WorldTalentWeb
Newsletter of the World Giftedness Center

Awards of the World Giftedness Center

The Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation for Distinguished Academic Performance has been offering educational awards since the year 1998. Ever since then, the Hamdan's different awards have undergone significant developments and expansions at the local, regional and international level. In 2008, for example, the Hamdan Foundation inaugurated the UNESCO - Hamdan Prize to support and enhance best practices in teaching and learning at the global level.

In line with these continuous efforts and commitments towards the enhancement of quality gifted education around the world, the World Giftedness Center (WGC) of the Hamdan Foundation will announce very soon the creation of five more awards: Innovative Project Award, Community Service Award, School Education Award, Young Researcher Award and Innovative Research Award. **The launch of these awards is one of the unique initiatives of the WGC to support and encourage best practices and/or distinguished efforts in the area of gifted and talented education.**

All eligible people from around the world may apply for these awards. The application process is expected to start immediately after the official announcement of the awards. Eligible applicants from all around the globe may then consider applying for the awards online through the official website of the WGC. An application form including all the essential information about each award can be downloaded from the website which is now under construction and will be launched very soon.

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WorldTalentWeb Editorial

Penina Barry & Jennie Quinn
Education Officers, SCS Australia

Happy New Year to one and all and a very warm welcome to the 3rd edition of the WorldTalentWeb Newsletter and the very first edition for 2020. In this edition, we take a close look at gifted education programs, their diversity and their fit for purpose in light of three completely different contexts. We are excited to bring you 3 articles written by authors from across the globe. Our authors have fascinating stories to share about the structures and programs that have been implemented in their unique environments to ensure that gifted students thrive. What underpins each of these stories is the undeniable impact that advocacy and strategic vision play in enabling access to programs that meet extraordinary needs. Each article showcases approaches aimed at ensuring the "right fit" for a diverse range of gifted learners.

The identification process plays a critical role in the equitable selection of gifted students for targeted gifted programs. As outlined by Stoeger, Balestrini, and Ziegler (2018, p.33) "In particular, a better theoretical understanding of how to examine the individual and environmental resources that coalesce to create giftedness and expertise should enable the creation of more culturally and socially adaptive forms of gifted education (e.g., Sternberg & Arroyo, 2006; Ziegler & Stoeger, 2011)." Unique students require responsive programs that cater to their specific environmental factors, particular domains of giftedness and their individual psychosocial needs and development.

In her article on harnessing psychology to enhance the teaching of the Gifted, Dr Rena Subotnik from the American Psychological Association's Center for Psychology in Schools and Education (CPSE) Washington, advocates for content and skill development in domains, guidance in psychosocial skills and insider knowledge that will help make the talent development path forward easier and more rewarding. Carolyn Prince, the Gifted and Talented Educator at Kingston State College, Australia advocates passionately for gifted programs for students from low socio-economic backgrounds and schools. She asks an important question; 'Can one person make a change?" and proves through her vision and determination that indeed when the cause is worthy one can certainly make the difference.

And finally, Ingvelde Scholz takes us to the Friedrich Schiller Gymnasium (FSG) in Marbach am Neckar in Germany where Weekend Academies, Special Classes and Mentoring opportunities are offered in strategic response to gifted learners' needs.

Through the lens of catering to these unique needs, the concept of mentoring is also explored in our January edition. In their conceptual analysis of mentoring for the gifted, Grassinger, Porath and Ziegler (2010, p.42) state that "Mentoring – if applied properly – can be a highly effective pedagogical method. Analyses of the lives of eminent persons show that it is probably the most effective method (e.g., Bloom, 1984, 1985b)." Two of our authors discuss how they have implemented this provision for gifted students. Ingvelde Scholz highlights a mentoring program that has 4 instrumental components: CyberMentor Plus, performance-oriented Mentoring, Individual Learning paths and Excellence Training. Dr Rena Subotnik addresses mentoring through the Catalyst Program Model designed to expose young scholars to authentic experiences, offer a network of top mentors and role modelling from advanced students/post-docs. Finally, Carolyn Prince's story reminds us that it's not just the students who need mentors. Teachers and educators need champions to guide, inspire and support them in their quest to provide high-quality programs and provisions for gifted students.

We hope you enjoy the January edition of the WorldTalentWeb Newsletter.
Penina & Jennie

Penina Barry
BEd Secondary Education, Certificate of Gifted Education (COGE), MEd Educational Leadership, MEd Gifted Education

Jennie Quinn
BEd Primary Education, Certificate of Gifted Education (COGE), MEd Gifted Education

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HARNESSING PSYCHOLOGY TO ENHANCE TEACHING GIFTED, CREATIVE, AND TALENTED STUDENTS: THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION'S CENTER FOR PSYCHOLOGY IN SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION (CPSE)

Author:
Rena F. Subotnik, Director
Center for Psychology in Schools and Education,
American Psychological Association

One of CPSE's core missions is to generate public awareness, advocacy, clinical applications, and cutting edge research ideas that will enhance the achievement and performance of children and adolescents with special gifts and talents in all domains, including academic disciplines, the performing arts, sports, and the professions. I'm delighted to provide a brief description of CPSE's current offerings to engage readers in our work and to elicit global collaborations.

CPSE's orientation toward giftedness and talent.

There are three streams of literature in the gifted field. One is derived from those of us who work with larger groups of individuals in classrooms, schools, community centers, and summer programs. Another is generated from those who work in clinical settings. The narrow range of participants in that study population is informative to scholars seeking to understand the interaction of mental health issues and the gifted population. Problems can develop, however, when those outcomes are generalized to gifted populations in general. We recognize that there are problematic behaviors that can occur among gifted students that stem from environmental factors. These can include inappropriate placement in class, performance anxiety, inability to deal with distractions, failure, or perfectionism. These problems can be addressed by teachers and, unless they are extreme in how they are presented, can be part of a classroom discussion and psychosocial skill building.

The third stream of research is in domains. Most prominent is the sports psychology literature, which makes sense given the huge financial investments that are placed in finding winning formulas for teams and athletes. Gifted education has ignored this rich source because the content being addressed is not academic, and yet the techniques and psychosocial skills studied and implemented in interventions have some possible applications

to high performance in schools, universities and extracurricular activities such as science Olympiads and science fairs.

CPSE's standpoint is to shift discussion, policy, research and practice in the direction of talent development and high performance while moving away from conceptualizing giftedness as inherent to a person's being. In our view, children labeled as gifted based on a test of intelligence may not still be gifted as adolescents or adults without cultivating their intelligence with effort, motivation, persistence, and taking opportunities in a domain of human endeavor.

We promote talent development in many ways. First, we engage in the study and exploration of giftedness in domains, and we're happy to see that young scholars all over the world are also exploring performers in various fields, even those that may be more culturally based, like drum corps, or circus arts. We are also advising scholars who are pushing boundaries of talent development in sports and medicine, domains that are already widely studied.

CPSE's offerings to the gifted and talented community.

This article describes some of the offerings available to readers of this web newsletter from APA. We welcome feedback and commentary about their usefulness. Catalyst is a program model for developing adolescent creative scientists, the Top 20 Principles from Psychology for Gifted, Creative, and Talented Students is a handy synthesis of the psychology literature applied to classrooms that target this special population.
We have published articles on topics such as competition and high performance in domains and can forward those articles to anyone wishing to read them. Finally, we offer a discussion and information listserv called CGEP. Each will be described in more detail below.

Catalyst Program Model:

Funded by the Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation in Chemical Sciences, CPSE hosted a project for high achieving secondary school students interested in careers in chemistry. The core of the project was in the form of teams, participants of which included: "Mentors," eminent scholars in four domains of chemistry and three in the arts, "Associates," rising stars in four subfields of chemical sciences; and "Scholars," 3 high school age individuals who have exhibited outstanding achievement in one of those sub-fields of chemistry as a result of their commitment of time and talent.

The main goals of the project are the following: To provide exposure to authentic experiences in science to help in career decisions, to be provided with a network of top mentors who can provide connections and introductions, as well as advanced students who can provide role models for next steps. Some of the less explicit but important contributions of the Catalyst project include the provision of insider knowledge about the value systems in science such as fundable research questions. More explicitly, psychosocial skills associated with success and mental toughness in the face of competition and failure is integral to the program. Finally, artist mentors provide insights into the creative process that have

been shown to be more obvious and more easily absorbed by the students than the creative process of science. On an instrumental level, the presence of the artists is a big draw for the scientists being willing to spend a week away from home and responsibilities.

Catalyst Mentors were selected by the Foundation based on what the Foundation considered to be “rock star” status. In order to show the wide variation in opportunities in the chemical sciences, mentors were chosen from among biochemists, bioengineers, physical chemists and theoretical chemists. Each mentor selected an associate from among his or her PhD students or post-docs. Mentors also developed applications to be completed by high school students who wished to be candidates for the program. Here is an example of an essay for the biochemistry team:

When pharmaceutical companies develop new drugs, they are very concerned with the possibility of toxic side effects from the drug itself, its metabolites in the patient, or from contaminants that accompany its production. Sometimes these side effects are only discovered after the drug has been used for many years, with serious consequences to the patients. The sedative thalidomide is an example of a drug that was pulled from the market due to the discovery that infants of pregnant women who were taking the drug had a high risk of birth defects. What is the structure of thalidomide and what was the cause of the birth defects? How might the production of thalidomide be altered to avoid this problem in the future?

The Catalyst structure included a summer, week long summit at a bucolic university campus willing to offer dormitory, eating, and laboratory space. Each day started with meetings among the individual teams to identify and develop a year-long project. Each afternoon, one or two of the mentors offered a lecture or demonstration, including the visiting artists. Meals would be relaxed but also serve as the location for discussions about psychosocial skills or insider knowledge. For example, post-docs would talk about how they handled the failure of an experiment both emotionally and cognitively. Mentors might talk about the years they invested in generating one of the discoveries that made them eminent, and how they kept themselves excited and motivated through setbacks and tiny, incremental rewards. The team members stayed in contact electronically during the academic year and returned to the campus the following summer to witness talks on the project given by the young scholars and to welcome a new cohort of teams.

Challenges: The outcomes of the project led us to consider how to address a difficult problem that challenges many programs in STEM. Although the young scholars were passionate about chemical sciences, they were undeniably drawn to careers applying chemistry to medicine and engineering, and not toward chemical science research. Certainly, well informed doctors and engineers is a

worthy outcome, but it was not the one desired by funders for the most talented students, both private and governmental. It also caused us to wonder whether the applicants were viewing the program as an opportunity for "resume padding," especially with regard to entering competitive medical schools. Happily, a few did pursue PhDs in Chemistry, and others, MD/PhDs. It is worth considering how to tinker with the application to get at those who aspire to a career where research is primary.

Top 20 Principles from Psychology for Gifted, Creative, and Talented Students

Over the last 20 years of teacher preparation in the United States, the number of courses addressing psychological content has been reduced. In order to ensure that teachers and teacher candidates had easy access to evidence based information on learning, development, assessment, behavior management, motivation, and social and emotional learning, CPSE organized a document called the Top 20 Principles from Psychology for PreK-12 Teaching and Learning. It prioritized the most important information from psychology that teachers need and want to know. The selection of topics was informed by a survey of over 4,000 teachers.

The 20 principles are organized under the following categories:

- How students think and learn
- What motivates students
- Why social context, interpersonal relationships, and emotional well-being are important to student learning
- How the classroom can best be managed
- How to assess student progress

The document https://www.apa.org/ed/schools/teaching-learning/top-twenty-principles.pdf is organized so that each principle is briefly described, including a summary of the research literature about the principle. The description is followed by suggestions for classroom application and 5 key references. Happily, the principles are very popular and the text has been translated into Arabic, Czech, Estonian, French, Hebrew, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Serbian, Slovenian, Spanish, and Turkish so far.

The gifted community requested a version that addressed gifted, creative, and talented students. The project was organized by Matthew Makel, Paula Olszewski-Kubilius, Rena Subotnik, Heidrun Stoeger, and Jonathan Plucker https://www.apa.org/ed/schools/teaching-learning/top-principles-gifted.pdf. The principles are universal and remain the same however the explanations and classroom applications were more specific to these populations.

Challenges: The biggest challenge we faced in organizing the research literature was a lack of a clear, agreed upon definition of giftedness. Are we talking about students with high general cognitive ability, or with high general

achievement, or with both high ability and achievement, or finally or with high ability or achievement within specific domains (e.g., mathematics, science, visual arts)? For purposes of generalizability, the organizers placed primary focus on what works for teaching gifted students no matter who they are.

An example from the motivation section: *Principle 10: Students persist in the face of challenging tasks and process information more deeply when they adopt mastery goals (goals oriented toward acquiring new skills or improving levels of competence or expertise) rather than performance goals (goals concerned with peer comparisons, and outperforming others)*. Gifted students are likely to find themselves in performance conditions like competitions, so they need to be able to balance motivation goals appropriately. Some classroom applications from the document include convey mistakes as opportunities to learn (much like sports teams conducting post game analysis). Also frame competition as a yardstick for self-improvement, and provide support for psychosocial strength training to make the experience of competition constructive and not onerous.

Collaborating with High Performance Psychologists

CPSE was looking for alliances beyond those traditionally found in gifted education. Many psychologists who are members of APA are hired to work with clients to optimize performance. We formed a Coalition of High Performance Psychologists and then reached out to sports psychologists as well as those who train artists and soldiers. We rounded out the group with educational, developmental, and school psychologists who have conducted work or research with talented populations.

One important contribution derived from this group is in the realm of psychosocial skills. For example, we can learn about addressing performance anxiety from the music and sports world. The research can inform us about screening out distractions based on work in chess that might apply to helping children with test taking or studying. Finally, we can inform and excite young people about the ways in which psychologists serve teams of astronauts, lawyers, surgical teams, and firefighters and how this can help them to collaborate.

The coalition has completed two projects so far. One is a paper designed to address the bad name of competition in schools (see reference below). The paper argues that viewing competition as bad is too extreme. Many children enjoy competition and perform at their best under competitive conditions. If children feel prepared and competent, if they think the competition is fair, and view it as a mechanism for self-improvement, competition can be very useful. Further, techniques that can help with performance anxiety can also make competition more fun and rewarding.

A recently completed project included a compilation of special abilities needed for a career in sport, arts, professions, or academe (see reference below). Incorporated in each chapter was information associated psychosocial skills for each stage of talent development as well as insider knowledge. Access to insider knowledge is often missing for underserved populations. Without it, young people can waste time and energy, which can be especially discouraging in competitive arenas.

Third on the list of projects for the Coalition of high performance brings gatekeepers, such as admissions directors, hiring directors, scouts, and editors, out of the shadows. In all domains, a gatekeeping process determines

acceptance into elite programs, invitations to perform, drafting onto elite sports teams, and matriculation into graduate school. Gatekeepers are responsible for opening doors as well as keeping people out. How well trained are they, and how resistant are they to bias? A paper in the work attempts to address these issues.

Challenges: Collaborating like this has been very rewarding, but it can also be problematic when some members benefit from publications and camaraderie but not the heavy lifting of writing and researching.

Outreach:

CGEP host a listserv of 400 plus members from around the world who are interested in psychology, gifted education, and talent development. Please join by clicking on this link. cgepnetwork@lists.apa.org.

Challenges: Our only problem with the listserv is when people post advertisements for services, products, or events that charge money. That goes against our rules.

Summary:

CPSE is dedicated to promoting talent development in domains as the preferred approach for gifted education. Keeping this in mind, it's important to note that not all talents can be evident in the early grades, as each domain has unique trajectories of when they begin, peak, and end. We need to be on the lookout for talents all through the school years, providing opportunities for content and skill development in domains, and also guidance in mental and social skills as well as insider knowledge that will help make the talent development path forward easier and more rewarding.

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ADVOCATING FOR GIFTED PROGRAMMING IN A LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC SCHOOL: CAN ONE PERSON MAKE CHANGE?

Author:
Carolyn Prince
GATE Coordinator
Kingston State College
Queensland, Australia

Kingston State College is a relatively small school of about 750 students across six year levels, Years 7-12 at which I have worked since 2010.

In Australia, for the purpose of comparing schools, data including student factors (parent occupation and parent education) and school factors (geographical location and proportion of Indigenous students) is used to calculate an Index of Community Socio-Education Advantage (ICSEA) score. The ICSEA places a score of 1000 as average, with a range generally between 750 and 1250. Schools with an ICSEA below 950 are usually those eligible to participate in programs offered to low socio-economic areas.

Kingston State College currently has an ICSEA of 916. Over 80% of our students fall into the bottom half of the Distribution of Students graph.

With this status in mind, our school community is acutely aware of the vital role we play in the progress and success of our student body. Despite the frequency with which we are questioned about the necessity of providing gifted education in our region – “I really don’t think you’ll find any gifted students in this area, will you?” – the school administration has, over the last 2 years, provided me with the freedom to research, learn, create and implement a deliberate program for our high potential students.

Mid 2017, following the 22nd Biennial World Conference in Sydney, is the starting point of our journey. To begin with, there were no staff with explicit training in the sector, no identified students and no real opportunities provided for anyone who might be. Highly performing students were somewhat catered for, but, as we have discovered in the intervening 24 months, meeting the needs of gifted individuals is an entirely different matter.

My work is overseen by one of our Deputy Principals, Mr David Holgate, who has been supportive since day one. While I am the individual running our programs, coordinating activities and upskilling our community, none of it would be possible without that absolute backing.

His epiphany that gifted education needed a profile within the school to balance out the time dedicated to students struggling to meet national benchmarks is summed up when he said “A lot of those kids at the top end weren’t really getting the attention they deserve. It felt like time to start working to put something in place for the kids at the top end.” A large part of this, of course, is having someone willing to work in the space. As much as the school leadership team is happy to meet my requests for different resources, activities and time, the program would not exist if I had not approached them with a plan. The willingness and confidence to take a risk and pitch an idea was crucial to our eventual success.

After the initial request to forge ahead was approved, we needed to upskill as many of our staff as possible. Working independently, and with very little experience myself, this was a terrifying proposition. I went to workshops, professional learning seminars, online associations and conference contacts, learnt as much as I could and transformed that into teacher accessible content. This is an ongoing process – I learn, I share, we trial ideas and discuss their effectiveness in meetings. We now have staff who, using Gagne’s Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DGMT), in alignment with Education Queensland policy, can identify the difference between gifts and talents, see their role in the developmental process and, vitally in a low socio-economic status school, acknowledge that the student sleeping through their lesson, making chicken noises when asked a question or failing every subject may be gifted!

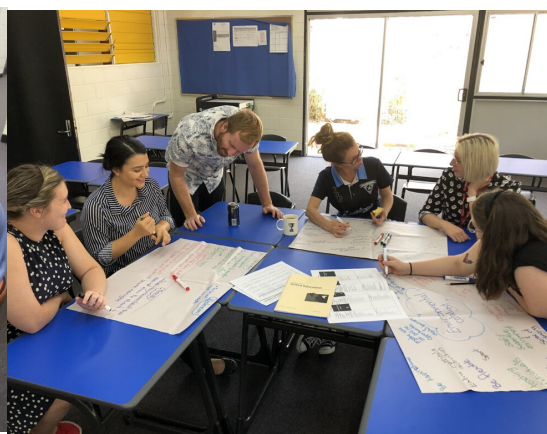
As teacher confidence has grown, so too has their willingness to experiment, challenge students and take on new classes and projects within our program. In 2019 we have had more students participating in debating and academic competitions, our highest application levels for high performance classes, new incursions and excursions planned by other staff and unprecedented parent and community involvement. Within our streamed classes, focusing on high achieving and/or high potential students, teachers are experimenting with inquiry based and student directed learning with adjusted and complex content and texts, where critical and creative thinking is encouraged. Students and teachers are enjoying the capacity to move faster through their curriculum content, experiencing greater breadth and depth in the learning, with reduced requirement for repetition and behaviour management. This has opened a lot of doors for our students who previously were bored, disengaged or invisible. As Ms Amy Johnson, English teacher and debating coach, identifies of her experience: “[Gifted students] get so left behind. They don’t get extended and learn less than other students. Now we can truly challenge them. Before I wouldn’t have known how to support a gifted student but now I think I have a lot of different tools to do so and I’m really glad about that.” And it is this kind of feedback that continues to drive our efforts.

Most importantly, with all the opportunities provided to students – whether streamed classes, extra-curricular activities or pull out programs – their feedback is gathered regularly and acted upon. Some comments are positive and encouraging: “At first it was kinda like extended version of school, more suffering, kinda boring, but as I continued going through it I guess it showed me what being more motivated can do, how I can do a bigger task if I just stick to it. Cause normally I just drop things that I don’t get the hang of quickly,” and “The ACE class has helped me improve my education by recognising my potential, making me want to put more effort in to stay here.” Others show we have a long way to go in convincing everyone that there is value in what we are doing: “Why spend so much time and effort on the ACE class when the not so bright kids need more help?” and “This puts pressure on us as we constantly get told we are special and we have to live up to that.”

Despite the barriers, however, there is genuine valuing from the top down of prioritising our gifted students and their potential. As David Holgate says, “Being in a low SES school, there is a real focus on negative things… So it creates a real negative feeling and has an impact on teacher and administration wellbeing. Being able to say ‘look we have evidence to say that we have 10% of our kids at the top end of the scale’, it’s really good to be able to celebrate it. The more we progress with this [gifted program], the bigger the profile will get. We are in the early days of what we can achieve.”

And these aren’t just throwaway comments – there are genuine commitments seeing the light of day. In 2019 we have established a GATE Committee to support me in overseeing the various activities and decisions within our program. Furthermore, this committee has guaranteed dedicated resources for 2020 that will see us increase our program from Years 7-9 to 7-10 and move from utilising the SAGES-2 (Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students) to assess only teacher recommended students to undertaking universal screening of the entire Year 7 cohort.

Whilst we are not, by any means, doing things perfectly, or on the grand scale I would love to see, we are making progress, growing every year and experiencing a significant increase in staff and student understanding of and interest in our gifted provisioning.

PRACTICE-ORIENTED IMPULSES FOR THE PROMOTION OF GIFTED PUPILS BASED ON THE FRIEDRICH SCHILLER GYMNASIUM IN MARBACH AM NECKAR

Author:
Ingvelde Scholzt
Friedrich Schiller Gymnasium Marbach am Neckar
Seminar for Didactics and Teacher Education in Stuttgart

My article will be opened with a short overview of my school. Subsequently, three selected best practices in education of gifted students will be considered: Weekend Academies, Special classes for highly gifted pupils and our Mentoring Program.

Brief overview of the Friedrich Schiller Gymnasium

The Friedrich Schiller Gymnasium (FSG) in Marbach am Neckar – a small town near Stuttgart – is the largest gymnasium in Germany, with almost 2500 pupils and more than 220 teachers. We have about 330 students per class level. Our school starts at fifth grade, which means that children are about 10 years old when they come to our school. Before that, they attended elementary school for four years.

The FSG has received numerous prizes and awards for its excellent performance and innovation. For example, in 2007 our school was awarded the German School Prize as one of the best schools in Germany. The promotion of gifted students is an important focus, indeed a central pillar of our school development as well as of our teaching development. We are convinced that we have to offer a diverse range of services for the diverse talents and skills of our students. We achieve this primarily through **external differentiation**. That's why our pupils can choose between different curricula, that suit their individual talents:

- Language-gifted students can choose the languages curriculum, so they can learn 3 to 4 foreign languages. In addition to English as the first foreign language, pupils in the sixth grade at the age of 11 years can choose either Latin or French or Russian or Chinese as a second foreign language. In the 8th grade, pupils can additionally choose either French or Italian or Spanish as their 3rd foreign language. As a fourth foreign language, our students can choose Arabic as well.

- Students with special scientific and technical talents can choose the scientific-technical curriculum. So they have more lessons in the natural sciences such as chemistry, physics, biology, as well as in technology.

- And students with special artistic skills and interests can choose the curriculum "Art and Intermediate Communication".

In addition to the different profiles and curricula, we also have **special classes**:

- Special classes for students who have special musical abilities.

- Special classes for highly gifted students, which I will introduce in detail later.

- In grade 10 we have two international fellowship classes (IFC). In each of these classes about 8 young people from different countries around the world learn and live together with about 16 of our German pupils. This project opens up the opportunity to deal directly with other cultures and ways of life.

By doing so, students expand their own intercultural competence and are prepared for the global challenges of the future world. The lessons take place in all subjects in English – except in German and foreign languages. During their stay in Germany, the foreign students live with the families of our German students, who agree to welcome them to their homes and hearts for the duration of one school year.

Since our school has so many offers for talented and gifted students, the FSG was selected as one of 300 pilot schools from all over Germany for the so-called Excellence Initiative to promote high-performance students. This Excellence Initiative is a joint initiative of federal and state governments. After this brief overview of our school I want to introduce three selected best practices in education of gifted students.

Weekend Academies

In our school, we organize four to five weekend academies per year for gifted and motivated children and adolescents. An academy weekend lasts from Friday afternoon until Saturday morning. Experts from schools, universities and other institutions offer 12 to 15 workshops on a broad range of topics, such as Mathematical games, robotics, writing workshop, astronomy, wildlife observation, bridge construction, vehicle construction and much more.

Talented children and adolescents from kindergarten, elementary and secondary schools have the opportunity to reach their potential and explore new topics

beyond the content of the school curriculum. All course offerings focus on discovery and creative learning on a very high level. With more than 200 participants per weekend, our academies are well attended and much sought after.

In order to reach as many suitable talents as possible, we inform the educators in the kindergarten as well as the teachers in the primary schools, secondary schools and gymnasien about our academy. And we ask them to propose suitable children and teenagers for our academy. For the selection process, we have developed a questionnaire together with the Institute of Giftedness of the University of Tübingen.

Parallel to the workshops for the children and adolescents we have offers for the parents and teachers. Because we not only want to have a look at the individual child, but also at the familiar environment and the network.

We offer a free lecture series on topics about gifted education and accompaniment on Friday afternoon. Therefore competent speakers introduce in a topic of the accompaniment of gifted children and adolescents. Afterwards there is the possibility to exchange and to discuss. On Saturday morning, we offer a parent talk circle of parents for parents. The participants can exchange experiences and ideas and receive support. Later on Saturday morning, there is also a parents' café.

With our offers of the weekend academy we make parents and children aware of our school and we discover many talented children at a very young age. Already four-year-old children can take part in our academy. Also many gifted children of the elementary school are happy to take part in our offers of the academy. These children prefer to apply for our special class for gifted children. As a result, our weekend academies form an important foundation for the existence of our special class for highly gifted children.

Special Classes for highly gifted pupils

In 2008, a class for gifted pupils was set up at our school. This special class is intended for highly gifted and motivated students.

Together with the Ministry we have developed a three-step admission procedure:

- As a first step, the applicants must complete an IQ test to determine their intelligence quotient (Cognitive Ability Test). This IQ test is conducted by experienced psychologists. The first requirement for admission to the special class is an IQ of 125 or more.

- In the second step, we have a conversation and interview with the child and his parents. This is about getting to know the child and the parents as well as the interaction between them.

- In the third step, the candidates sit in our special class for three days. The focus of our observations is on the behavior of the child. We observe the following aspects: motivation, perseverance,

learning strategies, willingness to cooperate, ability to learn from mistakes and failures, concentration and so on.

Now take a look at the model for promoting gifted children in our special class.

In this class we have the well-known elements Acceleration and Enrichment. We teach the contents of the curriculum a little bit faster (2 lessons in less than a week). This allows us to create space for an enriched learning offer (enrichment). For the students of our special class, we offer several projects and modules on Tuesday afternoon, in which the gifted pupils can participate. The modules take place on different topics and are led by our teachers and external experts. The topics of the modules are, for example, Programming a computer, Architecture or Participation in competitions. One question was asked again and again whether very gifted students develop better in a special class or better in a regular class. An answer to this question is given by the PULSS study.

The PULSS study examined the cognitive and socio-emotional development of very gifted students in a special class and the cognitive and socio-emotional development of very gifted students in a regular (standard) class. I just want to mention two results:

These results show that the special class offers very good support for gifted children.

Mentoring Program

Our mentoring program is designed for gifted and talented students who are proposed by teachers and who need to be highly motivated. Our goal is to help mentees successfully develop their skills. The mentoring program consists of four main topics: CyberMentor Plus, performance-oriented Mentoring, Individual Learning paths and Excellence Training.

The topic **Cyber Mentor Plus** is a combined online and offline mentoring program designed exclusively for female students who are interested in STEM. First I will introduce the CyberMentor Program and later I'll explain the CyberMentor Plus:

- **CyberMentor:** Online mentors are women working in various fields and in various institutions of STEM, such as university, business or industry. The mentoring takes place via a protected online platform with mail, chat and forum. On this online platform, there is a wide range of information on STEM, study and career choice as well as projects, tasks, etc. Participants can access these online offers at any time. In addition, the mentees can contact other mentees and mentors.

This creates a CyberMentor community and network. And success is measurable, as the studies by Heidrun Stöger and Co have shown: girls who have taken part in the CyberMentor-Project are more likely to take up courses and professions in the field of STEM than students who did not participate in this CyberMentor program.

- **The CyberMentor Plus** program goes beyond the CyberMentor program. Because the girls are also personally supported and accompanied once a week by a STEM-teacher from our school. At these weekly meetings, mentees can talk with the teacher or research on specific issues.

I come to the next topic of our mentoring program, namely **performance-oriented mentoring**.

This mentoring program is designed for gifted and motivated students, who can be interested in very different topics. Whenever our teachers discuss our students through educational conferences, class conferences, or testimonial conferences, they also consider which students might be suitable for our mentoring program. I receive from my colleagues the names and contact details of the appropriate students. This allows me to contact the pupils.

In order to be able to offer suitable mentoring, we use a feedback form to raise the interests of the proposed students. So we ask the pupils, our future mentees, to complete a feedback form.

The third topic **Individual Learning Paths** focuses on the very intensive promotion of exceptionally talented students in a talent domain. The mentees get individual and intensive support by subject matter experts. That's why Mentor and Mentee meet every week for 1 hour.
The mentor helps his mentee to achieve excellence in his talent domain.

As a last point of our Mentoring Program, I would like to introduce our **Excellence Training**.

Our excellence training aims to strengthen the personality and talents of young adults. "What are my talents?", "What do I want to achieve?", "What are my goals?" “And how can I use my talents in research and for society?" Supported by a Mentor-Team, each participant finds individual answers to these important questions and thinks about what his or her next steps might look like.

Through excellence training, young people should discover their personal strengths and abilities as a treasure for their future lives and careers and learn to set goals and pursue them. And our participants make networks with universities, companies etc.
And finally, our pupils will gain insights into the possibility of international study and international scholarship programs.

The participants are also invited to our alumni meeting, which takes place every year in our school. This keeps us in contact with our former, very gifted students. At the same time, these former FSG students and mentees are the later mentors to our gifted, current and future students.

Conference Announcements

The 2e at W&M Conference: February 28-29, 2020 in Williamsburg, VA (USA)

2E at W&M: Twice Exceptional Conference

William & Mary School of Education

The conference focuses on twice-exceptional (high-ability with learning differences or neurodiverse) children both at home and school. The goal of the conference is to provide information, resources, support, and community building opportunities to educators, administrators, parents, practitioners, counselors, and district personnel.
https://education.wm.edu/centers/cfge/profdev/conferences/2e/index.php

Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness 2020 July 30 - August 3, 2020, in Daegu, Korea

Beyond Intelligence: Entrepreneurship, Leadership, and Ethical Minds

APFG Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness

http://www.apfggiftedness.org/

The 17th ECHA Conference of the European Council for High Ability: 9 to 12 September 2020, in Porto, Portugal

Gifts and Talents: Values for the Future

Gifts and Talents Values for the Future 17th International ECHA Conference 9-12 September 2020, Porto, Portugal

The conference will be organised by the APCS - Portuguese Association for Gifted Children in partnership with the Higher School of Education of Paula Frassinetti. This conference aims to define force lines in the educational policy field, to promote a higher level of scientific knowledge, to share innovative action models and to enhance, in this field, the combination of educational efforts in the European Union and at world level. The conference will bring together scientists in this domain of interest from around the world.
http://echa2020.org/

International Congress on Gifted Young Scientists Education in Istanbul, Turkey from 24-26 October, 2020

ICGYSEducation

Talent, Technology and Future, 1st International Congress on Gifted Young Scientists Education (ICGYSE)

Gifted Young Scientists Education, founded in 2013, has started to be discussed in the world with the academic journal Gifted Young Scientists. The ultimate in science education is for the education of gifted children. The problem of how gifted and also young scientists will be trained is the most important problem of education.
https://icgyse.net/about-icgyse/

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC) August 1 - 5, 2021, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

WCGTC World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

Developing The Future Of Gifted Education

The 24th WCGTC World Conference will be hosted at the Dubai World Trade Centre, August 1 – 5, 2021. The conference will focus on the theme of Developing the Future of Gifted Education. The World Conference is a great opportunity for researchers, educators, psychologists, parents, and other stakeholders to gather from around the globe to discuss the vital matters, issues, and concerns that impact the field of gifted education and gifted and talented children. The World Conference will be hosted by the Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation for Distinguished Academic Performance
https://worldgifted2021.com/

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(not more than 70 words)

"The WorldTalentWeb newsletter's team is very happy to advertise your conference."

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