

23RD WORLD CONFERENCE

July 24 - 28, 2019



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UNLEASHING INDIGENOUS POTENTIAL:
THE PURPOSE, POWER, AND
PROMISE OF GIFTED EDUCATION

Dr. Melinda Webber, Keynote Speaker

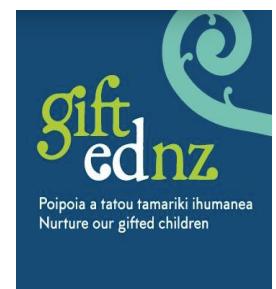




Unleashing Indigenous potential

The purpose, power, and promise of gifted education

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Ngāpuhi



Te Arawa



A useful definition:

Giftedness: a) reflects the values of society; b) is typically manifested in actual outcomes, especially in adulthood; c) is specific to domains of endeavor; d) is the result of the coalescing of biological, pedagogical, psychological, and psychosocial factors; and e) is relative not just to the ordinary (e.g., a child with exceptional art ability compared to peers), but to the extraordinary (e.g., an artist who revolutionises a field of art).

- drive
- grit
- motivation
- intellectual risk taking
- self-confidence/determination
- academic self-concept
- self-discipline
- growth mindset
- self-efficacy
- resiliency in the face of failure or disappointment
- task commitment
- passion
- chance
- opportunity

Subotnik, R. F., Olszewski-Kubilius, P., & Worrell, F. C. (2011). Rethinking giftedness and gifted education: A proposed direction forward based on psychological science. *Psychological science in the public interest*, 12(1), 3-54.

One more...Embedded Achievement

“...a youth's attention to group values and norms with regard to school... the belief that achievement is an in-group identifier, a part of being a good in-group member, and the related sense that achievement of some in-group members helps other in-group members succeed.”

(Altschul, Oyserman & Bybee, 2006, p.1156)



Altschul, I., Oyserman, D., & Bybee, D. (2006). Racial-ethnic identity in mid-adolescence: Content and change as predictors of academic achievement. *Child development*, 77(5), 1155-1169.



An Indigenous perspective – Māori

(Bevan-Brown, 2011; Macfarlane, Webber et al, 2014; Mahaki & Mahaki, 2007; O'Neill, 2002; Webber & Macfarlane, 2018)

Components of a Māori Concept of Giftedness (Bevan-Brown, 2011)

- | |
|---|
| 1. Giftedness is widely distributed in Māori society. It is not bound by social class, economic status, lineage or gender |
| 2. Giftedness can be exhibited in both individual and group contexts. Also, an individual's gifts and talents can be 'owned' by a group |
| 3. The areas of giftedness and talent recognised are broad and wide-ranging |
| 4. Importance is placed on both 'qualities' and 'abilities' |
| 5. The concept of giftedness is holistic in nature and inextricably intertwined with other Māori concepts |
| 6. There is an inherent expectation that a person's gifts and talents will be used to benefit others |
| 7. The Māori culture provides a firm foundation on which giftedness is grounded, nurtured, exhibited and developed |
| 8. Mana tangata ² is frequently accorded to people with special abilities especially in the areas of traditional knowledge and service to others |
- Rangatira – the Māori word for leader means “a weaver of people” – and is considered someone able to weave people together for a common purpose

(Webber, in press)

“In the first instance the foundation for our children is actually set in our house, at our home, at our pā, and within Ngāti Pikiao. And when we send them off to kura, for us it’s an extension that helps them to cope in a Pākehā world, but first and foremost recognising that their Māori values are the ones that matter, their language, culture, mana and identity are the things that keep them strong and anchored in the first instance. Everything else from the Pākehā world is an absolute add-on and something that they need because that’s just the world that we live in, but we recognise where their inner stuff comes from – their mana.”

- A parent speaking of their gifted Māori children

(Macfarlane, Webber, McRae & Cookson-Cox, 2014).



An Australian perspective - Indigenous Australian

(Chaffey, 2011; Christie, 2011; Cooper, 2005; Gibson, 1994; Gibson & Vialle, 2007)

Gifted Indigenous Australian students “are the ones who help the other kids when the teacher is not watching. They are not competitive. They already know that they are people with destiny. They know the authority of their elders (each in a specific and significant kin relationship with them). They also know how to pay attention to significant people, and also places, things and moments.”

(Christie, 2011)

That from an Aboriginal perspective, giftedness is a measure of your knowledge of your ancestry, your land, your kin, and your respect for your community and elders. That is what giftedness is. And with being identified as a leader or a gifted person of any kind, comes an enormous responsibility. You are expected to care for certain family groups, you’re expected to care for certain totems, and for your natural environment. This is a big weight on anyone’s shoulders.

(Chandler, 2011)

- Giftedness is associated with leadership. The gift is not there for the child. ‘It belongs to everybody’. Giftedness is inherited. *“People do not have gifts by themselves or for themselves”*.
- Young people are born with their gifts and talents, derived from their embodiment of ancestral connections. The Yolŋu word for this embodiment is gakal.
- ‘Gakal’ – knowledge of cultural ways of knowing and ceremony that enable the individual “to become one with their ancestors” Kinship and a connection, respect and responsibility to the land is central.
- Linguistic, physical, and spatial intelligence – particularly learning through observation, engagement with land, and mentoring from elders
- Giftedness is neither a head thing (mulkurr) or a guts thing (ŋayaŋu) but an effect of the two coming together.



An Indigenous perspective – Pasifika

(Frengley-Vaipuna, Kupu-MacIntyre & Riley, 2011; Fuamatu, 2008; Faaea-Semeatu, 2011)

Pasifika giftedness will manifest when students can “utilize their innate sense of selves to master and navigate through their conflicting worlds”

(Faaea-Semeatu (2011, p. 121).

A Gifted Tongan must become “... poto [which] involves being able to match behaviour to context – knowing what to do, being able to do it, knowing when to do it and doing it well. Being poto means both learning the rules and learning how to manipulate them to one’s advantage. ”

(Frengley-Vaipuna, Kupu-MacIntyre & Riley, 2011)

- 1. Adaptability**
- 2. Memory**
- 3. Church affiliation**
- 4. Commitment to excellence**
- 5. Relationships**
- 6. Resilience**
- 7. Lineage/Birthright**
- 8. Language Fluency**
- 9. Leadership**
- 10. Representation**

Faaea-Semeatu (2011)



An Indigenous perspective - Native American

(Begay & Maker, 2007; Fisher, 2007; Gentry et al, 2014; Tonemah, 1991; Wu, 2011, Brokenleg, 1999)

- Strengths in naturalist, spiritual, leadership, visual-spatial, art, music, creative problem solving, and communication domains
- A commitment to their Native language and self-determination
- Knowledge and memory for Native knowledge, history, social expectations and cultural values
- Awareness and sensitivity to kinship, community and nature.
- Maturity, adaptability, intrapersonal skills and work ethic
- A spiritual connection to using Native visual arts, narratives, and oral histories in a contemporary context
- Strong Native community participation and collaboration with parents, elders, and other community members/resources

The "Circle of Courage" is comprised of four key components:

Belonging: children are surrounded by caring adults and peers in an extended kinship system that treats all significant others as relatives.

Mastery: children who are mentored by elders and skilled peers gain competence in social, physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual domains.

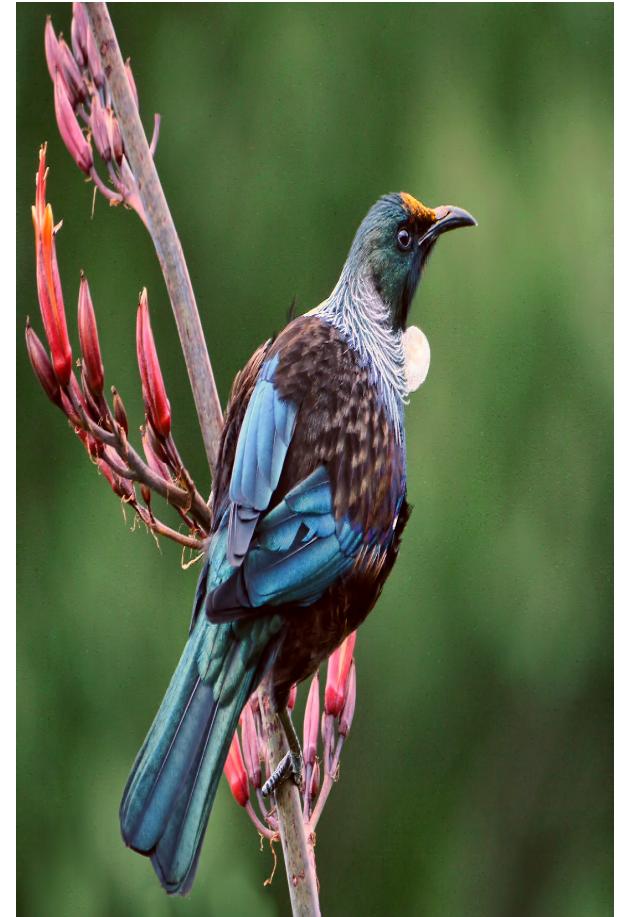
Independence: children are anchored in the values, knowledge, and skills of their culture can develop a stronger sense of autonomy and power over their own lives.

Generosity: the highest expression of courage is attained when children learn to show compassion for others and to give a higher priority to relationships rather than possessions.

(Brokenleg, 1999)

Some commonalities...

- **'Mana' (Māori)** - a quality, energy or consciousness in the world which can be harnessed and expressed in human activities through acts of generosity and wisdom
- **'Poto' (Tongan)** - able to match behavior to context – knowing what to do, being able to do it, knowing when to do it and doing it well
- **'Gakal' (Yolŋu)** - knowledge of cultural ways of knowing and ceremony that enable the individual “to become one with their ancestors
- **Ya Ne Dah Ah (Chickaloon, Alaska)** - Ancient teachings that provide students with the skills necessary for mainstream academic success and also helps students develop knowledge, pride and skills in traditional Athabascan culture.





Ka Awatea: An tribal case study of Māori student success



Dr Angus Macfarlane
Rangiwēwhi



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Dr Candy Cookson-Cox
Uenukukōpako



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Ngāti Whakaue, Ngāpuhi

Macfarlane, A., Webber, M., Cookson-Cox, C. & McRae, H. (2014). *Ka Awatea: An iwi case study of Maori students' success*. [Manuscript]. Auckland, NZ: University of Auckland. Retrieved from http://www.maramatanga.co.nz/projects_publications.

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Webber, M. (2015). Diversity and the secondary years: Nga pūmanawa e waru: Identifying the characteristics of successful intelligence from a Maori perspective. In A. Macfarlane, S. Macfarlane & M. Webber (Eds.), *Sociocultural Realities: Exploring New Horizons*. (pp. 135-154). Christchurch: Canterbury University Press.

Webber, M. (2011). Look to the past, stand tall in the present: The integral nature of positive racial-ethnic identity for the academic success of Maori students. In W. Vialle (Ed.), *Giftedness from an indigenous perspective* (pp. 100-110). NSW, Australia: University of Wollongong Printery.

Key research questions:

- How do Te Arawa define giftedness?
- In what ways do families , teachers and the wider Te Arawa community foster conditions that enable giftedness to manifest?
- How is giftedness enacted by Te Arawa students? To what effect?

Table 1. Study Participants

	Questionnaire	Individual Interviews	Focus Group Discussions	
Participants	n	n	n	Total
Gifted students	66	5	61	132
Teachers	38	10	32	80
Principals	5	7	1	13
Family Members	29	2	17	48
Elders	-	10	-	10
Total	138	35	110	283



Tunohopu

Gifted Qualities/Identification Criteria

What are the qualities of giftedness (from a distinctively Te Arawa perspective)?

In what ways do these qualities manifest in gifted Māori students?

Quality 3
Successful Māori students learn how to nurture strong relationships

Characteristics
The ability to sustain relationships that are premised on a balance of assertiveness and warmth (manaaki) because this provides sustenance for the inner person.

Application to school & work

- Encouraging
- Willing to learn from others
- Willing to mentor others
- Aware of own strengths and weaknesses

Te Arawa Icon – Te Ao Kapurangi




Quality 6
Successful Māori students are committed to advancing their own knowledge. They are scholars who know where they want to go and persevere to achieve their goals

Characteristics
An aptitude for things scholarly and a commitment to excellence are evident. A intrinsic desire to learn and an innate curiosity.

Application to school & work

- Can apply themselves
- Driven
- Purposeful
- Aspirational

Te Arawa Icon – Makereti




Quality 1
Successful Māori students have a positive sense of Māori identity

Characteristics
A belief in and knowledge of one's self; strength of character, strength of personality; a strong will; boldness and a tendency to take risks

Application to school & work

- Resilient to negative stereotypes
- Positive self-concept
- Some knowledge of language and protocols to successfully contribute/participate in Māori contexts
- Connection to land and place (genealogy)

Te Arawa Icon - Tamatekapua




Quality 4
Successful Māori students are curious and innovative

Characteristics
An enquiring mind which probes, draws conclusions and makes associations; an exploratory orientation that is exploited in social and academic activities.

Application to school & work

- Courageous
- Competitive
- Curious
- Creative

Te Arawa Icon – Ihenga




Quality 7
Successful Māori students possess humility

Characteristics
A quality which is often a cultural point of difference because it is about service to others, generosity of spirit and putting others before the self.

Application to school & work

- Puts others before self
- Accept criticism
- Work in service to others
- Team player

Te Arawa Icon – Dr Hiko Hohepa




Quality 2
Successful Māori students are diligent and have an internal locus of control

Characteristics
Patience, commitment and a sacrifice of time and effort; an ability to overcome difficulties; resolute confidence often balanced with a quiet, unruffled calm.

Application to school & work

- Disciplined
- Self-motivated
- Attentive
- Focused

Te Arawa Icon – Frederick Bennett




Quality 5
Successful Māori students look after their wellbeing

Characteristics
Attention to physical, spiritual and mental health needs that are needed to flourish at school, affirming the inexplicable link between wellness and learning.

Application to school & work

- Healthy
- Fit
- Resourceful
- Balanced

Te Arawa Icon – Nanny Bubbles Mihinui




Quality 8
Successful Māori students understand core Māori values

Characteristics
An ability to model the most meaningful qualities in Māori culture, portrayed by way of aroha (love), manaaki (care) and wairua (spirituality).

Application to school & work

- Manaakitanga – ability to care and be hospitable to others
- Kotahitanga – ability to commit to a kaupapa/vision
- Wairuatanga – moral compass and sense of social justice

Te Arawa Icon – Wihapi Winata




In what ways do families, teachers and the wider Te Arawa community foster conditions that enable giftedness to manifest?

The Mana Model

Mana Tangata: A diverse knowledge base

- The skills, knowledge and confidence to navigate success in two (or more) worlds

Mana Tū: The psycho-social skills to reconcile difference and complexity

- Efficacy, motivation, courage, humility, tenacity and mindset

Mana Motuhake: A sense of embedded achievement and self-concept

- A positive Māori identity and a sense of embedded achievement

Mana Ūkaipō: A sense of belonging and relationship to place

- Belonging and connection to place.

Mana Whānau: A sense of connectedness to others and collective agency

- A belief that they occupy a central position of importance in their whānau



Webber & Macfarlane, 2018

Recommendations for Māori students

- Hold fast to your deeply held cultural values and moral standards.
- Embrace additional opportunities to enhance your cultural competence.
- Maintain a balance in terms of your wellbeing – especially your tinana and hinengaro – find time to nourish both.
- Value your teachers and friends within the context of the school community because they are valuable sources of knowledge and support in times of struggle.
- Value your whānau because they are you, and you are they.
- Seek out and maintain relationships with positive role models that you aspire to be like.
- Mahia te mahi! Drive your own learning – ask questions, do the hard work required, and celebrate all successes (large and small).
- Be humble – seek out and acknowledge the support, assistance and expertise of others and receive correction, compliments and feedback gracefully.



Pukaki

Recommendations for Policy-Makers

- Draw on iwi and local educational expertise.
- Make links to iwi-specific education strategies.
- Find out about iwi aspirations regarding education.
- Personalise and/or contextualise large Māori education projects to better suit local area needs.
- Provide seminars and workshops on Māori and tribal education priorities.
- Familiarise administrators with local tikanga and kawa.
- Adopt a Treaty approach of shared responsibility for educational advancement.
- Institutionalise a clearly marked path to student success.

Recommendations for Teachers and Schools

- Value Māori students' cultural distinctiveness and support them to develop a degree of academic and cultural self-confidence and self-belief.
- Articulate hapū and iwi features in teaching and learning.
- Actively support Māori students toward a state of cultural enlightenment and encourage them to embrace opportunities to engage within the wider community.
- Premise your instruction on evidence-based and culturally-responsive practices.
- Build upon students' cultural and experiential strengths to help them acquire new skills and knowledge.
- Utilise iwi role models of success, living or dead, to promote aspiration, cultural pride and achievement.
- Visionary school leaders should promote and model the right balance between whakahīnī (pride) and māhaki (humility) in their interactions with students, whānau, staff and wider community members.
- Ensure academic programmes have meaningful links to local people, their iwi history and their reo.



Tarakaiahī



Te Ao Kapurangi

Recommendations for Whānau

- Ensure that your home environment is positive, safe, caring and nurturing. Students who are products of such environments are more content, emotionally secure and resilient.
- Nurture your child's sense of Māori identity – give them a sense of belonging and connectedness to their reo, marae, hapū and iwi.
- Be tamariki-centric – place your child at the centre of your whānau. Make their success and wellbeing the most important thing in your household.
- Be present and active in the school context – this signals to your child that you value education (and *their* education in particular).
- Make your home a place of learning – establish routines and rituals that prioritise education.
- Encourage dialogue, open communication and good listening in your home.
- Ensure that your children are exposed to positive role models – children emulate the behaviours and characteristics of 'significant others'.
- Model coping skills – talk to your children about how to be resilient in the face of adversity.

Recommendations for Iwi

- Continue to be involved with local schools.
- Provide visionary and proactive leadership – 'reach in' to schools; don't wait for schools to 'reach out'.
- Provide stewardship to whānau, encouraging them to be tamariki-centric.
- Within reason, provide and promote marae-based reo and tikanga wānanga. Such offerings provide whānau with opportunities to become more culturally competent and connected.
- Where possible, support the organisation and provision of local cultural events (e.g., Te Matatini and Te wiki o te reo Māori) – and ensure they are connected and relevant to the local context.
- Interact with local educational policy-makers, academics, teachers and interested whānau in your forward-planning.
- Provide places and spaces for voices to be heard, particularly wahine and rangatahi.
- Provide support for the educationally vulnerable, because they too have talents and gifts to offer.

*Tribal response to the
findings of Ka Awatea...
a Teacher PLD programme*



A professional development
initiative for schools and families,
that is underpinned by Te Arawa
identity, language and culture.

Te Rangihakahaka “aspiring to lofty heights”



Te Rangihakahaka PLD Programme

Wānanga 1 (noho)

Theme: Te Tuakiri o Ngāti Whakaue- Ngāti Whakaue Identity
Significant places: Ohinemutu, Ngongotaha, Muruika, Mokoia

Wānanga 2 (noho)

Theme: Pukeroa Oruawhata- Establishment of Rotorua
township,
Fenton Agreement
Significant places: Pukeroa, Kuiarau, Street names, Government
Gardens

Wānanga 3 (haerenga)

Theme: Mai i Waimihia ki Waingaehe- Navigating the Ngāti
Whakaue boundary
Significant places: Te Puia, Tihiōtonga, Pukehangi, Ngongotaha
Waiteti, Owhata, Ngāpuna

Outcomes



	Te Rangihakahaka School Participation	
	2014	
School	Number of staff	
Cohort 1		
Westbrook Primary	6	
Rotorua Intermediate	4	
Ngongotaha Primary	5	
Rotorua Primary	4	
St Marys	4	
Glenholme Primary	2	
	6	25
Westbrook (whole school)	25	
	50	
2016	2017	
School	Number of staff	School
Westbrook Primary	25	Rotorua Girls High School
Kawaha Point Primary	34	Kaitao Middle School
Otonga Primary	20	Malfroy Primary
Ngongotaha Primary	25	SDA
St Marys	22	
St Michaels	13	
JPC	79	
Glenholme	20	
Kawaha Point Primary	34	
RBHS	70	
	342	
Total number of participants:	595	100

- A school receiving a new Māori name
- A school renaming all of their house groups after the 6 key ancestors of our tribe
- Most of these schools implementing elements of Te Arawa science, history and knowledge into their arts, reading, writing, social studies, science and maths programmes.
- Te Arawa are acknowledged and invited into the schools to either advise or be active participants in aspects of the school



**Tribal response to the findings of
Ka Awatea... a Science-focused
school holiday programme**

MATAKOKIRI

Light up the Sky



A student/parent holiday science programme (*for students aged 7-14 years, families and local teachers*) which involves:

1. Delivery of Science and Technology experiences based on the two bodies of knowledge: Mātauranga Māori and Science including:

- Week-long science programmes during the school holidays for groups of 40 to 45 students and their families.
- Day-long excursions during the school term where Year 9 to 10 youth experience field-based science opportunities.
- Active participation of key stakeholders from the scientific community who contribute to the design and delivery of the programme and excursions.
- Committed support of families and caregivers who participate in the programme and excursions as volunteer helpers.

2. Engagement with teachers of science within local schools to support them to see our children as scientists through:

- Collaboration with schools to deliver a science curriculum that maximises the learning opportunities that align with a placed-based science programme.
- Access to a wide variety of print, digital and personnel resources that support the teaching of science and Mātauranga Māori in classrooms.
- Facilitation of professional learning and development opportunities for teachers of science.
- Matakokiri House of Science kits – boxes of resources focused on particular areas of the science curriculum, contextualised for Rotorua, that are supplied to schools.

3. Provision of a Professional Learning and Development programme of school and marae based programmes designed to increase every teacher's understanding and appreciation of Te Arawa identity, language and culture – through science.



TE TAUMATA O
NGĀTI WHAKAUE IHO AKE

MATAKŌKIRI

11 delivered by 2018

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Ahuwhenua – Land | 7. Whakapapa – Genetics |
| 2. He Awa He Tipua – Fresh Water | 8. Te Ihi Te Wehi Te Wana – Forces |
| 3. Ara Ahi – Geothermal | 9. Hangarau – Technology |
| 4. Pātaka – Food | 10. Te Pūmairangi – Light |
| 5. Matariki – Astronomy | 11. Ki Te Whai Ao Ki Te Ao Mārama –
Combination of 3 previous topics |
| 6. Waitai – The Sea | |

Completed 11 Science focused programmes with 95-100% attendance

A total of 492 learners attended the 11 programmes.

We have reached over 240 Ngāti Whakaue families

We collaborated with over 100 science & technology experts and professional organisations



*Tribal response to the
findings of Ka Awatea...
a tribal school*



Te Rangihakahaka Centre for Science and Technology is Ngāti Whakaue's newest education initiative – a Kura Hourua / Partnership School with a curriculum based on science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics: STEAM

Te Rangihakahaka Centre for Science and Technology



Te Rangihakahaka Centre for Science and Technology provides opportunities for all gifted Te Arawa students to ignite their passion in learning. They deliver a meaningful and relevant curriculum drawn largely from the local context, genealogy and mātauranga Māori.

Te Rangihakahaka promotes the characteristics of high achieving students from the Ka Awatea project:

- Cultural flexibility
- Resilience and leadership
- Core Māori values
- Academic self-efficacy and motivation
- Being goal driven and self-managing
- Humility and a commitment to excellence



Findings: Gifted Indigenous students are more likely to express their giftedness if they...

- Are proudly Indigenous and have cultural and academic efficacy
- Operate from a position of mana by adding dignity to others and providing positive transformation back to communities and people.
- Are passionate, persistent, and aspirational
- Are connected to others in their kinship groups
- Have positive Indigenous role-models in their lives, opportunities, and a sense of embedded achievement
- Have ‘touchstone’ teachers who value/integrate Indigenous knowledge and worldview
- Are humble and demonstrate a service ethic – they seek out and acknowledge the support, assistance and expertise of others and receive correction, compliments and feedback gracefully. They work for the common good.
- Are curious about the opportunities and possibilities of integrating Indigenous knowledge and ways of being with their other academic exceptionalities



Unleashing Indigenous potential

Purpose of gifted education: to help gifted Indigenous students, and their families and communities, understand that their languages, cultures and identities are valuable, and indeed critical, to the manifestation of their gifted selves

Power of gifted education: to rethink, rephrase and localise our definitions, identification procedures, processes and programmes to better match the aspirations of gifted Indigenous students and the communities they come from

Promise of gifted education: to create conditions that unleash Indigenous potential and ultimately serve all gifted students