



## **Chairperson's Report Annual General Meeting 2019**

Kia ora koutou

I'd like to begin this report by letting you know that, Justine Hughes, our co-Chair, sends her apologies as she is unwell and unfortunately cannot be here today.

It feels somewhat strange to be standing here giving this report as we certainly did not anticipate filling the Chair (or co-Chair) position of giftEDnz! However, as you are aware, Sunny Bush, who was elected as Chair in 2018, stepped down from this position in September 2018 due to family and other personal commitments. As a result, the Board was required to reallocate roles. Justine Hughes and I took up a shared Acting Chair role, and will continue in this role until the Chair position comes up for re-election in 2021. As I was previously the Treasurer of giftEDnz, Tracy Riley stepped into an Acting Treasurer position.

As many of you will know, this year marks giftEDnz's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Today we would like to acknowledge the original Steering Committee and their foresight, innovation and efforts to get this organisation established – Roger Moltzen, Louise Tapper, Deb Walker, Leeana Herewini, Sue Hassall, Ann Easter, Annie Bonifont, and Tracy Riley. We would also like to gratefully acknowledge the Todd Foundation, who provided the initial funding for this committee to establish giftEDnz. As well, we recognise the founding Board of giftEDnz, and acknowledge those members of the inaugural Board who are here today – inaugural Chair Tracy Riley, Ann Easter (who was the inaugural Secretary), and Anne Sturgess – and those who could not be here – Rosemary Cathcart, Louise Tapper, Susan Hassall and co-opted Board members, Sue Breen, Laura Hawksworth, Hinetai Tait, and Leeana Herewini. Thank you for your vision and your hard work – this has laid the foundation for where we are as an organisation today, and this legacy will continue with us into the future.

There are also others in this room who have been on the Board of giftEDnz at various times over the last 10 years: Vanessa White, who really laid the foundation of our online presence, getting the website and social media aspects of the organisation going; Sue Barriball, who did a wonderful job as the giftEDnewz editor for a long time; and Melinda Webber, who took a leadership role with giftEDnz emerging researcher writing retreats and gifted Māori. Represented in this room are several key sponsors and supporters also – Massey, Waikato and Auckland Universities, Manukau institute of Technology, the New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education, and the New Zealand Association for Gifted Children. Two of those supporters, Waikato University and NZCGE (originally Gifted Kids and the George Parkyn Centre), were foundation members of giftEDnz.

The last few months have been exciting times for gifted education in New Zealand as we have seen renewed support from the recently elected government. Early in 2018, giftEDnz had the opportunity to collaborate with three other key gifted education organisations (New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education [NZCGE], New Zealand Association for Gifted Children [NZAGC], and REACH Education Consultancy) on a Ministry-funded project, *Gifted Aotearoa*. After having contributed to the initial stages of this two-year project, giftEDnz withdrew from the collaboration due to limited Board capacity and our need to focus on new initiatives for giftEDnz members. Our withdrawal does not exclude giftEDnz members from being involved in this project, and we encourage you to visit the Gifted Aotearoa website (<https://www.giftedaotearoa.nz/>) for more information about how you can be involved. We wish *Gifted Aotearoa* all the best with this project going forward and remain very much in support.

In the last few months we have also seen the launch of the Ministry of Education's *Draft Disability and Learning Support Action Plan*, which included mention of gifted learners. More recently, the government announced a new \$1.27 million support package for gifted learners, with Minister Tracy Martin stating that restoring support and funding for gifted education is a priority. While this is very positive news, we need to continue to have our voices heard if we want to increase the profile of gifted education and support for gifted young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. As your professional association, we will continue to have a voice, and we encourage you and your respective professional communities to continue to have a voice where possible also.

As a Board we have also introduced some new initiatives over the last few months. You may have noticed our increased social media presence, including more frequent posts on our Facebook page, a series of Blog challenges, and intermittent Twitter chats. The aim of this increased online presence is to create and develop an online community of practice where individuals can learn from

and with each other. Earlier this year we also launched our 'new look' website, which will give us the capacity to be more interactive and much more informative. The website has been designed to create a flow of information between all of our social media platforms so that you are able to stay connected to what is happening in the world of gifted education.

Last year we sent an email to members outlining the range of things our members are involved in that indicate that we are really punching above our weight for such a small country! Did you know...

- giftEDnz member, Melinda Webber, will be a keynote speaker at the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC) conference in Nashville, Tennessee in 2019. giftEDnz is proud to be sponsoring Melinda's keynote and we wish her well with this. REACH Education has also contributed to this sponsorship support. We also have New Zealand representation on the board of WCGTC, with Tracy Riley in the Secretary role and a small number of other New Zealand delegates. giftEDnz has also recently attained affiliation status to the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children.
- We are represented on the editorial boards of two international journals, *Gifted and Talented International* (by Tracy Riley) and *The Australasian Journal for Gifted Education* (by Nadine Ballam, Tracy Riley, Roger Moltzen, Melinda Webber and Janna Wardman). Last year we developed a special NZ edition of the *Australasian Journal for Gifted Education*, and later this year there will be a second NZ edition published. giftEDnz is affiliated with the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT), and this means that our members are entitled to discounted subscriptions to this journal.
- REACH Education Consultancy director and giftEDnz member, Rosemary Cathcart, was invited last year to be the first New Zealand member of the Columbus Group. The REACH Certificate of Effective Practice in Gifted Education was also awarded the National Association for Gifted Children's (NAGC) Professional Development Network Award last year.

We also acknowledge the persistent and often challenging efforts of all of our members who work tirelessly with and for gifted children and young people and their families. This work often goes unseen and yet it makes such a difference in so many lives. One of the key goals of our new Board in this 10th anniversary year is to review our vision for 2019 and beyond, and set goals for moving towards this vision. We want to be an association that genuinely and effectively supports

our members with the work you do, with gifted learners at the heart of our purpose.

Kia kaha – and we look forward to serving you again this year as the giftEDnz Board.

Nadine Ballam and Justine Hughes  
Co-Chairs

9.3.19