



WorldGifted

Newsletter of The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

www.world-gifted.org

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WCGTC Headquarters Update



Currently, our world is facing a global pandemic that is changing the way that we approach our daily life. We can no longer meet with our students in a face-to-face environment, yet we understand the importance of continuing to develop the gifts and talents of students around the world. I am so encouraged by educators I see adjusting to do just that.

There are many great resources available to help gifted students during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have created a section on the forum on our website for sharing resources, questions, and ideas related to serving students. Members may login with their WCGTC website credentials at world-gifted.org/community. As we recognize the importance of sharing information, now perhaps more than ever, we will give access to the COVID-19 discussion topic to nonmembers who email (headquarters@world-gifted.org) requesting access.

While we understand the academic needs of these students, it is important to continue thinking about the social and emotional needs of students as well. Educators and parents need to be aware of these needs and how to cater to them. I am grateful to Denise Fleith, Past President of the WCGTC, for creating a video discussing this important topic. Maureen Neihart has also recently created a video for us. Please see these videos and other resources on our YouTube channel at world-gifted.org/youtube.

While COVID-19 has changed the way life looks, we continue to progress as an organization and as a community. The Teacher Education Standards Position Paper Committee recently met via Zoom. The Committee is in the initial stages of collecting data for a first draft. The Chair of the committee, Norma Hafenstein, has shared a report on the work of the committee in this issue. As we look toward the future, we certainly hope our world will move to a more normal state soon. We continue working with the Hamdan Foundation to plan for the 24th World Conference. A huge thank you should also go out to the editors, reviewers, and authors who have worked to publish articles in our journal, *Gifted and Talented International*.

I am very energized by the progress we have made as an organization. I look forward to what we can continue to do together. While we have not reported on the member survey completed earlier this year, please know we have not forgotten about it. We have been and will continue to use it to inform how we move forward as an organization. Expect more information in the coming months.

Thanks for all of your support of the WCGTC. Let us know how we can support you and your work.

Best,

Tyler Clark



FROM THE WCGTC PRESIDENT JULIA LINK ROBERTS

Dear Members of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children,

How special it is to communicate with you as members of the World Council for Gifted and talented Children (WCGTC)!

The mission of the WCGTC is to

“focus world attention on gifted

and talented children and ensure the realization of their valuable potential to the benefit of humankind.”

During these most unusual times, the WCGTC has shared information to help educators, parents, and other members support children and young people with gifts and talents survive and thrive. The WCGTC website and social media have highlighted strategies and recommendations during the COVID-19 world crisis. I hope you have found these materials useful and that you have shared them with others. Denise Fleith and Maureen Neihart have created videos on supporting gifted children and youth during the health crisis. Please note there are new materials that will be posted in future days.

An initiative of the WCGTC is to develop a position paper discussing standards for teachers. It is my hope that having standards will support educators and policy makers as they work to bolster the infrastructure for gifted education in their countries. I extend my thanks to Dr. Norma Hafenstein,

Clinical Professor and Ritchie Endowed Professor at the University of Denver, for chairing the Teacher Education Standards Position Paper Committee. Thank you also to the WCGTC members who applied to serve on this committee!

Ongoing ways that the WCGTC informs the field are the *World Gifted Newsletter* and *Gifted and Talented International*. Please read along with other members and keep up with what is current in gifted education. The special issue of Gifted and Talented International on creativity is available, so enjoy reading those articles on this very important topic. Also, please consider submitting your research through our journal. We welcome your manuscripts.

Please know that the WCGTC welcomes your suggestions. Feel free to let us know your ideas for making the WCGTC relevant in your country.

Sincerely,

President of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children
Mahurin Professor of Gifted Studies
Western Kentucky University

Developing the Future of Giftedness: August 1 – 5, 2021

The 2021 WCGTC World Conference will be held in Al Habtoor City which is located on the newly developed Sheikh Zayed Road Waterfront in the heart of Dubai. Al Habtoor City Hotel Collection includes three world-class hotels with unparalleled amenities. World-famous international designers and architects have worked on the three 5-star hotels which offer more than 1,600 elegant rooms between them, including the Middle East's largest Hilton, Hilton Dubai Al Habtoor City, Habtoor Palace Dubai, LXR Hotels & Resorts, and V Hotel Dubai, Curio Collection by Hilton.

Dubai has a reputation for being a visionary city; a first-mover that shapes its own destiny. The spirit of possible and wise foresight of its leaders have been hallmarks of Dubai's economic progress over the past decades. And what once was a tranquil town has rapidly grown into a premier leisure and business tourism destination, becoming the record-breaking and innovative city it is today - the crossroads of opportunity.

Dubai has emerged as a global hub for financial services, logistics, tourism, hospitality, and trade, and is steadily growing other sectors including healthcare, technology, and clean energy. The city boasts a strong international reputation as a dynamic, stable, and safe destination, offering state-of-the-art facilities, first-class infrastructure, and a range of headline-grabbing attractions and experiences, many unmatched by any other city in the world. As Dubai matures in its role as a global knowledge hub, the city is cementing its position as a world-leading business events destination.

Certainly, Dubai has capitalised on its strategic geographic location as the gateway between the East and West and established itself as a rapidly growing global business hub that is home to more than 50 percent of the Middle East's business events, including many of the world's largest in their sectors.

Learn more at worldgifted2021.com. We look forward to welcoming you to Dubai for the 24th World Conference next year as we discuss Developing the Future of Gifted Education!



In Memory

Dr. Fathi Jarwan 1946-2020

Professor Fathi Jarwan was President of the Arab Council for the Gifted and Talented, an affiliate of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children. Dr. Jarwan earned the PhD in Educational Psychology / Gifted Education at Purdue University in 1992 and a Master's degree of Orientation and Guidance at the University of Jordan in 1986. He was the founding director of the Jubilee School, a boarding school for gifted students in Jordan in 1993. Dr. Jarwan was Professor of Talent and Excellence at Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies, and his scholarly contributions to the Arab world were numerous.

Dr. Franz Mönks 1932-2020

Professor Franz Mönks was an internationally known researcher and advocated for gifted children around the world. Among his many achievements, he had a long history of service to the WCGTC. He served as a Delegate to the WCGTC for many years and as Vice President of the WCGTC from 1989 - 1993. He served as chair of the 9th WCGTC World Conference in The Hague held July 29 - August 2, 1991. He was also a featured speaker at the 2003 World Conference in Adelaide and a keynote speaker at the 2011 World Conference in Prague. He also served as president of the European Council for High Ability for three terms.

Dr. Donald J. Treffinger 1940-2019

Dr. Donald J. Treffinger was an internationally known researcher, writer, teacher, and presenter in the area of creativity and Creative Problem Solving, as well as in the area of gifted and talented education. Dr. Treffinger held the Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Cornell University, and he was a professor at the University of Kansas, Purdue University, and Buffalo State University. Dr. Treffinger was a keynote speaker for the World Council at Warwick, and he gave a joint keynote with Dr. Ken McCluskey at the World Conference in Vancouver. He received the World Council's International Creativity Award in 2005.

I am pleased to advise that our journal, *Gifted and Talented International*, has been assessed by Elsevier's SCOPUS and has been evaluated as appropriate to be included. By joining this abstract and database, we hope to receive more excellent research manuscripts to be published in our journal! Also, we are pleased to advise that *GTI* can now be found in PsychInfo, in addition to many of the other data bases.

We are extremely appreciative of guest editors, Barbara Kerr, University of Kansas, and M. Alexandra Vuyk, Universidad Católica Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, Paraguay, for producing our latest special issue focusing on Creativity in Gifted Education. We are also grateful for the many manuscripts submitted from international researchers for this issue. The included accepted manuscripts from authors from Bahrain, Paraguay, Taiwan, Turkey, and United States.

We would like to recommend to those of you at universities who are not citing research from *GTI* in your research, because you do not have easy access to the *GTI* journal at your university library, that you contact your university librarian and request they specifically place an order for *Gifted and Talented International*. Some universities are accessing the journal as part of bundles of journals from Taylor and Francis, but many universities are not receiving *GTI*. So, if you do not have *GTI* at your university then please investigate to see if your university will organize to receive it.



Learn how to submit a manuscript at:
www.world-gifted.org/gti-submit

I am pleased to say that we will be producing another special issue for *GTI* during 2020. The focus is Research and Practice on Connections Between Talent Development and Big C Creativity or Eminence in Domains. The Editors of this special issue will be Rena F. Subotnik, Paula Olszewski-Kubilius, and Leonie Kronborg.



I would sincerely like to thank our hard-working editing team - Megan Nicpon-Foley, Ann Robinson, Franzis Preckel, Barbara Kerr, Nielsen Pereira, June Maker, and Alex Vuyk for their ongoing voluntary contributions to the development of *Gifted and*

Talented International, in addition to all of the journal article authors and international reviewers. It is due to the many valuable contributions from these researchers in gifted education, creativity, and talent development that our journal has continued to develop.

We would like to encourage those who are conducting research in gifted education or supervising postgraduate students in gifted education, creativity, and talent development from around the globe to consider submitting your research manuscripts to *Gifted and Talented International* for publication. If you haven't read *GTI* online to see the latest research, I recommend you go have a read! <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ugti20/current>

Dr Leonie Kronborg – Editor in Chief, *Gifted and Talented International*

Friends of the WCGTC

We would like to express our gratitude to the following individuals for recently giving to the WCGTC scholarship fund either directly or through purchasing a silver, gold, or platinum membership. These donations make it possible to provide more opportunities to interested individuals around the globe to join us at the World Conferences. For more information about giving to the scholarship fund, visit www.world-gifted.org/give.

🔗 Tyler Clark (United States)

🔗 Pam Clinkenbeard (United States)

🔗 Connie Cude (United States)

🔗 Denise Ford (United States)

🔗 Shelagh Gallagher (United States)

🔗 Minh Kim (Vietnam)

🔗 Barbara Lazarou (United States)

🔗 Ian Macpherson (New Zealand)

🔗 Simona Mitrea (Romania)

🔗 Bruce Riegel (United States)

🔗 Yukiko Sakai (Japan)

WCGTC Teacher Education Standards Position Paper

The WCGTC Teacher Education Standards Position Paper Committee is currently creating a community, most recently a virtual meeting, with member representation from across the globe. Committee members' level of engagement demonstrated commitment to share perspectives and consider direction for the future. The Committee is using WCGTC forums and is working diligently to share content and stories about teachers and gifted education from their regions around the world.

Committee members are sharing data regarding gifted identification, services, teacher education, teacher professional learning, programming, and funding. Examples of questions include:

- Describe how gifted and talented students are being served and supported in schools
- For educators who receive training on gifted education, how and where are they prepared to work with gifted and talented learners
- Describe the evaluation process of services for gifted and talented students.

Next steps include Committee members sharing perspectives regarding hopes and guidance for the field. Then, data collection and compilation will continue through the summer. For up-to-date information, please visit <https://world-gifted.org/publications/teacher-education-position-paper/>

Norma Hafenstein, PhD
Teacher Education Standards Position Paper Committee,
Chair
Daniel L. Ritchie Endowed Chair in Gifted Education
Clinical Professor, Teaching and Learning Sciences
Morgridge College of Education
Denver, CO, USA

WCGTC Teacher Education Position Paper Committee



21
Members



19
Countries

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- ❖ Norma Hafenstein (USA), Chair
- ❖ Rosemary Cathcart (New Zealand)
- ❖ Vivienne DeOkoro (Jamaica)
- ❖ Soha Elzalabany (Egypt)
- ❖ Szilvia Fodor (Hungary)
- ❖ Shelagh Gallagher (USA)
- ❖ Sule Gucyeter (Turkey)
- ❖ Ernst Albert Hany (Germany)
- ❖ Ahmed Hemdan (UAE)
- ❖ Mojca Juriševič (Slovenia)
- ❖ Michael Kainose Mhlolo (South Africa)
- ❖ Federica Mormando (Italy)
- ❖ Srinivasan Muthusamy (India)
- ❖ Connie Phelps (USA)
- ❖ Michelle Ronksley-Pavia (Australia)
- ❖ Bruce M. Shore (Canada)
- ❖ Mantak Yuen (China)
- ❖ Rachel Zorman (Israel)

Executive Committee members Anies al Hroub (Lebanon), Eleonoor van Gerven (The Netherlands), and Margaret Sutherland (Scotland) will also be working with the committee.

Joi Lin and Kayla Steffens, graduate students at University of Denver, will be assisting Norma Haffenstein.

Creating equal opportunities in education by means of academic language. *Lineke van Tricht*

Pupils from a less advantaged background, such as a low socioeconomic status or a native language other than Dutch, do not always fulfil their potential in terms of academic success. The project 'Creating equal opportunities at school: Empowering pupils from less-advantaged backgrounds through teaching academic language,' financed by Erasmus+, contributes to bridging the gap between these pupils' current academic success and their cognitive talent by means of teaching Dutch *academic* language.

Inequality in education is a big problem in every prosperous country. The Netherlands and Belgium even belong to the 10 countries in the world where socioeconomic status has the biggest impact on school success (UNICEF, 2017). Socioeconomic status is the position people have in society. Examples of indicators that are used to measure socioeconomic status for children are: the language spoken at home and the income, professional status and educational level of their parents (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2016). Inequality in opportunities means that background and socioeconomic status, instead of cognitive or academic abilities, determines academic success (Onderwijs in Cijfers, 2018). Language seems to play an important role in this.

It is essential that schools, pupils and parents become aware of this problem. Also, they should know where to find and how to make use of the learning materials that are available to teach pupils 'school language', also called academic language. The project 'Creating equal opportunities at school: Empowering pupils from less-advantaged backgrounds through teaching academic language,' financed by Erasmus+, offers a solution. The purpose of this project is to improve the academic language skills of cognitively talented pupils from less advantaged backgrounds. It aims to increase the chance that these pupils' academic success is in line with their potential because language is no longer a barrier, leading to a growth in their motivation and self-confidence.

Different experts and schools from the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK are working together in this project, benefiting from each other's experience and expertise. A similar project, which served as an example for this current

project, has been carried out in the UK. It was called the REAL-project (<http://www.realproject.org.uk/>), and the results were very positive.

The first step in the Erasmus+ project is to select

cognitively talented pupils from a less-advantaged background through a culture fair test. The 10% to 20% of best scoring pupils per school will start working with the Dutch academic words in September 2019. The project ends in June 2021, after which it will be evaluated.

The selected pupils will use an online programme to help them learn academic Dutch. Teachers and experts have worked

together to compile a list of academic words, based on previously developed lists. The online programme allows pupils to actively study and use the words. The aim is that they will be able to recognize and use academic language in formal school settings as well as in their everyday lives so that a lack of language skills no longer forms a barrier when it comes to academic success.

The project is innovative because this is a target group which is underrepresented in many Gifted-and-Talented programmes. The way pupils are selected and the development of an academic word list in Dutch is also new. From a broad perspective, the end goal should be that the influence of socioeconomic status on talent development, school results and school success will diminish. This fundamental change could ultimately lead to a more diverse and equal society.

UNICEF Office of Research (2017). Building the future: Children and the sustainable development goals in rich countries. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/RC14_eng.pdf

Inspectie van het Onderwijs (2016). De staat van het onderwijs [Onderwijsverslag 2014/2015]. <https://www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/documenten/publicaties/2016/04/13/staat-van-het-onderwijs-2014-2015>

Onderwijs in Cijfers (2018). Eindexamens voortgezet onderwijs 2016/2017. <https://www.onderwijsincijfers.nl/kengetallen/vo/leerlingen-vo/prestaties-eindexamens>



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



ALGERIA



Gifted and talented education in Algeria is concentrated on two levels: the official level represented in the educational institutions of the state, and the civil society level represented in the associations for the gifted and talented. The role of official institutions is limited to the care of talented students, while gifted students are ignored. An example of an institution for talented students in Algeria is the Al-Kubba High School of Excellence in Mathematics. In this school, the only criterion for identifying talented and gifted students is academic achievement. The Algerian Association for the Gifted and Talented: The first scientific association for the gifted and talented was established in 2013. In 2015, there was an expansion of the association from regional to national level, and strategy for the national Association was proposed for the years between 2016 and 2020. Since the establishment of the Algerian Association, training programs have been held on the identification of gifted; these programs have helped researchers carry out scientific studies on identifying gifted and talented students in order to discourage using academic achievement as the single criterion for identification.

In 2014, the Psychological-Education-Giftedness and Creativity Laboratory (SPED) was established at the University Blida 2. In 2014 and 2017, two international congresses were organized to coordinate between the Algerian Association and SPED. The congresses focused on the themes Towards a National Strategy for the Care of Gifted in Algeria and The International Conference of Training in the Field of Giftedness and Creativity.

In 2017, several training workshops were conducted in coordination between the Algerian Association and SPED and the International Association for Talent Development (IATD) in Malaysia. The workshops include the following areas: global systems for detecting gifted students; Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales, fifth edition; Ravens Progressive Matrices; global programs for developing creative thinking skills; psychological and social problems among the gifted and their orientation programs; and quality standards within institutions and centers for the care of the gifted and talented.

Recently, attention to research has increased. In 2019, a scale of the cognitive and emotional characteristics of gifted was completed by Nadjet Abdellah at University of Blida2. In June 2019, Nadjet completed a PhD thesis, entitled "The relationship of emotional and cognitive characteristics to academic achievement for students at the supplementary stage." Also, in the past year, two research projects registered at SPED were completed. The projects were "Emotional characteristics and their relationship to academic achievement and motivation among gifted students in supplementary schools" and "Nervous fatigue among talented students in Algerian high schools." Additionally, several Algerian researchers and participants presented papers at the conference of the Tunisian Association for the Gifted and at the World Conference of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC).

The Algerian Association for the Gifted and Talented has also been advocating for the gifted by preparing a guide for the association, conducting radio and television interviews, and using the written press. Moreover, talented students in Canstantine, Tiaret, and Biskra have been honored. Finally, in December 2019, Pofessor Naima Benyakoub presented a lecture entitled "The Path of Caring for the Gifted and Talented in Algeria" at the second Arab Women Innovators Forum in Egypt.

Submitted by Naima Benyakoub (psy.univb2dz@gmail.com)

AUSTRALIA



During 2018-2019 there have been several initiatives and education reviews throughout Australia that have resulted in increased public awareness of giftedness while highlighting the lack of a comprehensive national plan for the gifted.

State and territory education ministers have recently agreed on a revised national declaration on education goals for young Australians (2019). These goals are

- (1) The Australian education system will promote excellence and equity
- (2) All young Australians will become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners, and active and informed members of the community.

The *Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools*, published in 2018, recommended a focus on growth for all students, a phrase which assumes but does not explicitly mention gifted students. The lack of growth for

Australia report continued on next page

Australia report continued

our most academically able students is apparent in the recent release of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 results, which were not good news for Australian education. The percentage of Australian students in the top achieving bands has continued to decline, prompting a call from the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) to prioritise resources and call for the incorporation of mandatory pre-service instruction in gifted education. The impact on high-ability learners from how schools and school systems are implementing the curriculum and assessment continuum of the Australia Curriculum is yet to be known.

The national Senior Secondary Pathways Review is currently underway. The AAEGT submission centred on ensuring that appropriate educational options remain open and accessible for all gifted students regardless of equity and/or equality concerns.

As our international community would be aware, Australia has suffered greatly through the recent summer season with extensive bushfires. The AAEGT provided support information to parents and teachers of gifted children who have experienced the trauma, hardship, and displacement of natural disasters and organised a Week of Action, enabling a platform of response for the national community. We thank our international colleagues for the support we have received.

Around the country:

The Tasmanian Association for the Gifted (TAG) conducted a conference in September 2019 with Professor Don Ambrose as keynote speaker and was delighted to receive good media coverage about issues relating to gifted students in the lead-up to the conference. The TAG committee, elected at the September annual general meeting, is headed by new president Dr Amanda J Harper and has set its goals for the coming year. Priorities include education for professionals and parents; support, mentoring, and activities for gifted students; and engaging in and supporting Gifted Awareness Week.

In South Australia, the Department for Education's (2019) *Curriculum, Pedagogy, Assessment, and Reporting Policy* specifically addresses the special needs of gifted students. A mandated policy is a strong support for gifted education within government schools. The Catholic education sector is building provisions for gifted students, and the Independent schools sector has just completed a three-year project designing programs to improve outcomes for gifted students. Flinders University offers gifted education at the postgraduate level and is active in the provision of professional learning for teachers, in partnership with schools and sectors within the state.

The Northern Territory Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (NTAEGT) committee has continued working hard to provide activities including support of the popular Mathematics Camp, and the regional final of First Lego League, which was won by a team entered under the auspices of NTAEGT! Advocacy support included Northern Territory's biannual Festival of Teaching, and the association was able to field an inter-state expert to run a series of gifted education sessions for Territory teachers – a big thank you to Professor Peter Merrotsy. Last July we were lucky enough to send a committee member to the WCGTC Biannual conference in Nashville.

Gifted NSW (formally GFSG Inc.) celebrated the release of the new NSW *Department of Education Gifted and High Potential Policy* and package. Two-and-a-half years in the making, the policy is informed by the Revisiting Gifted Education literature review and supported by a professional development program. Gifted NSW continues to work in collaboration on the package and the recently reviewed Access to Selective Schooling, along with several cross-sectoral initiatives in addition to advocacy and engagement activities. Online support expansion and regional tours are the key focus of the association going into 2020.

The Queensland Association for Gifted and Talented Children (QAGTC) State Conference 2020 was held March 20-21, 2020. The theme this year, *Challenging Australia - Creating Vibrant Futures for Gifted Children*, featured Dr John Munro and Li Cunxin - author, speaker, and artistic director of the Queensland Ballet. More broadly, Queensland continues to focus on systemic approaches that prioritise a shared understanding of inclusive practices, highlighting individualised and personalised learning.

Two associations, the Victorian Association for Gifted and Talented Children and the Association for Gifted and Talented Victoria, continue to support, advocate, and provide professional learning for both parents and teachers in Victoria. The New Victorian Government Student Excellence Program will provide \$60.2 million to support government schools in providing a great learning environment for high-ability students through structured learning extension programs for high-ability students, upskilling classroom teachers to better support their high-ability students, and more resources for government schools to build their programs for high-ability students. Together, these three strategies will lift the learning, engagement, and well-being of high-ability students and help them thrive now and into the future.

Australia report continued on next page

Australia report continued

The ACT Gifted Families Support Group is glad to have been consulted by the ACT Education Directorate on the drafting of a new policy for gifted and talented students to be launched soon. Many of our members have attended informal social meet-ups to share knowledge, articles, and experiences with each other. The need for improved teacher training in gifted education will be one of our focuses in 2020.

In Western Australia, Gifted WA continues to provide information and networking opportunities for its members including various events for Gifted Awareness Week Australia, Coffee Catch-Ups for parents, Professor Peter Merrotsy speaking on alternative ways to identify 2e children, and education consultant Kylie Bice speaking about acceleration. We are in the process of raising awareness with state politicians and policy-makers about equitable access to specialist G&T secondary school programs, increased training for pre-service and current teachers, early school entry options, and allowing secondary specialists programs to offer bespoke learning and assessment for identified students.

Gifted Awareness Week (GAW) Australia, an initiative of the AAEGT, was held March 15-21, 2020. The theme was *Wellbeing — A No-Limits Approach*. Further information can be found on the GAW website.

Submitted by Melinda Gindy (president@gfsg.org.au), Lesley Henderson, and Margaret Plunkett

CANADA



Education in Canada is governed at the provincial level of jurisdiction. Each province and territory has a unique system of legislation and policy, although most provinces view the education of gifted students as a category of service provision under special education. Identification and reporting processes to identify gifted students vary across provinces. Services are generally supported through additional funding in some jurisdictions and, in others, through base block funding. Generally, Individual Education Plans are required to be provided for identified students, tailored to each student's learning needs.

Provision of services

In the primary and middle school case, services for gifted students take a wide variety of forms. Occasionally, services are provided through dedicated schools for identified gifted students, sometimes run independently of the public system. In larger districts (20,000 or more K-12 students), one or more public schools may be designated as a gifted school serving students from across the district. The more common configuration is to provide dedicated gifted classes in some schools in the district, either as the student's full-time enrolment, as pull-out/pull-in programs for a term or portion thereof, or as one full or part day each week. Smaller school districts often struggle to provide even these less expansive measures to address their small population of gifted students.

A general transnational movement toward inclusion has established a preference for in-class accommodation by the enrolling teacher, often supported by a resource teacher with some training and/or interest in gifted learners. Much work still needs to be done to make this an effective service model.

Acceleration is more commonly used in secondary schools. A 2013 study reveals some progress with this intervention at all levels, but whole-grade acceleration still remains a relatively rare option in elementary and middle schools. Kanevsky and Adler (2013) wrote:

Explicit support for gifted education and acceleration was strongest in Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, provinces with categorical orientations to exceptional learners. Additional opportunities to advanced learners also existed in these and all jurisdictions because potentially accelerative practices were supported, such as correspondence courses and mentoring. In order to address the needs of students who know more and learn more quickly than their peers, intentional, flexible interpretation, and implementation of permissive policies are becoming increasingly important as jurisdictions' philosophies and documentation in special education become less categorical and more inclusive.

Emerging/Ongoing Issues

Historical underprovision for First Nations (indigenous) learners also includes gifted students in this population who are also much less likely to be identified than non-First Nations gifted students; this problem is receiving increased attention across the nation.

Gifted learners are part of the Special Education array, but teacher pre- and post-certification courses tend strongly to focus on the other areas of special education such as autism, learning disabilities, and mental health/behavioral

Canada report continued on next page

Canada report continued

issues. As a result, new teachers receive very little preparation and develop little understanding of the needs of gifted learners. Therefore, they often fail to recognize gifted students in classrooms. If they do become aware of these learners, their repertoire of responses is very limited in comparison to the strategies for other special needs students.

Increasingly, parents are raising issues of inappropriate responses from schools regarding their gifted children, and their interest in establishing parent advocacy groups is growing. Interest is also growing in advocating for giftedness as an area of increased emphasis in teacher education programs. Additionally, there are signs of growing interest and activity among researchers, teachers, and parents in two areas with respect to gifted learners: social emotional development, and effective responses to support complex twice-exceptional learners.

Submitted by Maureen McDermid (mmcdermid@outlook.com)

Reference

Kanevsky, L. S., & Adler, D. C. (2013). Accelerating gifted students in Canada: Policies and possibilities. *Canadian Journal of Education / Revue Canadienne de l'éducation*, 36(3), 229 – 271.

COLUMBIA

Colegio Nueva Granada (CNG) in Bogotá, Colombia, is in the second year of developing a comprehensive program for gifted and talented students. Approximately 10% of the students from grades 3-10 have been identified and are being offered services ranging from extra-curricular enrichment to elective pullout classrooms. CNG hopes to be the standard-bearer for promoting and educating this population of students who deserve to be challenged beyond the mainstream classroom.

In November, Colegio Nueva Granada hosted the fourth annual regional Learning Center symposium presented by the school's Center for Exceptional Learners. The theme of this year's gathering was Maximizing Student Success, and the keynote speaker was Emily Kircher-Morris, a mental health counselor who specializes in high-ability and twice-exceptional individuals. This year the symposium continued the development of knowledge around supporting students with learning challenges as well as serving the needs of high-ability learners. This three-day event, which took place beginning November 1, included a pre-conference session for new participants followed by a two-day symposium for returning and new participants. CNG hosted more than 40 educators from schools around Colombia as well as from other countries in Central and South America.

Feedback from attendees at the end of the symposium was very positive. Participants found the presentations to be engaging and the topics relevant to their needs in the field of serving gifted students. The deep-dive format and the breakout sessions allowed educators to attend sessions that matched their interests and maximize their time. We are excited by the possibilities for future collaboration.

Submitted by Seth Jaeger (sethjaeger@gmail.com)

CZECH REPUBLIC

There have been many changes in our system of education again. Two institutions governed by the Ministry of Education (MSMT) were reduced and merged into the NPI CR (National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic) in January 2020. More details about this newly created institution will be forthcoming.

Meanwhile, there are several topics which have been frequently discussed. The first is the notion of inclusion, mostly without any mention of gifted children. The second is the teaching of mathematics. Pupils' success rates and interest in mathematics have been decreasing. At the same time, there is a shortage of teachers, especially for mathematics and physics. This situation has not been successfully addressed yet.

Of course, there are a number of public schools that are of high quality despite the current problems. However, the number of applicants for admission to these schools significantly exceeds their capacity. Therefore, many parents who want to provide quality education to their children create private schools. This situation is unfavorable for those gifted children who do not have the opportunity to attend a school capable of working with them.

If the teaching does not match the child's capabilities, his/her mental and physical health are affected, regardless of the child's level of ability — that is, whether gifted, average, or with special needs. It is therefore important that all those who work and raise children are aware that to help children learn effectively, we need to know their needs,

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Czech Republic report continued

their potentials, and the conditions in which they live. It is necessary to think holistically, in context, rather than focusing only on some isolated aspects of who they are.

The Association for Talent and Giftedness (STaN) has provided interesting and useful information from abroad. On October 15, 2019, Trevor Tebbs was our special guest in Prague. His Chandelier Methodology makes it easy to see the child in context and prepare tailor-made help. The meeting, which was attended mainly by psychologists but also by representatives of educational institutions, parents, and students, received a very positive response.

A personal meeting with important foreign experts can bring information directly from the source. It also enables discussion that contributes to an understanding of the topic at hand. It is also an opportunity for those who cannot attend international conferences. Meeting with quality and interesting lecturers also helps to improve the attitude towards gifted people in the host country. Therefore, last year in Prague we organized a conference, Paradigm Shift in Gifted Education. The conference was very successful, and the participants showed interest in its continuation. We also received recognition from the main sponsor of the conference, the RSJ Foundation.

We also hope to plan another STaN conference next year.

Submitted by Eva Vondráková (vondrakova@gmail.com)

DENMARK



As I watched the Nutcracker ballet in the Royal Theatre this past December, I reflected on how much talent Denmark has produced in art, music, the humanities, and science. Looking through my calendar for 2019, I can see how many different Danish projects connected to gifted education I have encountered throughout the year: small research projects, lectures and meetings in schools, interviews with journalists, TV spots, a foreword to a new book, etc. - and my calendar has been just as full with assessments. Although we live in an egalitarian society, there certainly is a great interest among the general public in Denmark in gifted education, due in not a small to the parent association Gifted Children.

In April 2019, we held a conference on giftedness and talent in the Danish School of Education, University of Aarhus. The conference, which presented an accurate assessment of the status of gifted education in Denmark, was documented in a special issue of the Danish journal *Kognition & Pædagogik*. We are planning to have the journal translated into an English version and released at a conference in Helsinki in July 2020.

For the conference in Copenhagen, we invited Linda Silverman to share her opinions on how an egalitarian society still has a need for special education for the gifted. I gave a national report from my clinical point of view and from my position as chair working with families, children, and educational institutions.

The originator of the conference and editor of the special journal, Dr. Poul Nissen, also invited guest writers to the journal from each Nordic country, and we had a description of our Danish research projects.

Just before Christmas, the new Social Democratic government, elected in June 2019, sent a sad message for the gifted and talented in Denmark when it announced that the 65 million Danish Crowns allocated for talent projects and research in Denmark will be taken away from talent funding and instead used to lift the general educational system. Many students, professionals, and parents have expressed concern that gifted students will be lost in an egalitarian political system where we are perceived as all being the same. We will have to think creatively in the future.

On the 30th anniversary of the Children's Convention on the Right of the Child, a Nordic gifted research network was established, not least due to our common cultural and educational background; Poul Nissen and the undersigned will be connected to a project called Water and Energy in Copenhagen. The purpose of the project is to create a scientific interest among young school children (9 – 11 years). We have also been asked to participate in some podcasts about talent and giftedness, primarily targeted at educators and administrators.

We are still finding fertile soil to put seeds in, and we are looking forward to seeing the outcome, but we are still waiting for a big national research project to be launched.

Submitted by Ole Kyed (info@olekyed.dk)

ECUADOR



In Ecuador, it is common in certain circles to talk about giftedness, talents, potential development, high skills, and high capacities (AACC). Many parents are obsessed with the idea that their children are gifted, while others want their children to skip courses. However, it is necessary to generate more knowledge about how these children and adolescents should be educated. There are still many areas of gifted education where we need more research.

In Ecuador there is still debate about educational measures that involve acceleration, what flexibility should be used with the gifted, and what specific programs should be implemented. Identification is also controversial. Sometimes parents look for a diagnosis of giftedness when their children exhibit a behavior that worries them, such as boredom, hyperactivity, or a refusal to attend school, or when they score above 130 on an IQ test. But IQ cannot be the only criterion for establishing giftedness, especially if detection is primarily done at an early age, since environmental enrichment and stimulation are factors that can make a child develop faster than peers and make him or her score higher on a test than those who may be gifted but have not received enrichment and stimulation.

When children are identified as gifted, programs must be provided to help them achieve cognitive development, and these programs must be consistent with the characteristics of gifted students. At the Center for Gifted and Development of the Scientific and Cultural Talent, Instituto Fundación Sueño Mágico, we are interested in educational actions such as acceleration or flexibility that take into account not only gifted students' intellectual levels but also their social and personal development.

Therefore, we are proposing very specific actions to the Ministry of Education of Ecuador: (a) Develop an AACC identification plan; (b) Prepare an AACC intervention plan; (c) Develop a monitoring plan in AACC; and (d) Prepare an evaluation of these three objectives and their impact over a minimum period of five-years to demonstrate any substantive changes. Each of these actions should support good educational practices towards students with high capacities so they can harness and develop their potential.

Submitted by Fanny Alencastro (albanalencastroquito@yahoo.es)

GERMANY



Germany is a federal state, meaning there are 16 different fairly independent school systems. There are similarities between the systems, of course, but there can also be great differences.

There have always been gifted children in Germany, as in every other country, and sometimes rulers saw to it that these children were looked for and systemically trained, to be used for the state. One example is the three Fuerstenschulen (Princes' schools) in Saxony. They were founded by Moritz von Sachsen in the mid-16th century. Teachers and parish priests were asked to report bright boys. The students did not have to pay for their schooling, but they were expected to work for the ruler after leaving school.

All of these institutions were boarding schools for boys. Former monasteries were used that had been abandoned by the church after the Reformation and the end of the 30 years war (1618-1648). Because the schools were in Saxony, after World War II, they were all in the Communist half of Germany.

One of these schools, Schulpforta, has always been a boarding school for the gifted, even through the Nazi and the Communist eras, years with two very different ideologies. One of its pupils was Friedrich Nietzsche (www.landesschule-pforta.de). Another, St. Afra was closed by the Nazis because a majority of the staff and the pupils resisted the regime. It was re-opened as a state boarding school for the gifted in 2001 (www.sankt-afra.de). A third, Grimma, is today an ordinary grammar school. All three of these schools are now open to girls and boys.

For decades, Germany has had a three-tier school system, with grammar schools being at the top. At the 3rd World Conference in Jerusalem in 1979, Harry Passow gave an overview of the situation for the gifted worldwide. For Germany he had one sentence: "Germany has got the grammar schools," a statement that caused snickering among those participants familiar with the German system. At that time, grammar schools were attended mostly by girls and boys from a privileged background, not necessarily by the brightest and most gifted from all walks of life.

For the last 30 years, most of the states have had provisions for gifted children, starting in the early 1980s with special classes at a few grammar schools in Baden-Wuerttemberg. The World Conference in Hamburg in 1985 had an immense influence on gifted education in Germany.

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Germany report continued

About two years ago, all the states and the Federal Ministry for Education joined together to start a project called Leistung macht Schule (LemaS). They are planning to spend 125 million euros over 10 years. In 2019, 22 projects were started, involving 300 schools throughout Germany. In September 2019, there was a conference with 750 teachers taking part; this year the conference will be in Leipzig, and in 2021 it will be in Muenster in connection with the Muensterscher Bildungskongress (Recognizing potential – Developing talent – Creating education sustainably).

Although all the states have rules for acceleration and offer this option, there has been no research concerning this most effective provision for gifted children. When I asked the Federal Ministry about it, they answered that research on acceleration was not necessary because enough was known about it. This belief is definitely wrong, as I know from counselling parents and teachers. Some states have no figures at all on grade skipping, the most common form of acceleration, and have never had them, let alone on any other form of acceleration. There is very little teacher training on it, so few teachers and schools know how to select, prepare, and support children for whom this form of education is the best option. Therefore, it is no surprise that it sometimes goes wrong, leading teachers to assume that “acceleration is no good.”

Submitted by Annette Heinbokel (annette.heinbokel@swbmail.de)

HONG KONG



Recent developments in education for gifted and talented children in Hong Kong cover both school-based programs at tier one and tier two levels and affective education at tier three as well as a master's degree program in gifted education. The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust has funded two large-scale projects since 2016-2017, namely the Jockey Club Giftedness into Flourishing Talents Project (Project GIFT) and the Gifted in Bloom – Harmony in Heart and Mind Program. A new Master of Education program with a specialist strand in gifted education and talent development was launched in 2018.

Project GIFT is in line with the gifted education policy and the three-tier gifted education framework recommended by the Education Bureau of the Government of Hong Kong SAR. The project focus is on school-based gifted education provisions at Level 1 and Level 2, aimed specifically to promote the development of capabilities and talents in every child and to nurture children with giftedness and talents. Project GIFT was launched by the Centre for University & School Partnership and organized by the Chinese University of Hong Kong Program for Gifted and Talented Learners. The project is managed by a cross-institutional consortium with research investigators from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, City University of Hong Kong, and the Education University of Hong Kong, with support from renowned international scholars as honorary advisors.

Project GIFT has reached out to 3,483 educators in both primary and secondary levels, 15,111 primary and secondary school students, and 2,331 parents. The project has had an impact on the Hong Kong community and the field of gifted education through building the capacity of educators to enhance the strengths of all students and, in particular, to identify and nurture students with giftedness and talents. The fundamental principles underpinning the project are to enable students to understand their own interests and strengths, develop their gifts and talents to actualize their potential, and empower parents to understand the characteristics and needs of their gifted children and provide appropriate support. The project also has a focus on developing evidence-based assessment and intervention programs and practices, together with curriculum and learning resources for school-based implementation. Systematic evaluation using objective outcome evaluation, subjective outcome evaluation, and qualitative evaluation methods consistently showed that the Project GIFT components had positive impacts on different stakeholders.

Among the resources, there are online teaching and learning packages, each with a theoretical background, lesson plans, presentation files, worksheets, supplementary learning materials, and students' work. These packages cover Chinese, English, mathematics, general studies, and the sciences. Details are available at: <https://gift.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/resources/learning-and-teaching-resource-package>.

The Jockey Club Gifted in Bloom – Harmony in Heart and Mind Program is scheduled to be operated from 2017-2020 by the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education in collaboration with John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth. The program is a three-year research and evaluation study that aims to establish a comprehensive affective education framework for the long-term development of gifted education in Hong Kong.

The program has three groups of beneficiaries: students, parents, and teachers. Student programs are designed to cater for the affective needs of gifted students in three phases. First, specific programs on intra-personal and inter-

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personal skills in the social-affective domain are implemented for students between the ages of 10 and 14. Second, affective education elements are infused into academic programs provided for students (ages 13-16) at the Academy to build their self-confidence, life values, and good learning habits. Third, advanced learning experiences are offered to gifted students (ages 15-18) with a view to equipping them with skills for long-term personal development. For more information, please visit <https://hkage.org.hk/giftedinbloom/en/index.php>.

For parents, regular workshops, lectures, and sharing groups have been organized to provide platforms for parents to support one another in nurturing their gifted children. For teachers, workshops and lectures have been organized to introduce basic concepts and practices of gifted education. The aim is to enhance the teachers' understanding of the characteristics and affective needs of gifted students and to equip them to provide affective support. Project GIFT and this program collaborated to deliver two parallel professional development programs on nurturing affective development in gifted education on March 8 and 22, 2019. These programs were delivered for 537 teachers from 20 schools.

In 2018, a new Master of Education program was introduced by the University of Hong Kong, with a specialist strand on gifted education and talented development. In 2019, ten students graduated from the MEd program. Teachers and other professionals who are interested in enrolling in either the 12-month full-time or the 24-month part-time program in September 2020 should apply via the online application system. You may read more at: <https://web.edu.hku.hk/programme/med>.

Submitted by Anna N N Hui (annahui@cityu.edu.hk) and Mantak Yuen

ISRAEL



New Academic Year - Update of the Ministry of Education, the Gifted and Outstanding Students Division

The numbers of students in gifted education increased this past year. A total of 17,300 gifted students attended gifted and talented programs, including 58 primary and middle school pull-out enrichment centers and 39 high school special classes. About 13,000 students took part in afternoon enrichment programs, and another 76,000 students identified as talented took part in programs within their schools.

The Division has expanded the implementation of middle and high school programs for gifted and outstanding students and increased cooperation with Israeli universities. These efforts include virtual school for 1,150 students in 14 different courses; master classes in cinema, animation, and theater for 800 students; individual mentoring program for 15 students; a joint venture with the future scientist programs - the Alpha, Idea, and Odyssey programs — for 1,249 students; and a high school academy program for 1,100 students.

Teachers' Professional Development Program. More than 1,500 teachers take part in training programs throughout the country. The program includes pedagogical approaches, emotional and social topics, and more. Also, the Division offers a unique, two-year academic course for intern teachers.

Meeting Gifted Students' Needs in the Regular Classroom. About 20 elementary schools across the country participated in a pilot program aiming to adjust instruction, challenge gifted students in the regular classroom, meet students' social needs, and promote teachers' pedagogical skills.

Musically Gifted Students. About 224 musically gifted students were identified with a new tool developed especially for gifted students in music. Their school curriculum will be adjusted, and they will be entitled to enrichment hours tailored to their unique talents.

Online Parents Assist Center. The Division opened an online help and guidance center for parents.

Launching the Third Cohort of the Idea - A Research Program in the Humanities

The IDEA program is a unique, innovative research program in the fields of the humanities and social sciences for gifted students of high school age. The program has been running under the academic supervision of Tel Aviv University, and now, for the first time, it is also being run by Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The program participants are exposed to the forefront of academic research in these areas. The program meets gifted students' needs by enriching their knowledge in the humanities and social sciences, exposing them to high-level academic research in these areas, and providing them with the skills of independent study and researching at an academic level.

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Students are introduced to academic research principles in the humanistic professions and are provided with access to new areas of knowledge, enabling them to understand the complexity of historical, social, and political processes and of economics. Students also develop reading, writing, and presentation skills. IDEA is a research-based program. The participants are required to write an academic research paper that will enrich the world of humanistic knowledge. The first cohort of students submitted their research papers on diverse subjects such as philosophy, history, political science, literature, gender studies, sociology, and cinema. Some of the research papers won academic awards: The Science Museum's Young Scientists and Developers' third-place award, the Van Leer Institute award for Outstanding Masters in the Humanities, and the Israeli Historical Society award for Outstanding Finals in History. The IDEA Program operates at the Future Scientists Center as a joint venture with the Ministry of Education, the Gifted and Outstanding Students Division.

Launching the Seventh Cohort of the National Mentoring Program

In November 2019, the seventh cohort of the National Mentoring program in Israel launched. The goal of this national mentoring program is to cultivate future leaders in Israel in various talent areas. The program matches 10th- and 11th-grade highly gifted students on an individual basis with top-rated professionals from universities, research institutes, industry, and the arts. Students work for one year with their mentors on a project of mutual interest. The results of a follow-up study of the first six cohorts show that each of the students who completed the program produced high-quality university-level work. Seventy-eight percent of program graduates received significant recognition by the professional community, such as continued work with mentors, presentations in professional conferences, publication of their research in professional journals, or participation in national and international competitions. Some graduates developed software programs to analyze medical data to predict diseases, while others developed patents for practical methods for the interface between people and autonomous cars, and for innovative nano-engines. The Henrietta Szold Institute implements the program in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Gifted and Outstanding Students Division.

Submitted by Naama Benny (benny9@bezeqint.net)

JAMAICA



Nashville Conference Brought Massive Success to our Region

The concept of giftedness is frustratingly slow in entering mainstream education systems in Jamaica and the Caribbean region. The vast majority of our region's gifted children continue to languish in our nations' classrooms with frustrated, undertrained teachers who do not fully understand the phenomenon. The few who are aware continue to confuse giftedness with academic "brightness" backed with high performance on test scores. These conditions are why the WCGTC Nashville World Conference has left such an indelible mark on progress in our region.

Meeting and interacting meaningfully with the rich cadre of researchers, educators, practitioners, psychologists, publishers, Delegates, and WCGTC executive personnel paid huge dividends; the valuable expertise and experiences shared has made a significant contribution, individually and collectively, to my country and region. We returned to Jamaica renewed, encouraged, and empowered with a resilient determination to continue our lonely crusade for the gifted children and youth in our part of the world.

In this report, I acknowledge and underscore how important, meaningful, and effective these biennial World Conferences are in making a difference and in encouraging my colleagues around the world to press on, scaffolded by the international community of gifted experts and supporters and reassured by the shared concerns, vision, and goals of our WCGTC membership and associations worldwide.

Many valuable contacts were made in Nashville: (i) Under our Gift for the Gifted program, our tiny gifted library was mightily enhanced with a priceless donation of a treasury of gifted books and materials from Molly Isaacs-McLoed, president of the publishers Gifted Unlimited. (ii) We received an invitation from the indomitable Dr. Linda Silverman to be a key member of the select collaborative group of international individuals who will develop and build the Child-Centered Collective, a new international movement in psychology and education. (iii) We will collaborate with Australia and New Zealand to produce Gifted Awareness Week 2020 in three countries (Australia, New Zealand, and Jamaica). (iv) We received an invitation from Dr. Heidrun Stoecker of the University of Regensburg, Germany (URG), to participate in and represent its UNESCO Global Talent Mentoring talent development program in the Caribbean. (v) We obtained the Travas-Daneille Distinguished Gifted Student Award, a full academic gifted scholarship for K-12, sponsored by WCGTC member and Vanderbilt University Medical Center

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nurse Danett Guy, who says she is touched by our “obviously massive effort in bringing awareness and working with the gifted children in [our] region of the world.”

We continue to expand and maintain our existing regular and pilot programs to promote and advance the cause of giftedness in Jamaica and this region of the world. These programs include: (i) Deokoro Magnet Schools for the Gifted and Talented elementary and high schools; (ii) the Caribbean Centre for Giftedness and Creativity (CCGC) POPIN Gifted Clubs in schools and PEP-A-STEM resource centres; (iii) the Gifted Education Consultancy for universities, colleges, schools, and teacher-associations (government and private); (iv) psycho-metric and psycho-educational screening and assessment of gifted children; (v) counseling services for parents and teachers of gifted and other exceptional students; and (vi) conference presentations and professional development workshops.

This year the Deokoro Magnet Alumni Scholarship was awarded to a special needs student. The Deokoro Magnet Educational Foundation (DMEF) Advanced Placement Program, in conjunction with the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean, continues to serve young gifted students who qualify for early admission.

Submitted by Vivienne DeOkoro (videokoro@gmail.com)

JORDAN



Jordan participated in the 2019 StarT International Award that is annually organized by LUMA Centre Finland. Two teams from Jordan were ranked in the top ten in Teachers' Best Educational Practices. Two other teams were ranked in the top ten of Internationally Most Distinguished Science, Technology, and Mathematics-related Projects by Children and Youngsters. This year the winners came from Jordan, China, Portugal, and Finland. The grand prize was awarded to the Jordanian students team for their project on a flash flood alert system. The Innovation for Creativity Development Association (ICDA) organized the competition at the Jordanian level as it is the representative of LUMA Centre Finland in the International StarT Project. The Jordanian Level competition is organized annually in collaboration with Ministry of Education and University of Jordan.

ICDA also organized a national scientific camp for gifted students and teachers in collaboration with the German Jordanian University. This annual event, in which successful scientists, engineers, and teachers participate, focuses on STEM approaches. The main speaker and trainer for nanotechnology education was Professor Munir Nayfeh from the University of Illinois in the U.S.A.

In December 2019, ICDA participated in the fourth international STEM conference in China. The chairperson of the association, Surayya Ayyad, presented a keynote at the conference about the ICDA STEM approach and its concept and practices in Jordan. ICDA also presented a workshop about STEM activities by Khaled Shahham.

Submitted by Surayya Ayyad (surayyaayyad@hotmail.com)

LEBANON



The 2019 World Conference in Nashville was a remarkable get-together for all Lebanese educators who are interested in the gifted education field. For the first time in our history, we had more than seven Lebanese participants present at the conference. These participants presented four different studies relating to gifted education and agreed to combine efforts back home. The former Lebanese Delegate Dr. Anies Al-Hroub was elected as a member of the Executive Committee of the WCGTC. A new Delegate was assigned, Dr. Maya Antoun, in addition to the existing Delegate Nidal Jouni.

On October 11, the Department of Education at the University of Balamand organized a symposium entitled Teach with a Twist. The symposium aimed at empowering all students and emphasized the education of gifted children in Lebanese schools. Dr. Maya Antoun organized the symposium. Three members of the WCGTC participated in the symposium, namely Dr. Ketty Sarouphim, Dr. Anies Al-Hroub and Dr. Antoun. More than 200 educators and practitioners attended the symposium.

Another regional event was also planned during October 2019 at the University of Sciences and Arts in Lebanon by Nidal Jouni, with more than 17 speakers from Lebanon and the Arab countries. The conference was postponed due to the revolution that started during the same month. However, the conference will be held as soon as the situation improves.

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Lebanon report continued

Three Lebanese universities are offering new courses at the undergraduate and the graduate levels on gifted education (AUB, LAU, and USAL). There is also an increase in the number of in-service training workshops for school teachers and practitioners.

At the research level, Lebanon has witnessed a growth in the amount of research conducted in the field of giftedness, especially by university graduate students. There has also been an increased interest in developing enrichment activities for gifted students, prompting a few educators to participate at Confratute during the summer, a conference-institute organized by the Renzulli Center at the University of Connecticut. Dr. Anies Al Hroub was also a visiting scholar there last year. Those who attended the conference have promised to offer support and assistance for school teachers to improve their practices and develop new policies that relate to gifted education.

Dr. Randa Yehia has founded a new organization called the Lebanese Organization for Giftedness, Innovation, and Creativity. The organization has been active lately in working with gifted students in a few public schools.

Submitted by Nidal Jouni (nidaljouny@gmail.com) and Maya Antoun

MEXICO



During the second half of 2019, there have been many positive developments in fieldwork for and awareness of giftedness in Mexico. First, several Mexican students and researchers participated in the WCGTC 2019 World Conference last July. Additionally, the first class of gifted children studied at the newly expanded location of the school for talented students in the Mexican capital. Also in 2019, a professor working with gifted students and education, who had recently completed her Master's degree at Harvard University, was recognized with the 2019 Mexico City Youth Award in the category of outstanding academic activities. That achievement attracted media and social recognition because it was one of the few times an academic project by a professional in gifted education received this highly-prized government recognition.

As mentioned above, in August 2019, the first class of 400 gifted students began attending courses at the new premises of the specialized center of the Mexican Alliance for Giftedness, the CEDAT Mexico City. This expansion allowed the center to work with up to three times its class size and admit several waitlisted students who were previously denied access to specialized education due to lack of space. In addition, CEDAT opened new facilities and programs at its location in Ciudad Satelite, a northern countryside region of Mexico City, allowing several students who had previously made long trips to the original headquarters receive their education a location much closer to their homes.

Additionally, nearly 50 students began participating in the first class of the program for gifted named The Professional Workshop. This training-based program seeks to develop real-time skills and practices in fields like medicine, economy, nutrition, administration, and graphic and comic design, among others. Last December, the group of gifted children who worked in graphic design published its first book of short comic stories, entitled *The Seven Horsemen of Procrastination*. We hope that The Professional Workshop will expand and will encourage the development of more initiatives of this kind throughout the country.

During the summer, we attended the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children Conference in Nashville with several students and researchers. Six presentations from students and researchers in Mexico were made on diverse topics like teacher training, arts, and cluster and enrichment.

This year, to increase the impact of science, media, and education, the Fifth International Conference on Giftedness will be held May 30-31 in the Mexican capital. In the past, more than 1,000 people have attended. This time, the conference days will coincide with the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the arrival of full-time programs for gifted in Mexico (May 30, 2010). As the only current annual event in Mexico, this conference has become an opportunity for gifted students to present the results of their cluster enrichment projects in the sciences and their research and to compete in the Gifted Tournament (a public, cognitive competition in scientific knowledge and skills). Some of the confirmed 2020 conference speakers include international researchers in the fields of giftedness, school administration, and education such as Dr. Eduardo Duron, Dr. Edward Dutton, and Dr. David Bach.

Finally, the gifted education community in Mexico officially kicked off its anniversary at a ceremony called "10-Year Celebration of Excellence." As the first decade of work in gifted education is concluding, this period will consist of a series of events and celebrations that will culminate in the aforementioned international conference on

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May 30, 2020, allowing many children and adults to remember the positive social changes that have occurred around the country.

In conclusion, 2019 ended the first stage of professional attention to gifted programs in Mexico. Our work expanded the development of scientific events and increased the number of success stories of talented students while also setting the stage in Mexico for the arrival of a new generation of gifted students in the next decade.

Submitted by Andrew Almazán Anaya (almazananaya@cedat.com.mx), Javier Esquivel, Araceli Robles, and Zayda Acevo Zepeda

NEW ZEALAND



In Aotearoa New Zealand, 2020 sees continued support for gifted education within the Ministry of Education priorities. This year introduces the first of 600 new Learning Support Coordinator roles <https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/learning-support-action-plan/learning-support-coordinators/> which are part of the Learning Support Action Plan that will run from 2019-2025. Priority 5 of this plan (p. 35-36) is “Meeting the needs of gifted children and young people” (<https://conversation.education.govt.nz/assets/DLSAP/Learning-Support-Action-Plan-2019-to-2025-English-V2.pdf>).

Priority 5 states that we will:

Increase access to supports for gifted children and young people

Implement an initial package of support for gifted children and young people:

- expand online learning modules (Completed January 2019)
- partially fund access to One Day Schools (Completed January 2019)
- provide and promote out of school experiences and extension events for children and young people who are gifted (Underway since May 2019)
- establish awards for gifted children and young people (First two rounds completed April and October 2019)
- continue to work with the gifted education expert group to monitor and evaluate the gifted learner package of supports (November to December 2019)

Increase access to supports for gifted children and young people

Implement an extended package of support for gifted children and young people:

- establish study awards to allow gifted learners to undertake extension study and projects (November 2019 to December 2020)
- establish study awards to build teacher capability in gifted education (from July 2019)
- extend current supports to early childhood education services (including the transition into primary school) (from January 2020)
- increase access to One Day Schools or similar and mentored online learning opportunities where One Day Schools cannot be accessed (from January 2020)
- continue to work with the gifted education expert group to monitor and evaluate the gifted learner package of supports (ongoing)

Gifted Aotearoa, our Network of Expertise, has launched Waka Hourua — Raising New Leaders. Waka Hourua were waka used for travelling long distances. The intent of this Waka is to journey over time with local emerging leaders in gifted education, to develop their abilities to lead gifted education initiatives in their community, and to support other educators. In 2020, the Waka is providing reduced fees for courses, conference attendance, and personal development opportunities.

Katja Eager has been honoured on TVNZ's *Good Sorts Programme* (<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/good-sorts-mum-founds-home-new-plymouths-gifted-children>) for her work setting up the Gifted Taranaki Trust, which runs the NZCGE Mindplus Programme and is a member of NZAGC and giftedNz.

A two-part series called *Brainboxes* was also aired on TVNZ: looking at the sheer determination and inner drive of a concert pianist, a pilot and a young mathematician graduating university before his peers even finish high school, *Brainboxes* examines the burden of being gifted in New Zealand. Made with the support of NZ On Air (<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/shows/brain-boxes>). Tristan Pang, who appeared on the show, has also set up Gifted Learners Give Back (<https://giftedgivingback.wordpress.com/>) to enable young gifted adults to directly support the next generation of gifted learners. The New Zealand media reviewed the show at <https://www.stuff.co.nz/>

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entertainment/tv-radio/114479812/tv-review-beautiful-minds-on-display-in-brainboxes-and-matilda-and-me, <https://www.pressreader.com/new-zealand/the-tv-guide/20190411/281513637533071> and https://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=12251031.

NZAGC has launched a new website at <https://www.giftedchildren.org.nz/>, and its National Conference was held in Christchurch on March 21-2 with the theme of Gifted Wellbeing. The Conference also hosted the giftedNz AGM.

Submitted by Brooke Trenwith (brooketrenwith@xtra.co.nz), Deborah Walker, Nadine Bellam

SAUDI ARABIA



The University of Jeddah at the Glance.

The University of Jeddah (UJ) is a Saudi Arabian public university established in 2014 and located in the city of Jeddah (western region, Makkah Province). The primary goals of UJ are to invest in human development and respond to fast-paced changes in higher education, the sciences, the economy, general innovation, the labor market, and talent development. At the end of 2019, Dr Adnan bin Salem Al-Homaidan, the president of the University of Jeddah, announced the beginning of UJ's unprecedented, bold project, "The New Saudi University." The project brings a paradigm shift to higher education, enabling UJ to be a unique model for Saudi universities. This shift increases the university's potential to shape the future and address anticipated changes and developments in society brought about by Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 (<http://vision2030.gov.sa/en>) and its extraordinary, innovative projects such as NEOM (<https://www.neom.com/en-us/>), Qiddiya (<https://qiddiya.com/>) and the Red Sea Development Company (<https://www.theredsea.sa/en>).

Attracting and Nurturing Talents at the University of Jeddah

Policies, research, and pedagogical models in gifted education have mostly focused on serving and nurturing gifted students while they are in grade school. However, less attention has been paid to the persistence and sustainability of gifted education programs in higher education and beyond. The gap between how we nurture giftedness and talents in primary education and how we do so in higher education is becoming a critical issue in the gifted education system around the globe. Two questions frequently posed are, "Do students identified as gifted in schools become extraordinarily accomplished when they are adults in society? Why do we lose many bright, gifted students in adulthood?" In her speech about talent development, Subotnik (2016) found that some students who were identified as gifted in childhood surprisingly did not become creative and productive in adulthood. However, other students who were not identified as gifted in childhood did become creative and productive adults. In light of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, the University of Jeddah introduced a new era of gifted education through its unique program of Attracting and Nurturing Talents. The program was established in 2017 as a result of UJ's policies and strategies for embracing talents, creativity, and innovation. The program's paradigm revolves around three basic principles: human capital, creative productivity, and sustainability.

The prime purpose of this program is to provide an integrated approach throughout the university's education system (e.g., from the admission process to graduation). This strategy will help empower gifted students to pursue their talents and become as adults vital resources for the kingdom's vision, development, and prosperity. The underlying assumption of this program is that gifted education is reinforced by the development of general education foundations and curricula, rather than isolating gifted education in a separate context. At UJ, gifted education provisions emerge from the university's vision, strategy, and pedagogical foundations. In other words, its program of attracting and nurturing talents aims to achieve the vision of UJ to prepare young talents to be producers of knowledge and to have a significant impact on developing their society. Thus, UJ's gifted education program must be understood within the context of what UJ needs from educating gifted students.

Another underlying assumption to the program is that we must take a holistic approach to talent development. The UJ approach moves beyond the narrow perspective of talent development that focuses on the single domain of academic achievement; it uses a broad perspective that generates synchronous developments among different domains. UJ has developed the Holistic Model of Talent Development (HMTD), which creates a new model for designing talent development programs in the Saudi Arabian context. Figure 1 demonstrates the latest version of this model (2020). The HMTD defines talent development as the interactive context among five major dimensions:

Saudi Arabia report continued

(1) Country Development, (2) Society Development, (3) Pedagogy Development, (4) Knowledge Development, and (5) Individual Development.

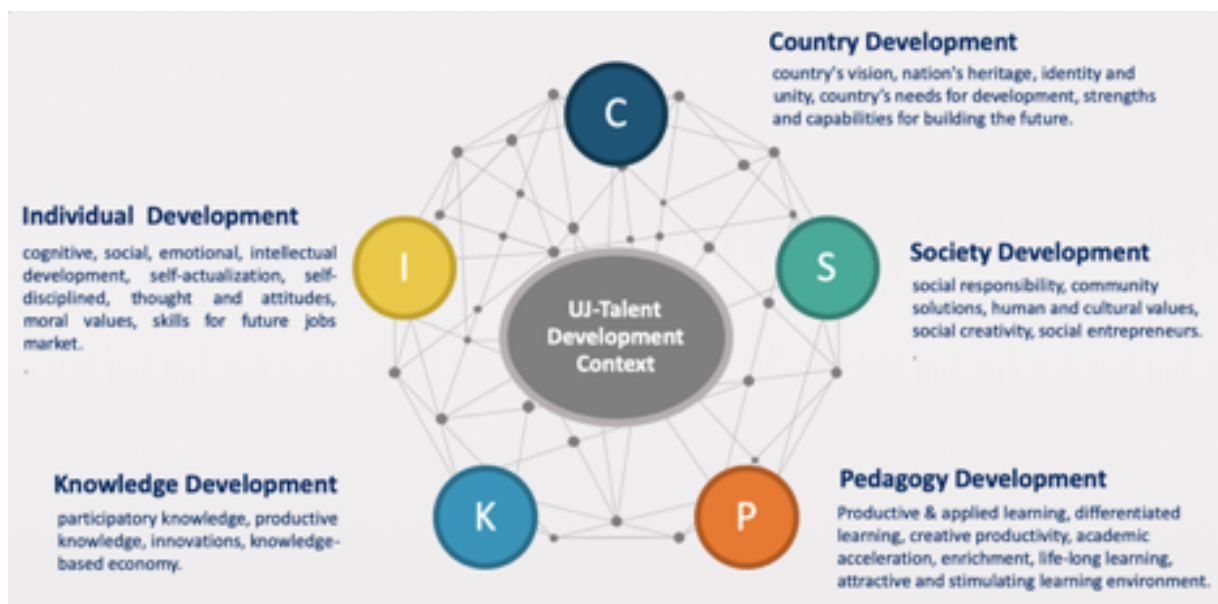


Figure 1: The University of Jeddah Holistic Model of Talent Development

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Subotnik, R. F. (2016). *Seven principles of talent development for effective gifted education*. Paper presented at the 14th Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness, Macau.

Submitted by Faisal Yahya Alamiri (falamiri@uj.edu.sa)

SLOVENIA



There was no meaningful enhancement in 2019 in the domain of gifted education in our country (see the national report from 2018). Therefore, this report will briefly present gifted education in Slovenia and highlight its main elements.

The education system in Slovenia is predominantly public, and gifted education is integrated within it. Educational policy is based on inclusion principles, and beginning in the early preschool years onward, every child has to be stimulated for the cultivation of her or his learning potentials. Provisions might be offered to gifted children during regular classes in elementary (students ages 6-14) and upper secondary school (students ages 15-18) by means of differentiation and personalization. It is assumed that every gifted student is served by her or his individual learning program after being identified. However, teachers of gifted students are generally not very competent because the so-called integrative model of teacher education in the domain of gifted education does not provide teachers enough knowledge and skills for teaching gifted students.

During the academic year, before or after regular classes schools offer many extracurricular activities to all students that are based on students' interests and are not specifically for gifted students. They also offer enrichment activities dedicated specifically to gifted students (e.g., research projects, contests, summer camps, etc.). These activities are not organized exclusively by schools but are conducted in collaboration between schools and different NGOs and/or other educational institutions (e.g., universities or research institutes).

The National Education Institute, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Sports, provides support for schools. The Public Scholarship, Development, Disability, and Maintenance Fund is responsible for scholarships for gifted students at the national level, and Slovenia has a rich history of providing contests for gifted students. For example, the Association for Technical Culture in Slovenia, the Society of Mathematicians, Physicists and Astronomers of Slovenia, and the National Education Institute are the largest organizers of contests in STEM fields, the social sciences, and the humanities, while the Association of Slovene Music Schools organizes music and ballet contests for students. There are also several sports organizations

Slovenia report continued on next page

Slovenia report continued

united under the umbrella of The Olympic Committee of Slovenia – Association for Sports Federations, which is responsible for contests in sports.

The Centre for Research and Promotion of Giftedness at the Faculty of Education University of Ljubljana (CRSN) also contributes professional support for schools in the domain of gifted education along with advocacy, research, and support to academic staff and study programs for prospective teachers. In recent years, CRSN developed its own national network with plenty of educational, research, and cultural institutions nationwide to raise awareness of appropriate talent development and quality assurance in gifted education as well as contributing to the development of the European Talent Support Network (ETSN). In 2019, the Erasmus+ project entitled EGIFT: European Gifted Education Training, in which CRSN collaborated as a partner, was successfully completed (<https://highability.eu/>).

In summary, Slovenia cares for its gifted students, although the provisions offered in 2019 were still not systematically planned, monitored, and evaluated, nor fully supported by relevant legislation. Similarly, due to a lack of national coordination, many meaningful initiatives and activities from the public and private sectors taking place in 2019 were not widely recognized, thus resulting in partial, unclear, and/or individually driven solutions. A national strategy that would conceptualize gifted education in the country clearly was proposed in the past years but is still missing. Moreover, there have been some political decisions made recently which, unfortunately, were not sensitive or favorable to the needs of gifted students. It is expected that with the new version of the White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia, planned for the next couple of years, gifted education will get the opportunity to develop further in accordance with contemporary professional guidelines and empirical findings from recent CRSN research projects.

Submitted by Mojca Jurišević (Mojca.Jurisevic@pef.uni-lj.si)

SPAIN



In Spain, our educational administrations and official colleges must enforce a code of ethics that guarantees the correct use of techniques, instruments, and resources to ensure that all students are educated according to their needs. Therefore, training these organisations is important. Dr. Yolanda Benito and Dr. Juan A. Alonso from the Huerta del Rey Centre conducted one such training. It was hosted by the Department of Education from November 5 - 7, 2019, and discussed intellectual giftedness, high intellectual abilities, twice-exceptionality, evaluation, etc. This training course was the forty-sixth course conducted by Benito and Alonso for the provincial delegations in Spain.

In addition to trainings, Benito and Alonso have provided scientific advice for several Latin American countries, including the Ministry of Education of Uruguay. For example, they assisted Mr. Horacio Paiva and Dr. Oscar Quiñones, under the coordination of the deputy secretary of the ministry of education, Mag. Edith Moraes, with *Study on the Prevalence of Students with High Intellectual Skills and Intellectual Giving: Their Learning Profile and Mental Health*. This study looked at a population of schoolchildren from Montevideo and its metropolitan area.

The Spanish Centre for Development Assistance of the gifted, Huerta del Rey, has been working for three decades for the rights of the child. This research-based work is carried out jointly by various professionals and the civilian society from different countries. Huerta del Rey is part of several working groups inside the Council of Europe, allowing it to provide feedback and share its studies and experience, as well as reflect on the many obstacles that our children are facing, such as family and parental challenges, exclusion by peers, and growing up in a digital world. The latter concern has been addressed in the Action Plan for Youth Participation (2016-2018) and in the new directions taken by the Standing Committee of the Conference of INGOs for 2018-2021. This work integrates the youth approach present in the work of the conference as a whole.

In addition, the Working Group on High Intellectual Abilities (GTAC) of the Official College of Psychology of Catalonia (COPC) has been doing countless informational conferences to different Catalan schools for teachers, administrative staff, and parents, as well as round tables inside the COPC about Creativity and High Intellectual Abilities (AACC), AACC and Clinical Pathologies, Double Exceptionality, etc.

Also, the GTAC has different commissions with different goals:

- The Research Commission: is going to create a resource guide for different communities to use as a reference and to help them put pressure on their institutions. With these resources we are going to propose

Spain report continued on next page

Spain report continued

an identification and intervention for the gifted protocol to present to the Department of Education of the Government of Catalonia.

- The Secondary Commission will meet to share experience and conclusions from the different working seasons at FANJAC (Aid Foundation for Children with AACC). They may already have a conclusion about a possible drop in secondary performance.
- The Expertise Committee is creating a new accreditation process for psychological experts in AACC.
- The Creativity Commission has requested collaboration with several schools, but so far few are participating.
- We are preparing a new Spanish Conference (the sixth!) that will be entitled AACC and Women.
- We are working on a presentation of the Pro-NESE (Specific Educational Support Needs) Platform in which gifted is included, in order to bring together representative professionals from each group (AACC, dyslexia, ADHD, transgender people, etc.) to ensure that viable and practical protocols are designed and implemented for each group.

Submitted by Juan A. Alonso (c_h_rey@cop.es) and Leopold Carreras-Truñó (mentor@cop.cat)

SWEDEN



During the second half of 2019, some important steps have been made in the progress of gifted education in Sweden. In June, the Swedish government gave the Swedish National Agency of Education (SNAE) an assignment to propose how schools can improve the support and stimulation of students of all ages who easily reach the curriculum benchmarks. The purpose is to improve realistic opportunities for enrichment and acceleration for these students, regardless of where they live in the country. In the assignment, the government specifically mentions opportunities to accelerate and to take courses and earn grades at the next level of the education system. For example, a primary school student could take mathematics at the secondary level, an upper secondary school student could take English at the university level, etc.

As a Swedish state agency, SNAE must build its suggestion on research and, in this case, take into account the opinions of students, schools, universities, and organizations for highly able children and youth, as well as from other relevant state agencies. Through this democratic process, SNAE has created a proposal that should be given to the government in the beginning of 2020. We hope this proposal leads to better learning opportunities for Swedish students with high abilities.

Since Sweden is a relatively large country by area, we appreciate that the governmental assignment specifically addresses all students regardless of where they live. For students in the rural parts of Sweden, digital solutions can provide some valuable opportunities, but it is important for them to also meet like-minded peers in person.

The development of gifted education in Sweden has been enhanced through collaboration with our Nordic neighbors. During fall 2019, Professor Valerie Margrain (Karlstad University) initiated the start of a Nordic Network of researchers. Through this initiative, a group of Nordic educational researchers met on several occasions to plan the establishment of a Nordic-wide research collaboration on gifted education, grant seeking, and research. Because we are in the initial stages of establishing the gifted education research network, we have started with a small and manageable group of professors whose role it is to lead research. We have begun with one representative from each Nordic country, plus a chairperson:

- Professor Valerie Margrain (group chairperson, Sweden)
- Professor Poul Nissen (Denmark representative)
- Professor Kirsi Tirri (Finland representative)
- Associate Professor Meyvant Þórólfsson (Iceland representative)
- Professor Ella Cosmovici Idsøe (Norway representative)
- Professor Mara Westling-Allodi (Sweden representative)

The group is also supported by gifted education researchers Dr Elisabet Mellroth (Sweden), doctoral student Caroline Sims (Sweden), and psychologist Ole Kyed (Denmark). It is our intention that as soon as we have the network formally established, we will welcome a range of our colleagues who are engaged in gifted research, including graduate, doctoral, and postdoctoral researchers.

Sweden report continued on next page

Sweden report continued

We all agreed early on that gifted children and students are currently and will continue to be in inclusive rather than specialized settings in any Nordic education context. Therefore, the focus of our research needs to focus on inclusive classrooms, schools, and preschools.

To date we have had three formal meetings: October 28, December 9, and early January. Our initial tasks have been to determine questions that are relevant and needed in Nordic contexts, the focus of our initial research questions, research and network funding opportunities, and our network name. We look forward to sharing more information later in 2020.

Submitted by Elisabet Mellroth (elisabet.mellroth@karlstad.se) and Valerie Margrain

SWITZERLAND



For 15 years, the University for Education and Teacher Training of Northwestern Switzerland has offered certificates, diplomas, and masters-level educational opportunities. The ongoing program guarantees a research- and scientific-based and practical program for the continuous education of teachers to become specialists or experts in gifted education and talent development. The program keeps a close collaboration with the Renzulli Center for Creativity, Gifted Education, and Talent Development of the University of Connecticut, USA. It recommends that every school in Switzerland should have at least one specialist (CAS) in gifted education; every school district/town is expected to employ at least one person with a master's degree (MAS). For more information, see (<http://www.begabungsfoerderung-schweiz.ch/>).

The Swiss Network for Gifted Education (<http://www.begabungsfoerderung.ch/>), in cooperation with the Swiss Foundation for High Ability Children (<https://www.hochbegabt.ch/>), held a conference in November 2019. Topics discussed included the promotion of excellence and high achievement and interdisciplinary perspectives on motivation, identification, and promotion possibilities. The topics were considered from the viewpoints of educational policy, school development and leadership, psychological and pedagogical diagnoses, economic perspectives for the future, and special education.

The schools in Zurich restructured their programs in gifted education. The new model presents an arrangement of ongoing and gapless promotion activities and formats from inclusive gifted education to pull-out-programs within the schools to out-of-school activities, with a research center for high achievers and mentoring programs. For further details of this school development, see <http://www.begabungsfoerderung-schweiz.ch/>.

In addition, a new instrument and procedure for the identification of gifted students has been developed: Dimensions of Personalized Talent Development (DBE). This instrument combines the pedagogical observations of teachers and parents and the self-understanding of students with process diagnostic data on the progress and effects of promotion activities. The tool was originally conceived as an identification instrument; it has been further developed into a tool of ongoing reflection and navigation of personalized talent development processes. Identification of high-end potential is no longer dominated exclusively by IQ but also includes personal traits, co-cognitive and executive competencies, interests, self-concept, mindsets, and environmental influences. For more about the new instrument, contact victor.mueller@fhnw.ch.

The Swiss Teacher Association (LCH: Lehrer/innen Schweiz) presented a position paper to the Swiss Board of Education (Schweizer Erziehungsdirektorenkonferenz). This paper request that the board provide schoolwide and nationwide gifted education programs in Switzerland. The paper is very important because Switzerland, as a federalist nation with 26 different cantons, each with its own school laws and policies, does not have any national policy or regulation in gifted education. The position paper asks for the implementation of talent promotion at every level of education, from toddler to tertiary level); specialized staff, targeted training and further education of teachers; school and teaching development processes for the design, implementation, and evaluation of talent promotion; capturing potential through multi-stage, pedagogical, and goal-oriented procedures; and composing talent promotion from different and individualized opportunities and activities. For more information, see <https://www.lch.ch/dokument/dokument/foerderung-von-begabungspotenzialen-als-grundauftrag-aller-schulstufen>.

A Handbook on Gifted Education in German is in preparation with more than 50 international authors. The book will be edited by Gabriele Weigand and Victor Mueller-Oppliger and published by the Beltz Verlag (Weinheim, Basel) in late 2020. In addition, two new books were published last year by the Swiss Foundation for High Ability Children. The first, *Begabungsförderung Steigt Auf*, focused on schools of secondary level two (grades 7 to 10). The

Switzerland report continued on next page

Switzerland report continued

second, *Mentoring*, shows successful conditions, backgrounds, and opportunities for mentoring and collaboration with out-of-school promotion.

The 3rd (international) Swiss Conference in Gifted Education and Talent Development will be held from September 3 – 5 on the campus of the University for the Science of Education and Teacher Training of Northwestern Switzerland (PH FHNW) in Muttenz (part of the city of Basel). Besides other content such as identification, creativity, school-development, and twice-exceptional students, the conference will have a special focus on “Gifted education means to take responsibility ... for one’s own learning, and acting ... for the community ... for the future of a shared society and global environment.” The call for papers opened in January 2020, and registration opened February 1. International participants and speakers are welcome. For further details, the program, and topics, visit <https://www.BegabungsfoerderungKongress.ch/>.

Submitted by Victor Mueller-Oppliger (victor.mueller@fhnw.ch)

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



Gifted and talented education is relatively new in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The country’s vision calls for a first-rate education. As a result, many organizations have introduced new initiatives to support and reach the country’s vision. For example, the Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation for Distinguished Academic Performance, based in Dubai, has introduced a national plan for gifted and talented education, the first of its kind in UAE. In 2015, in line with the 2015 year of innovation in UAE, the Hamdan Foundation established the “Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Centre for Giftedness and Creativity.”

The Hamdan Giftedness Center caters to gifted students in three main areas: identification, cultivation, and investment of talent. In the identification area, the foundation created a Gifted Identification Kit (GIK) to identify the gifted students in the country in grades 4- 12 and ages 9- 18. The GIK is a series of diagnostic tools for identifying students for gifted programs and for identifying the most appropriate program for each student. In 2018 the total number of identified students was 317. Students who are identified as gifted are served with specialized enrichment programs in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) along with personal and thinking skills during school breaks and weekends. Some examples of the programs are Drawing a Robot, A Trip to Mars with NASA, Drones, Python, and 3D printing. Also, the centre prepares gifted students to compete in national and international competitions in robotics, math, and other areas. The also provides counseling and guidance for gifted students and their parents whenever needed in the areas of academic, professional, psychological, and social counseling. In 2018, the Hamdan Centre joined the ETSN and became qualified as an Associate European Talent Support Centre.

The Hamdan bin Rashid Foundation has created different programs to raise awareness of gifted culture in the country. Such programs include organizing a national and international conference in the field of gifted and talented development. In 2012 the foundation hosted and organized the 12th edition of the Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness and in 2017 the foundation organized the IRATDE (International Research Association for Talent Development and Excellence) conference. In addition, the foundation organizes an annual national summit on gifted and talented development. Furthermore, the foundation sponsored special issues on giftedness in two known journals, SAGE and Cogent Education.

Moreover, the foundation created a special diploma in gifted education for UAE national teachers to better qualify them to work with gifted student in schools. Lately the foundation initiated a promising project, the World Giftedness Centre (WGC). The mission of the WGC is twofold: (a) to compile international research and theories on talent development; and (b) to effect best practices toward excellence of any kind. In 2020 a World Giftedness Center International Conference will be organized and held in Dubai during Expo 2020 to officially launch the WGC and to bring together leading researchers, scholars, educators, and practitioners from around the world to exchange and share their research findings, ongoing research activities, and experiences in gifted and talented education. The WGC conference also aims to foster international cooperation and find diverse partners to establish future cooperation.

Submitted by Mariam Alghawi (malghawi@ha.ae)

UNITED KINGDOM



There is no national framework in place at present to support gifted and talented children in the UK. Countries within the UK as well as individual schools are broadly left to their own strategies, if any, for supporting gifted and talented children. However, organisations across the UK have been determined to keep gifted and talented on the agenda and several of us have been working hard to do this.

The first initiative, which was launched in Birmingham on February 11, 2019, was the Above and Beyond Awards (<https://www.potentialplusuk.org/index.php/above-and-beyond-awards/>). Instead of being critical about what is not happening to support gifted and talented children and young people, the Above and Beyond Awards celebrate parents, teachers, support staff, and other professionals in the UK who go “above and beyond” to help exceptional young people within the UK achieve their high learning potential. They also celebrate the achievements of children and young people in the UK who help in the wider community or are overcoming challenges in order to excel “above and beyond” expectations for their age.

Above and Beyond came out of a consultation with teachers and gifted and talented community groups that was held at St George’s House in Windsor Castle at the end of 2017 (<http://cominofoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Serving-the-learning-needs-of-children-with-high-potential-Consultation-Nov-2017.pdf>). The success of this event has sparked greater partnerships among a wide number of different gifted and talented organizations and a working strategy.

Over the past two years we have been holding regular meetings coordinated by the Potential Trust. From this, we have established a loose federation of organizations under the title Above and Beyond Advocates to work together, share best practice and suggest other people who could be encouraged to work with us on developing a national strategy.

Work is also taking place within schools on DME (Dual and Multiple Exceptionality, which some countries refer to as Twice Exceptionality or 2e), spearheaded by nasen <https://nasen.org.uk/> and Potential Plus UK <https://www.potentialplusuk.org/>. A book about DME, entitled The School Handbook for Dual and Multiple Exceptionality: High Learning Potential with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, has been written as part of an initiative to help teachers understand DME and how to support these children. It is hoped that this work will get DME back onto the school and political agenda.

Other UK-based initiatives on gifted and talented include work to train occupational therapists in how to recognize and support DME children and young people, and policy work on DME with the Westminster government.

On the international scene, we are aware of the UK’s imminent departure from the European Union and the need to retain links with European organizations working in similar fields. In the last three years, the Potential Trust began to host meetings of organizations from different countries. In 2017, it formed the High European Learning Potential (HELP), a loose partnership of these organisations (<https://etsn.eu/help-high-european-learning-potential/>). All organizations in Europe are welcome to join this group and use it as a network to explore best practice, learn from each other, and explore new ideas.

Looking ahead, we are planning to host another Above and Beyond awards ceremony, possibly in 2021. Work will continue on DME and on raising awareness and training occupational therapists. We are also looking at an initiative on alternative forms of education for gifted and talented children, spearheaded by the Nisai Educational Trust which has been established to explore how to support non-traditional education models, including home education. <https://www.nisai.com/the-nisai-offer/nisai-education-trust/>.

All of this work is in addition to the “day job” of each organisation: running activities for children and young people, providing bursaries for low income families so that children can take part in extension activities to inspire them, assessing children and young people and developing individual action plans to support them, training teachers and support staff in schools, teaching children and young people, running weekend programs for families, undertaking policy work and working to change attitudes towards gifted and talented children, research work and the wide variety of other initiatives that are being done by organizations in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and England.

There is not enough space to outline everything that individual organisations are doing, but here are the websites of the main organizations.

United Kingdom report continued on next page

The Brilliant Club	https://thebrilliantclub.org/
British Mensa	https://www.mensa.org.uk/
GIFT	https://www.giftcourses.co.uk/
National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE)	https://www.nace.co.uk/
Nisai Group	https://www.nisai.com/
North West Gifted and Talented (known as NWGT)	https://www.northwestgiftedandtalented.org.uk/
Potential Plus UK (formerly known as NAGC - The National Association for Gifted Children)	https://www.potentialplusuk.org/
(The) Potential Trust	thepotentialtrust@clara.co.uk (website under construction)
Powerwood	https://www.powerwood.org.uk/
SNAP (Scottish Network for Able Pupils)	https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/ablepupils/
Tomorrow's Achievers	https://www.tomorrowsachievers.co.uk
Villiers Park Educational Trust	https://www.villierspark.org.uk/

Finally, one of the issues that those of us involved in this work have been debating for a long time is attitudes towards gifted and talented children. One of the outcomes of the debate is that some of us have started to use the phrase High Learning Potential (HLP), and this wording is increasingly being picked up by parents, schools, and others. Here is a link to a Potential Plus UK website explaining the reasoning behind this shift in terminology to parents and carers - <https://www.potentialplusuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PA101-High-Learning-Potential-170131a.pdf>.

Submitted by Denise Yates (denise.yates2@btinternet.com)

USA



Education Week Survey of Gifted Education

The Editorial Projects in Education (EPE), publisher of the American education newspaper *Education Week*, commissioned a national survey about practices in gifted education with support from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. The survey solicited participation through *Education Week* and received responses from over 1,200 responses from gifted education teachers, program coordinators, school personnel, and others. Questions included in the survey focused primarily on the status of identification and services for gifted students, with an aim to "... gain a better understanding of the extent to which districts are experiencing and addressing issues related to the over or under-representation of specific student groups in gifted education" (p. 4). The results present a snapshot of the patchwork quilt of approaches to gifted education used across the US, with a particular emphasis on issues related to equity. Read more at <https://www.edweek.org/media/2019/11/25/gt%20survey%20report-final%2011.25.19.pdf>

Outward-Facing Advocacy: *Talent Delayed/Talent Denied II*

Few issues in US gifted education are more critical, or more challenging, than the underrepresentation of low-income gifted students and gifted students of color. Across the nation, the education news is full of accounts of calls to dismantle gifted programs because of disparities in identification. Seeking to be seen as a source of the solution instead of a part of the problem, North Carolina Association for Gifted and Talented (NAGT) took the proactive step of holding a day-long invitational conference that invited a new group of potential partners to the table. Led by NAGT president Dibrelle Turret and advocacy chair Dr. Shelagh Gallagher, the driving philosophy of *Talent Delayed/Talent Denied II* was to create a "day of many voices" that welcomed different perspectives on the problem of under-representation in gifted programs. A majority of invitees represented organizations invested in improving education for low-income students or students of color but uninvolved in gifted education, including early childhood educators, afterschool coordinators, school-to-college program directors, leaders in the faith community, education policy specialists, and civil rights advocates. Keynotes from Dr. Joy Lawson Davis and Dr. Del Siegle anchored the conversation; NAGC past-president Dr. Sally Krisel shared insights about efforts underway around the country. For the remainder of the day, a diverse group of local presenters shared insights across the boundary that usually divides those inside and outside gifted education.

USA report continued on next page

USA report continued

The participant response was overwhelmingly positive. Every member of the target “outside advocate” group said they would come to similar events, and 86% indicated an interest in participating on an advisory panel to help guide the next steps by the NCACT Board. NCACT is now better positioned to help lead the way to solutions in concert with parallel efforts by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. This experiment in “outward-facing advocacy” demonstrates that support for gifted may be more robust than detractors claim and that there are many organizations ready to engage in a broader advocacy coalition on behalf of low-income gifted students and gifted students of color.

Jacob K. Javits 2019 Awards are Announced

The U.S. Department of Education funded ten new projects in the latest round of Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Program request for proposals. They are:

- STEM+C2 (Creativity X Computer Science), University of Arkansas at Little Rock
- Project Appalachian Coders, West Virginia University
- ExCEL (Experiences Cultivating Exceptional Learning) – Ignite (E-Ignite) Program. George Mason University, Virginia
- Serving the Underrepresented by Grouping Equitably (SURGE) Program, Milwaukee Board of School Directors, Wisconsin
- Project Building Up Mathematics Proficiency Utilizing Push-in (BUMP UP), University of Connecticut
- Closing Excellence and Opportunity Gaps for Students from Traditionally Underserved Populations in Gifted Education: A Multi-Tier Systems of Support Approach, Purdue University, Indiana
- Project Expanding Equity & Engagement (E3), School Board of Pinellas County, Florida
- Universal Plus: A Two-Step Process for Equitably Identifying Computer Talent, Minnesota Department of Education
- Project Twice Exceptional with Autism Spectrum Disorder (2E-ASD), University of Connecticut
- Project Launch Plus, Duke University, North Carolina

Submitted by Laurie Croft, Shelagh Gallagher (sagallag1@gmail.com), and Ann Robinson



Thank you for supporting the WCGTC!
We can't wait until we can all be together again!





WORLD COUNCIL FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN

World Gifted

World Gifted newsletter is the bulletin of the World Council. It contains the latest news and information concerning the organization, its membership, and the international gifted education community.

We invite all members to contribute and report on anything that would be of interest to other members, such as events and initiatives, news about regional organizations, profiles of individual members, or announcements.

Submissions should include the name of the author, title, and country of residence. Send contributions for consideration to: Tyler Clark, Editor, at headquarters@world-gifted.org. Please give us enough lead time if the submission concerns an upcoming event.

Gifted and Talented International

Gifted and Talented International (GTI) is the official journal of the World Council. *GTI* is refereed by an editorial review board of leading international educators of the gifted. It is published twice a year.

The purpose of the journal is to share current theory, research, and practice in gifted education with its audience of international educators, scholars, researchers, and parents. Articles for the journal are welcome and may be submitted at any time.

Prospective authors are requested to submit inquiries and manuscripts to:
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