, fostering a positive and inclusive school culture that values and supports diverse talents.

The creation of professional learning communities where teachers collaborate and share experience, discussing effective strategies for teaching and supporting high performing and gifted students. And of course, parental involvement. We need to make sure that we educate our parents. We need to make sure we provide resources and information to our parents so that they understand the needs of high performing and gifted students. This can help so much to create a collaborative approach between our teachers, our parents and our students to support their educational journey.

Marc: Bernadette, thank you. You really pointed out a couple of things here. When we look at our class of 25 or 30 students, whatever number we have in front of us, it's about all of the kids. But we specifically target groups of students that we need to identify.

When we look at such complex and diverse schools, it's also another way of actually having that knowledge, having that understanding, having those resources, having those tools. But also, how to use the tools and resources to support teachers in classrooms on a day-to-day basis. Bernadette, I'd like to thank you for a couple of things. One is your knowledge, your deep knowledge in this area. But partnered with that is your passion and the passion that you show in this – again, this complex, diverse, but also sometimes tricky space for teachers to work in, and leaders to work in.



3rd WORLD GIFTEDNESS CENTER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The World Giftedness Center (WGC) of the Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation for Medical and Educational Sciences (Hamdan Foundation) is excited to announce the 3rd World Giftedness Center International Conference, taking place virtually from October 20 to 23, 2025!

This year's conference comes at a pivotal time as artificial intelligence and digital technology continue to reshape the world. These advancements present both challenges and opportunities in the field of gifted education and talent development, making this an essential event for researchers, educators, and experts in the field.

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Please submit your article to the following email: WorldTalentWeb@ha.ae

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2. WorldTalentWeb newsletter caters to the international community and thus, all articles should be written in English.
3. American or British spelling is accepted.
4. All non-native English speakers should make sure to check their articles for language accuracy before submitting them.
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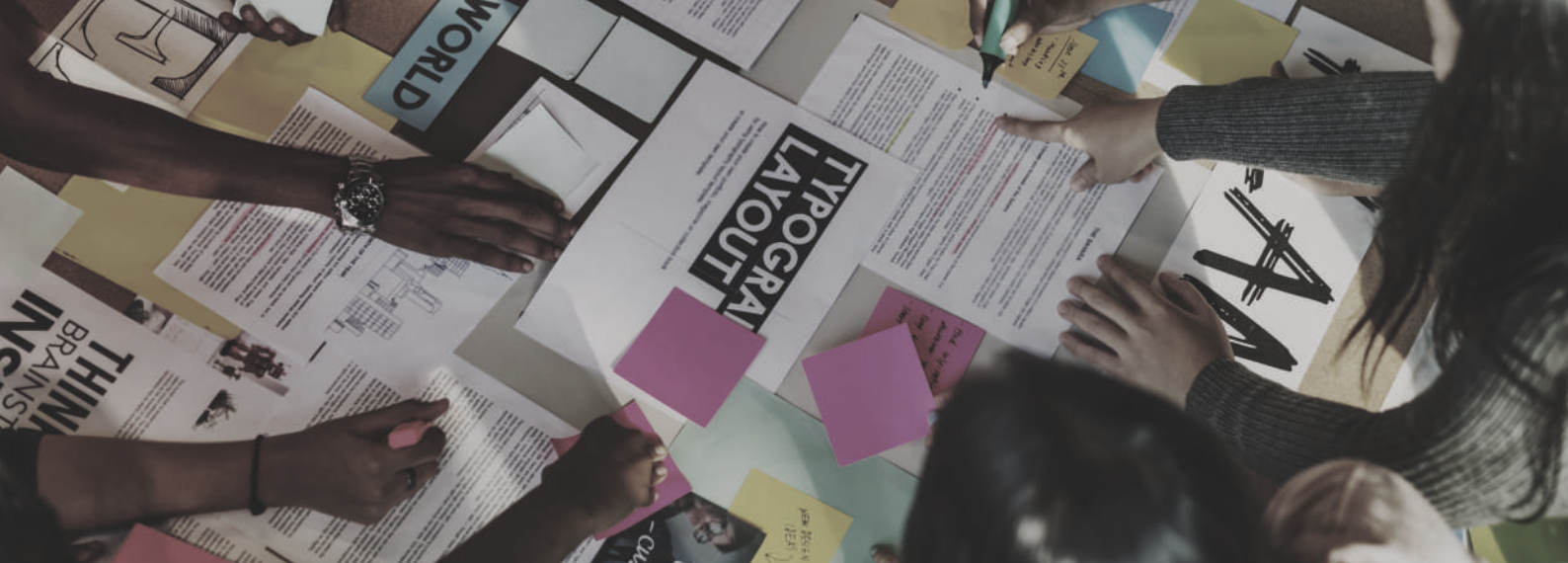
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