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WORLDTALENTWEB NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD GIFTEDNESS CENTER



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WorldTalentWeb Editorial



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Building Teacher Capacity

As we open the 6th edition of the WorldTalentWeb Newsletter the world is facing a pandemic. Whilst this is undoubtedly an unsettling situation to be in, it does provide us with an opportunity for reflection. The Coronavirus has given us pause to stop and think about how as nations of the world we truly are globally connected and that our interactions have far-reaching consequences with ripples felt in both economic and humanitarian spheres.

In the case of the Coronavirus, we are clearly united in our fight against this global challenge, in the case of Greta Thunberg's climate activism we are roused to do more and in the case of the global gifted education community we are inspired by the groundbreaking work occurring to continuously refine and improve our practice. But as we know, this impact can only be felt by our gifted students if educators and system leaders have the capacity to be agents of change. The opportunity to learn from and be inspired by global gifted education experts is something highly valued in the education system that Penina and I work in.

We are fortunate each year to invite an International Academic in Residence to spend a week with our Principals, Gifted Facilitators and System Leaders to share international perspectives, pedagogy and innovation in the field. The 'Academic Expert in Residence' program for schools facilitates the discussion and planning needed for school-wide change aligning with current best practice in the field of Gifted Education. This is an exciting time of growth and renewal that schools look forward to each year. A chance to be challenged and inspired to fight the good fight for the gifted in our care with passion and conviction. You can read more about the Academic in Residence Program in Penina's article, The Value of an Academic-in Residence Program.

In this month's edition of the WorldTalentWeb Newsletter, we encounter passionate and inspirational international authors who satisfy our need for new ideas and perspectives in Gifted Education. Kathleen Stone in her article, A Piece of PISA, examines the use of the OECD's (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) PISA (Programme for International Student Achievement) test and



raises "concern that the international benefits are more related to the global economic landscape, rather than the philosophical purpose of education as nurturing lifelong learners." Kathleen points to specific PISA subgroup data that would be very useful in supporting and advocating for our Top Performing students as an investment in the wealth of educational potential in our countries.

Dr Eleonoor van Gerven from the Netherlands shares the Systemic Intervention Protocol (SIP). Eleonoor is involved in continuous professional development for primary school teachers. She developed the SIP as a response to teachers looking for ways to enhance their work with gifted students, focussing on the optimisation of the match between a student's needs and the provided education.

And finally, Lara Milan discusses the state of Gifted Education in Italy where there is a lack of ministerial planning and specific measures to address the education of gifted students. In reaction to this situation, Lara discusses the essential need to "invest in teacher training in the area of Gifted Education to meet the special educational and emotional needs of students who demonstrate a potential above the norm." Lara shares with us a study on the implementation of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model in Italian schools. Bravo to these champions who advocate for our gifted students through building the capacity of teachers and leaders in the field and sharing their perspectives and ideas on current global developments. We hope you enjoy the April edition of the WorldTalentWeb Newsletter.

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A PIECE OF PISA 2018 PISA SUB-GROUP DATA IN ADVOCACY FOR GIFTED EDUCATION



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Abstract

PISA International Test Scores have become an increasing influence on global education policy in the last two decades. The newest results for PISA 2018 were released in December, 2019. The educational research community has expressed concerns that PISA has negative as well as positive influences on educational policy. Viewpoints are based upon the economic lens of OECD, as opposed to the equity, socio-economic, and high stakes testing perspectives of the comparative education community. Positive evidence to support education policy can best be facilitated through emphasis on the wealth of subgroup data. Economic global publicity competitively uses rank on League Table scores to focus on

a limited number of high scoring countries followed by larger samples of mediocre or low achiever results. This PISA overview emphasizes an awareness of valuable subgroup data that policy makers can use to advocate for "Top Performers," which would relate to Gifted and Talented students. With 79 countries participating in PISA 2018, suggest possible examples sample selection strategies, and high achieving subgroups that can easily be accessed and used in Gifted advocacy by policy makers. Increased PISA achievement by Top Performers can positively contribute to overall mean score improvement and have a positive effect on the country's education.

PISA 2018 (Programme for International Student Achievement) provides evidence to advocate for Gifted Education policy. The (Organization OECD for Economic Co-operation and Development) launched PISA international testing in the year 2000, and has completed 7 test cycles, every three years, in 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2018. Each cycle has added countries to participate, and for the 2018 cycle, 79 countries are divided into 37 OECD members and 42 non-OECD Partner countries. "Over the past two decades, PISA has become the world's premier yardstick for comparing quality, equity and efficiency in learning countries outcomes across and an influential force for education reform." (OECD Vol. I 2019) Approximately 600,000 15-year-olds sat for the 2-hour computer-delivered test. For each country, a two-stage sampling procedure first selected



a representative sample of at least 150 schools, taking into account factors such as location, rural, town or city. In the second stage a limited number of roughly 42 15-year-old students were randomly selected from each school to sit for the assessment. Most countries assessed 4,000 to 8,000 students, with sampling weights to represent the entire PISA-eligible cohort. (OECD, Vol. I, 2019)

The overwhelming wealth of PISA data is most frequently limited to competitive League Table rankings that publicize total mean scores in Reading. Math, and Science. Few communications outline the overall breadth and depth of the online PISA database. There are valuable sub-score tables that analyze "Top Performers" with the highest proficiency levels 5 and 6 in Reading, Math and Science. PISA's sub-group gender differences also support goals to reduce barriers to girls as "Top Performers," especially in STEM. PISA subgroup data can support any number of policy initiatives in education, including Gifted and Talented Education.

Pisa 2018 READING FOCUS

PISA 2018 reports results in Reading, Math, and Science, with the 2018 major focus in Reading. Reading literacy included digital literacy. Trends in reading literacy were also reported over the past two decades. Around 8.7% of students, across OECD countries, were top performers in reading. In 20 education systems, over 10% were top performers. At Proficiency Levels 5 and 6, students are able to comprehend lengthy texts, and deal with concepts that are abstract or counterintuitive. They can establish distinctions between fact and opinion, based on implicit cues pertaining to the content or source of the information. (OECD, 2019)

In addition to Proficiency Levels, PISA also has valuable subgroup data defining Reading curriculum in Content and Cognition: Cognitive process subscales are: Locate information, Understand, and Evaluate and reflect. Text structure subscales are Single and Multiple text. Description of Proficiency Levels in Math and Science, also provide useful standards for advanced curriculum development.

PISA 2018 Overall Rankings Mean Scores in Reading, Maths and Science

Each three year cycle of PISA testing has a specific focus, with 2012 Math, 2015 Science, and 2018 Reading. Each cycle has overall results in each subject, but the specific year in focus has more in-depth sub-group data related to content, concepts and participant questionnaires. When results are shown for each subject, the subject in focus is generally noted first, which, in the case of 2018, is READING, followed by the repeated sequence of MATH and SCIENCE.

PISA TESTING GLOBAL CONCERNS

When PISA rankings are published as League Tables, the publication will generally note



a country's rank in each subject area. For example in PISA 2018, the United States is noted as (1) Reading, Rank 13th, (2) Math, Rank 37th, (3) Science, Rank 18th. This is an example of an internationally high profile country where rankings and scores are indicated as mediocre at best, and not in line with higher U.S. international rankings in other areas like economics or sports. PISA rankings are often a source of great transnational esteem in the context of education, but with 79 countries participating, more of the PISA rankings actually reflect a mediocre or low profile.

Academic literature related to PISA often claims discrepancies and flaws in the testing process, and scores are showcased only in a positive light for the top-scoring countries. Also, at times, results may only describe one rank, which would then be derived by averaging the mean scores from the three subject tests. In looking at the mean score variance for the United States, one can see a weak U.S. average mean across Reading, Math and Science.

philosophical, PISA critics debate the political, economic, and educational barriers that manifest limitations in validity of PISA's league tables in global education research and discourse. Cautionary validity has been increasingly addressed in PISA international bridges research that the fields of comparative and gifted education. A formal concern was directed to the OECD from a large group of academics regarding the detrimental effects of overemphasis on educational

testing (Guardian, 2014). Therefore, use of PISA results requires a balanced viewpoint with diplomacy in design for controls and data. PISA has regularly increased emphasis on issues in equity and socioeconomic factors.

Limitations are recognized in causality related to PISA scores. Reference is made to the 2018 report from the U.S. National of Education, "International Academy Education Assessments Cautions. _ Conundrums, and Common Sense." Valid areas of caution include (1) design, (2) sampling, (3) survey development, (4) computer-based assessment, (5) analyses, (6) reporting, (7) interpretation, (8) policy uses, and (9) limitations. (Singer, 2018)

A few countries in the past PISA cycles have been tested by region, and those analyses provide results that address concerns related to different areas of countries not being properly represented in the total mean achievement or rank of the country. PISA 2015 had regional results for Canada, Spain and 3 States in the U.S.

PISA	2018	regional	results	include:	
(A) Belgium 3		(G) Argentina 4			
(B) Ca	nada 10	(H) Brazil 5			
(C) Colombia 1 (I) Indonesia 2					
(D) Ita	ly 4	(J) Kazakhstan 14			
(E) Spa	E) Spain 19 (K) Russia 2				
(F) United Kingdom 4					

Also, the Chinese sample is listed as China B-S-J-Z, standing for the test sample from



cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang. With Chinascoring high in all subjects, there is continued concern that scores may be inflated due to the larger urban populations in their four city sample.

PISA 2018 - LEAGUE TABLES

Online published PISA results show ranking in League Tables, with Total Mean score for each country in Reading, Math and Science, and grouped into OECD and Partner countries. Some publications may only report data based on ranking "of OECD countries," and by including only OECD countries the rank of most countries is higher. Highest scoring countries are from Asia, with only Japan and Korea as members of OECD. The initial step in reviewing PISA 2018 lists mean scores for each of the countries by subject area, with the results in order of READING, MATHEMATICS, AND SCIENCE.

PISA ANALYSES – SAMPLE SELECTION

In reviewing PISA's complete list of 79 countries, it is an overwhelming task. Results for PISA are divided into quartiles as well as percentiles, and countries in a sample are generally compared to the top ranking countries. In Math and Science, seven of the top ten countries are from East Asia, and five of the top ten countries in Reading are likewise East Asian. If the countries targeted for comparison are from Europe or North America, for example, using the top ten for the sample would be limited to 5 or 7 Asian countries, plus 3 to 5 of the European countries of Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, and Poland, plus Canada. For the purpose of addressing the major European audience of this newsletter, there needs to be selection criteria containing more countries from Europe. Therefore a better sample would include the top quartile of 20 countries.

GEOGRAPHICAL GROUPINGS

Geographical PISA groupings could include:

- Western Europe
- Eastern Europe
- Scandinavia
- Eastern Mediterranean
- Middle East
- North and Latin America
- Oceania,
- Africa
- Asia

Geographical groupings reduce the sample countries to a reasonable number for descriptive and multivariate statistical analyses. Groupings may also compare members of relevant organizations:

- G7
- European Union
- ECHA European Council High Ability
- World Giftedness Centre
- European Talent Network Centers.
- WCGTC World Council for Gifted & Talented Children



ETNS EUROPEAN TALENT SUPPORT NETWORK – SAMPLE SELECTION

For the benefit of the ETNS audience, the following sampling procedure will be demonstrated. (1) A list will be selected that includes the top quartile (top 20) for each of the three tests. (2) From the top quartile list, the countries from Europe will be selected for comparison, thereby defining the comparative sample of "European Countries ranking in PISA top quartile for Reading, Mathematics, or Science."

Subgroup comparisons that would be most meaningful for the members of the World Giftedness Center would include comparisons of the 21 members of the European Talent Support Network and percent of top performers in reading, math, science. By the first half of 2019 the ETSN had 25 centers of which 21 were in European and 4 in non-European countries.

The European centers provide a justifiable sample for further analysis, yet would omit six of the higher ranking European countries that do not have ETSN centers: Estonia, Finland, Poland, United Kingdom, Sweden, and Norway. Also, some of the ETSN countries are not part of the top quartile sample: Austria, Czech Republic, Greece, Lithuania, Hungary, Italy, and Slovakia.

Volume I - What Students Know and Can Do

One of the most valuable sub-group scores related to Gifted and Talented education is the Proficiency Level Scores from PISA.

There are seven Proficiency Levels, with below Level 2 designated as Low Performers, and Levels 5 and 6 designated as Top Performers. The Top Performer results are indicated in percent of total students scoring above Level 5, and this group would correlate well with Gifted. Yet "Gifted" is never used in PISA. The less elitist term used is "Top Performer."

ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Differences between Top Performers and Low Achievers provide important descriptive statistics related to the Achievement Gap.

Volume II - Where All Students Can Succeed

United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4, Agenda 2030, ensures that nations achieve equitable quality education, and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Equity does not mean equal outcomes, but that variations are not related to student background, including socio-economic status, gender or immigrant background. Overall, PISA 2018 results state that "all countries still have some way to go towards reaching the global goal for quality education." (OECD, Vol. II)

SOCIOECONOMIC DISPARITIES

The level of economic development explains 28% variation in learning outcomes. Despite socio-economic disadvantage, some students can attain high levels of academic proficiency. Across OECD countries one in ten disadvantaged students was able to score in





the top quarter of reading performance, indicating "disadvantage is not destiny." Across OECD countries, 40% of teachers in disadvantaged schools have at least a Master's degree, compared with 48% of teachers in advantaged schools. Disadvantaged schools are more likely hindered by a shortage of education staff and limited education resources. (OECD, Vol. II)

GENDER GAPS

READING – In all countries, girls significantly outperformed boys in reading.

MATHEMATICS – Boys outperformed girls in mathematics in all but 12 countries.

SCIENCE – Less Gender Difference

Gender Gap is wider among Top Performers. Girls expressed greater fear of failure, and there is a gender difference in types of STEM career expectations.

IMMIGRANT & NON-IMMIGRANT

Immigrant background across OECD countries has increased from 10% in 2009 to 13% in 2018. In most countries, immigrant students tend to be socio- economically disadvantaged. Around 2 in 10 immigrant students scored in the top quarter in reading. Many immigrant students report a goal-oriented attitude.

Volume III - What School Life Means for Students' Lives

BELIEF IN GROWTH MINDSET

Majority disagreed that intelligence is something you can't change very much.

TEACHER ATTITUDE & PRACTICE

Positive results for teacher stimulation of reading, and greater support from teachers,

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents emphasized school safety, school climate, reputation, academic achievement.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Student sense of belonging: cooperation (62%) was more prevalent than competition (50%). No clear relationship between competitiveness and student performance.

STUDENT WELL-BEING

More than 80% feel happy, cheerful, joyful, and lively. 6% reported always feeling sad. Peers play a pre-eminent role in social lives. Three Main student aspects: (1) way they look, (2) relationships with parents, (3) life at school. Additional subscale data in Volume I include Digital devices at home, Reading Habits, Attitudes Towards Reading, and Time Spent Using the Internet.

SCHOOL MISBEHAVIOUR

23% bullied at least a few times a month.88% agreed wrong to join in bullying. Those not bullied report stronger anti-bullying attitudes. Attendance is a factor.



CONCLUSION

PISA is a complex Large-Scale International Testing program that has been growing in global influence since its first 3 YEAR testing cycle began in 2000. Extensive questionnaire also important data has become an component of PISA. Throughout the results, there are valuable subgroups with data that would especially relate to students who are Gifted and Talented. With the broad global landscape of PISA, no reference is made to the term "Gifted," however, the PISA term of "Top Performer" is regularly woven into the subgroup data, results and conclusions.

There is an attempt in this article to present a broad overview of PISA, to address varied knowledge of the PISA effect on global education. There is also a strong voice in the academic community of education that has continued to express reservations about the validity and subsequent global influence of PISA. With OECD's administration of PISA. there is concern that the international benefits are more related to the global economic landscape, rather than the philosophical purpose of education as nurturing lifelong learners. The competitive League Table results are also translated into critical policy decisions based on global economic drivers. Use of PISA subgroup data provides less emphasis on broad competitive policy, and more focus on the depth of factors related to educational reform. Specific PISA subgroup data may be an evidence-based resource for policy. Advocacy for Top Performing students is an investment in the wealth of educational potential within each country.

PISA ONLINE ACCESS: (Free Download) https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/pisa -2018-results.



OECD COUNTRIES (N = 37)



NON-OECD PARTNERS (N = 42)







PISA 2018 - VOLUME II - WHERE ALL STUDENTS CAN SUCCEED - Sample Data

PISA 2018 - VOLUME III - WHAT SCHOOL LIFE MEANS FOR STUDENTS' LIVES - Sample Data







PISA 2018 - READING, MATH, SCIENCE



PERCENT OF TOP PERFORMERS



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THE SYSTEMIC INTERVENTION PROTOCOL. AN EASY TO USE TOOL TO TUNE TO A STUDENT'S EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.



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As a teacher educator, involved in the continuous professional development for primary school teachers and specialists in gifted education, teachers confront me daily with questions on how to become more successful in gifted education. Based on their questions and their reports of successful strategies in their classroom, I designed the Systemic Intervention Protocol (van Gerven, 2014; van Gerven, 2019). It is an easy to use free and accessible tool we provide for teachers based on a systemic approach. This strategy is not only useful when educating gifted learners, it is also useful for all other cases where teachers experience that an optimisation of the match between a student's needs and the provided education is opportune.

A better match

In the Netherlands, generic assumptions about giftedness underpin education for gifted learners. For example "gifted learners are able to learn with a minimum of instruction": "gifted learners prefer а top-down approach of the curriculum"; or "gifted learners need a curriculum focusing on the development of higher-order thinking skills". Sometimes the assumptions are based on stereotypes such as "gifted learners love mathematics" (van Gerven, 2020). Although for some gifted learners these assumptions might apply, they do not automatically apply for all gifted learners.

The optimum match between gifted learners and education can only be accomplished if we are willing to step away from the idea that all gifted learners have identical traits characteristics. and and identical educational needs. Gifted learners differ as much from each other like every other student in a classroom. During our teacher education courses for specialists in gifted education, our teacher-students report how applied strategies, described as "effective for gifted education", are not successful in their practice. The exploration of how these their teachers design strategies for educating gifted learners clarifies how generalising the characteristics of a gifted learner towards all gifted learners influences the lack of success.

Apparently, there is a gap between theory and practice. In this article, we explore that



gap from a systemic perspective but within the limitations of what a classroom teacher can use as influencing factors. We explore what general classroom teachers can learn from the (f)actors in the student's ecological system at school and how that knowledge enhances their chances to provide a successful curriculum and instructional strategies. The central question in this process is how to create an optimal match between the student's educational needs and the provided interventions in the regular classroom.

Based on the previously mentioned generic assumptions, schools select a special curriculum and interventional strategies for their gifted students (Bakx, de Boer, van den Brand, & Houtert, 2016; Schrover, 2015). They compact the regular curriculum, provide enriched course work and implement this in the classroom schedule (Drent & van Gerven, 2012). Students who match the selection criteria are selected to join the so created programme that is provided by their classroom teacher or that is provided as a pull-out programme (Houkema, Janssen, & Steenbergen-Penterman, 2018). Although these concepts may work in many cases and the assumptions on traits and characteristics of gifted learners may be correct in general, in daily practice it may not always be an effective approach (van Gerven, 2019; van Gerven, 2020). Sometimes set objectives may not be reached, the student may not be as successful as expected, coursework may not be finished and sometimes, the gifted learner may find an escape route not even starting to work on the scheduled

assignments (Heacox & Cash, 2019). In these cases the teacher's good intentions are not effective and teacher and student are heading straight for a disappointing experience.

An example

Kelly is 8 years old and is in fifth grade. Two years earlier, she was identified as a gifted student. Her parents and her teachers have high expectations of what she can achieve. Until the second half of grade four, Kelly met all expectations. She loved going to school; her classmates liked her; she had friends; she clearly enjoyed learning and achieved highly. At the end of grade four, a slight change in her attitude was noticed. However, her parents and her teacher were not able to pinpoint what exactly was going on. She seemed to be not as keen on learning as she was before. Her interest in her enriched course work decreased. She still finished her course work on time, but the results lagged behind the expectations of the teacher and her parents. At home, she stated that everything at school was boring and that she preferred to join her classmates doing their regular tasks. In grade five, her new teacher wanted to make a fresh start. She explored what assignments would be challenging for Kelly. She ensured that she scheduled time for individual instruction on the enriched work. When she did not achieve the success she aimed for, she submitted Kelly for the day-a-week gifted programme in a segregated class. The teacher had the impression that Kelly needed more challenges than she was able to offer under the circumstances in the regular classroom. Kelly's parents were happy with this vigorous approach and were happy that Kelly was submitted and



accepted for the day-a-week programme. They experienced the teacher's actions as proof of their child being "seen" and acknowledged. In the day-a-week class, Kelly proved to be a friendly student, always willing to help her classmates. She was interested in everything on offer. However, it was a pity that her achievements lagged behind the level of the other students. She slowly worked and the "take-back-to your-own-class-projects" were never finished. Kelly's enthusiasm for school decreased per week. On a certain morning when she was to attend the gifted programme, this resulted in a meltdown at home. She did not want to go to school. She sat on the settee, cried, was angry and confused, and was not willing to move at all.

Without knowing anything for sure, one could explain Kelly's behavior by boldly stating that Kelly is extremely perfectionistic, has a fear to fail and difficulties with educational situations where she feels consciously incompetent. In that case, the conclusion could be that Kelly uses the word boring as an emergency escape. It is also possible to think that Kelly, based on her need for social relations with her classmates in the regular prefers to do identical classroom. course work. Another explanation might be that Kelly is not as fast as the other gifted children due to her preference to explore different perspectives before she starts working on her projects. The least friendly explanation is that Kelly is an underachiever who needs to learn that there are criteria for pace and quality that she has to meet. All these swift "diagnoses" of what causes Kelly's behavior could lead to adjustments for the teacher's actions and implementing

different interventions consecutively. By analyzing this vignette, one may conclude that the actors involved have taken this approach already without them being successful. Hence, if this is not a successful approach, how to do this differently?

A systemic approach to education

A systemic approach of education can best be compared with a construction of cogwheels and setting the wheels in motion by turning on one of the wheels. Each cogwheel can be turned separately, but turning the wheel affects the other wheels. In the systemic approach the students are staged at the center of their ecological system (van Meersbergen & Jeninga, 2012). (f)actors Different influence their development: the teacher, the curriculum, the parents, the physical learning environment and peers. In this perspective, students' behaviour is always the result of them functioning with their combination of personal traits and characteristics in multiple contexts and under multiple circumstances (van Meersbergen & de Vries, 2017). To tune the curriculum and instructional strategies to the students needs, it is important that we take distance from general assumptions of what is supposed to be good for all students and find answers to the question what is good for the student involved (Pameijer & Van Beukering, 2007; van Meersbergen & de Vries, 2017)In this case that would be "what is good for Kelly?". In this article, it is not my intention to explain what is good for Kelly as an individual student.



Kelly merely represents all the students teachers have in their classroom and for whom they want to create the best developmental opportunities as possible. Small changes in educational perspectives can make a huge difference.

SIP

The Systemic Intervention Protocol (SIP) is constructed as a matrix. This matrix helps teachers to understand what they could change in instructional strategies or the curriculum for a single student in order to enhance success (van Gerven, 2014; van Gerven, 2019). The matrix helps teachers to explore their educational strategies for single cases. Each column in the matrix focusses on a different (f)actor in the ecological system. That way, teachers explore four (f)actors that they can influence the directly: individual student, the curriculum, the learning environment and the teacher's strategies. For this article I present an abridged matrix. However, this matrix can be easily extended by asking more questions per constructed cell. Protocol users can easily design their own additional guestions. One can easily add a fifth column (parents) or even a sixth column (school as an organisation). Each row in the matrix aims for a different aspect to be explored from that ecological perspective. This exploration can vary from thinking strategies and the use of (or call on) executive skills to the ability for cooperative or collaborative learning.

Using SIP requires that teachers are familiar with the basics before they are able to manipulate the protocol in a way that matches their professional context. Keep in mind that there is a difference between goals of education and goals in education. Goals of education are focused on the development of an attitude for self-regulated learning. Goals in education are curriculum based. Teachers who are using the SIP for the first time, best restrict themselves to focusing on goals in education. That helps to narrow the interventions down, keeping them simple and small. Interventions needed for successful teaching that specific learners follow logically from the use of the matrix. The following instruction can be used to fill in the SIP.



	Student	Assignments & materials	Physical learning environment	Teacher
Objectives (of/in)	What is the next educational objective for this student, and why is this objective relevant for this student?	Which assignments and/or materials are a match with the objective(s) I stipulated?	What is the best learning environment to aim for these objectives?	What do I have to do to match objective, assignment/material and the environment?
Content & student efficacy	What are the student's current knowledge and skills regarding the topic and considering the set objectives?	Which contextual knowledge and skills are required for the selected assignment to be able to work successfully on the task?	Which content-based resources to the develop required knowledge and skills do I have available to support the student to work succesfully on the task?	What do I need to do to support the student's efficacy to learn successfully? What are meaningful responses to match current knowledge and skills, with required knowledge and skills and the available environmental support during the learning process?
Thinking skills	Which thinking skills at the cognitive level of Marzano and Kendal's Taxonomy can be considered as strengths for this student?	What thinking skills are trained by doing this assignment? How does this assignment call on the required thinking skills?	Which 'resources' do we have available to support the student during the learning process?	How do I modify the learning environment in a way that the learning situation becomes suitable for the aimed thinking skills?
Product	What kind of product would be a match with this student's capacities and preferences?	What options are there to swap the product that comes along with my material if the product isn't a match for the student?	Within reason, what products can be made in this learning environment?	What interventions are necessary to match objective, assignment, product and the learning environment? How can I make learning visible and relate learning results to the set objectives?
Regulation skills	To what extent is this student ready for self-regulated learning? What do you know about the student's executive skills?	What is the level of self-regulation that I want the student to express while working on the assignment and how does the assignment call on the student's regulation skills?	How does the learning environment influence the student's use of regulation skills? What is the level of self-regulation skills that are best met in this environment?	How do I have to support my student in this process of self-regulation, considering objective, task requirements and environmental conditions?
Cooperative & collaborative	To what extent is this student able to learn in a situation where cooperation or collaboration is required?	To what extent is cooperative/collaborative learning a condition for successfully working on this assignment?	To what extent is cooperative/collaborative learning possible in the learning environment? What requirements for cooperative and collaborative learning are met in the learning environment?	How do 1 adjust the learning environment in order to be a match for the required level of cooperation/collaboration?
Emotions	How are the student's emotional responses when he is learning? How does the student deal with limited success or even a lack of success?	What are the emotional responses I might expect when the student is working on this assignment?	What resources are available in the environment to enhance the chance of a positive learning experience?	What do I have to do in order to help my student with his emotional responses during this learning process?

The first column focuses on the student in the current situation and is directly related to the educational objectives the teacher has set. Without exception, we always take the question in the first cell of column one as a starting point: "what do I want the student to learn, why is that relevant?" Obviously, that question can be jointly explored by the teacher and the student. However, if teachers are a first time user, it may be best to answer the questions from their perspective. Next step is the question in cell two. Describe in as concrete a way as possible what you already know about the student's knowledge and skills in relation to the set objective. Now go to cell three and describe the student's strength regarding the different level of thinking skills (either based on Bloom or Marzano and Kendall's taxonomy). What type of thinking skills are still difficult for the student to apply? Identify those skills

as well. Do not expand to an overall description of the student's functioning in every cell, but stay focused on the description related directly to the set objective. In doing so, the teacher constructs a systematic inventory of the student's knowledge and skills related to the set objective and making tuning to the student's educational needs easier.

Column two helps the teacher to explore what assignment, project of coursework the optimal match offers for this student with the learning objectives and this current set of knowledge and skills. Similar questions as in column one are leading. What assignments do you think to be a match for the set objectives? What knowledge and skills are required at the start of the assignment? How does the assignment call on specific thinking skills? What level of self-regulation is required?



Comparing the results between column one and two, it is normal to conclude that there is a gap between the student's starting level and the level of knowledge and skills required for the task. If not, the offered task may not be in the zone of proximal development. This gap can be bridged with interventions explored in column three and four. In column three, teachers explore how the learning environment can contribute to a successful learning For example, what resources process. regarding knowledge and skills are available for the student once he is working on the assignment? How can the student ask for help? How is the learning environment prepared for the required level of self-regulation? To what extent is the physical learning environment match for what is required? а ls collaboration with other students possible?

Learning in the zone of proximal development means that the student is about to take on an assignment that forces him to stretch towards a next developmental level within the safety of an effective support system that is available if needed. Having done the assignment, having reached the set objectives means that the student has acquired new knowledge and skills. During this process the teacher takes on a central position. Hence, column four focuses on teacher bevaviour. Per item that has been explored in columns one to three. the teacher describes what teacher behavior is needed for the student to reach the set objectives. For example, if the assignment requires the student to do an experiment but the student has never used the strategy of

systematically experimenting during the learning process, the teacher needs to provide necessary scaffolds.

Often it is not about doing more, or intervening more, but about doing something slightly different or doing the same thing at a slightly different time. Sometimes it is not about what the teacher does while the student is working on the assignment, but about what the teacher has done prior to the lesson to enhance independent learning. All these things will sound familiar. Teachers are used to providing this support for all their students in their classroom (van Meersbergen & de Vries, 2017). When teaching gifted learners in the regular classroom, general assumptions about how "they" learn, may prevail a teacher to provide this type of support.

Working based on SIP shows teachers that a detailed preparation can be very effective for all learners. Especially when they are dealing with complex learners or with situations where learning is not as successful as initially thought to be. SIP is not about ready to use interventions but it is about using common sense for intervention design. It is not about working based on general assumptions about a certain group of learners, but it shows teachers how to create custom-made interventions. These interventions may even be applicable for a wider group than one single student. It is fully understandable that teachers do not have enough time to design daily a set of custom-made interventions for every student



in their classroom. However, working based on SIP is a useful strategy when it comes to situations where success did not occur as expected. It helps teachers to analyse where they took a wrong turn and how to get back on track.

Dutch teachers using SIP often conclude that the protocol created a renewed awareness to include a student's personal strengths and weaknesses when constructing their curriculum and instructional strategies. They often concluded that their gifted students showed more similarities with other learners in their classroom. This awareness offered them the opportunity to cluster students based on educational needs supporting the effective delivery of the curriculum from an inclusive perspective.

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHOOLWIDE ENRICHMENT MODEL IN ITALIAN SCHOOLS. A RESEARCH STUDY



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The field of gifted education is based on the almost universally accepted reality that some learners demonstrate outstanding performance or potential for superior performance in academic, creative, leadership, or artistic domains when compared with their peers (Renzulli & Reis, 2014, page 15). This agreed-upon justifies conception an examination of differentiated models and strategies to develop students' talents and gifts in schools.

The international research on Gifted Education demonstrates that all children benefit from participation in research-based programs for talent development to develop their gifts and talents. Simply stated, gifted and talented education contributes to developing metacognitive knowledge and higher order thinking skills, as recommended also by both the European framework and the 21st Century movement.

Anyone hoping to understand the diversity of options for educating gifted and talented students should review the abundant literature on this subject, as models and strategies vary widely in the ways they may be used to meet the needs of highly able students. Since the 1980s, several intervention programs have proved their effectiveness, and all contributed to defining the concept of giftedness, laying the foundations of Gifted Education.

The idea that also in Italy different education models should be adopted to meet the diverse educational needs of children with high intellectual potential has been suggested since the Nineties by the Recommendation n. 1248/1994 of the Council of Europe, which was inspired by the work carried out in the workshop "Education of the Gifted in Europe: Theoretical and Research Issues", held in Nijmegen (Holland) in 1991 and supported by the Council of Europe itself.

Unfortunately, Italy has not activated specific measures since then, even though the actual school regulations make some references to the need of supporting the development of students' potential and talents, the traditional teaching strategies tend to be focused mainly on remedial approaches.



It is therefore essential to invest in teacher training in G&T to meet the special educational and emotional needs of students who demonstrate a potential above the norm.

The hypothesis that Italian society should promote the development of the talent of new generations responds to a fundamental ethical principle: all students should be offered the opportunities, resources, and encouragement to fully develop their talents in order to become fulfilled and happy adults. "We do not believe that "all students are gifted" or that we can develop gifted behaviours in everyone. But our research and the research of many eminent scholars has shown that we can develop gifted behaviours in far more students than was possible when more restricted definitions of the gifted were the norm" (Renzulli & Reis, 2014, page 16).

Given a lack of ministerial planning on the subject of gifted education in Italy, it may be convenient to fill the gap by studying and evaluating the different approaches that have characterized the field of gifted education in other countries, and in particular the different strategies used in the United States for the past forty years.

The models provide a theoretical and practical guide for the development of educational programs; they are based on the sample would be limited to 5 or 7 Asian countries, plus 3 to 5 of the European countries of Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, and precise choices regarding founding principles such as: the definition of giftedness, assessment and screening tools for the identification of the gifted, the evaluation scales adopted, the curricular approaches and the programming strategies.

Therefore, it is important to know and evaluate more systems and models to discern the one that most corresponds to the educational objectives set (Renzulli & Reis, 2014).

Definitions and Identification of Gifted and Talented Students

In Italy, there is not yet an agreed-upon definition of giftedness, but one should be aware of the fact that the particular conception of giftedness that is going to be adopted has important implications for educational practice, as each conception of giftedness brings with it its own set of implications for education. The history of gifted education teaches us that there is no unique right way to identify children as gifted, giftedness and modern researchers emphasize alternative assessments that do not rely solely on intelligence tests. The reality is that giftedness is a social construction (Borland, 2009, page 237). Moreover, there is a general misconception on 'being gifted' which is strictly associated with having a high IQ. The myth 'once gifted, always gifted' persists, and giftedness is perceived as something permanent, although studies since the early 1970's consistently show that it is the result of an interaction between the child's genetic endowment and a rich and appropriate environment in which the child grows, in an endless interaction (genes) and between nature nurture



(environment), as Letha Hollingworth pointed out in the 1920s. "There is no single homogeneous group of gifted children and adults, and giftedness is developmental, not fixed at birth" (Reis & Renzulli, 2009a, page 233).

Among Italian experts, even the gifted assessing giftedness benchmark for varies; some psychologists refer to the 2% of the population, as the cut-off considered is an IQ of 130, whereas others refer to the 5% of the population (IQ of 120). From an international perspective, it is as if the Italian approach to the still misunderstood conception of giftedness dates back to the problem of labelling students as 'gifted' that took place in the 70's in the United States, when the controversy took a new turn thanks to the research conducted by eminent scholars like Renzulli (1978, 1986), Gardner (1983), Feldhusen (1988), Gagne (2000), Tannenbaum (2003), to name a few, whose studies opened new perspectives on the conception of giftedness. James Borland does raise an important and valid cautionary note on the dangers of using the IQ in defining giftedness or as a gatekeeper for gifted programs (Borland, 2009, 237). D

Streams of Research and Educational Practices

Among the many theories of which the history of Gifted and Talented Education is permeated, three broad schools of thought that apply to education defined the three major approaches to Teachingand Learning, namely: Acceleration, Enrichment and Differentiation. The two mega-models of Julian Stanley and Joseph Renzulli represent the historically different approaches of acceleration and enrichment and they have defined the major curriculum efforts of the gifted education field since the mid-1970s (VanTassel-Baska & Brown, 2009).

Acceleration can be referred to as "vertical curriculum". Acceleration implies moving faster through academic subjects and content, allowing students to skip grades and instructions, so as to learn at a level that best matches their academic abilities (Davis & Rimm, 2004).

Enrichment can be referred to as 'horizontal curriculum'. Enrichment provides richer and more varied educational experiences, a curriculum that is modified to provide greater depth and breadth than is generally provided (Davis & Rimm, 2004, p.120).

Another approach is offered through Differentiation. Differentiation means tailoring instruction to meet individual needs, as fostered by A. Tomlinson. The goal of differentiated instruction is to ensure that all students are engaged in the learning process by providing tasks that match each individual's needs. This successful approach to instruction benefits a wide range of students, from those with learning disabilities to those who are considered high ability. Nonetheless. Differentiation is to he considered a strategy rather than a model.In recent years, the passionate controversy between enrichment and acceleration has taken on a less antithetical dimension, and the two methodologies used are in



a complementary way: any gifted and talented program should provide both enrichment and acceleration opportunities. Indeed, both acceleration and enrichment meet the special educational needs of talented students, as they foster and enhance the development of greater skills and abilities, particularly creativity and thinking skills (Rimm, Siegle, & Davis, 2018).

A combined approach to Talent Development

The review of the main schools of thought that characterized the history of Gifted Education in the United States in the past 40 years suggests that these three main approaches should be taken into consideration when urging policy makers to take steps towards the promotion of educational policies to support students who have a potential to emerge in schools.

The Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) (Renzulli & Reis, 2014) combines the three approaches, of maior acceleration. enrichment and differentiated instruction. The SEM applies the pedagogy of gifted education to talent development, providing every student with the opportunities, resources, and encouragement necessary students' achieve the individual to potential, simultaneously challenging gifted and highly gifted children. This combined approach and its multicriterial identification system overcomes some of the criticism to which the field of gifted education has been historically entangled.



Figure 1: A Combined Approach to Talent Development

The original idea that underlines Renzulli and Reis' work is that we should extend the G&T services offered to the traditional top 2% of the school population to a broader spectrum of students. Indeed, unlike traditional Gifted Programs for which admittance is regulated by achievement test and IQ cut-offs, the SEM adopts a broadened conception of giftedness (Renzulli, 1986), namely the Three Rings Conception of Giftedness (Renzulli, 1978), that avoids labelling students as "gifted" and "non-gifted". The identification system provided by the SEM is based on a variety of measures including the Renzulli Rating Scales (Renzulli, Smith, 2013), achievement tests, teacher/parent/self-nominations, as well as alternative pathways. Based on the belief that "a rising tide lifts all ships," the SEM identifies 15-20% of above-average ability/high potential students. Indeed, enrichment activities provide gifted children as well as non-identified students the opportunity to explore their potentials and uncover their gifts. Steven Pfeiffer refers to these students as 'uncut and unpolished diamonds' that "have the potential to excel" (Pfeiffer, 2013).



The SEM model has been implemented in hundreds of school districts across the USA and around the world (Burns, 1998), and has demonstrated effectiveness under widely differing socioeconomic levels and program organization patterns (Olenchak, 1988; Olenchak & Renzulli, 1989). Moreover studies in the research literature show highly favourable results for underachieving gifted students (Baum, Renzulli, & Herbert, 1995) when the Three Ring Conception of Giftedness (Renzulli, 1978) and the Enrichment Triad Model (Renzulli, 1977) are used as a direct intervention for counteracting underachievement.

Due to the sheer number of models in gifted education, the choice of a model that enhances the strengths and abilities of the school population, (including gifted learners and twice-exceptional students), should be guided also by sound professional training that may help teachers to promote a mindset that is supportive of gifted education in general, as well as specific training, focused on evidence-based gifted education practice of the selected model.

The Enrichment Specialist is a key figure in Gifted Education that unfortunately does not exist in Italy, and his/her responsibilities are many:

- assist with the identification of students who qualify for enrichment programs;
- design, develop and implement a strong enrichment curriculum;
- provide creative, enriching activities and projects for students;
- maintain accurate and complete student records;
- arrange parent meetings regarding the enrichment program.

The Specialist in gifted education plays a key role in implementing any G&T model and providing professional training to teachers on the many models ensuring adherence to recommended structures and processes peculiar to each model. Indeed, implementation fidelity is a potential moderator of intended benefits of any educational strategy (Brigandi, 2019). With this respect, this research study suggests the need for new professional figures in Italy, namely Enrichment Specialists, and the establishment of standards and specialized certification for Enrichment Specialists. An international Association of Specialist in Gifted and Talented Education should be created to promote study and growth, participation in professional activities and research. contributing to the advancement of the field. Enrichment Specialists may also contribute to guarantee that future national provisions and best practices will be put in place in both private public and schools and that opportunities are offered to promote talent development and creativity in all young people, and especially in gifted and talented students.

A research study: The Implementation of The Schoolwide Enrichment Model in Italian Schools

In examining multiple theoretical models, as well as the main components of gifted and talented education systems, some models appear more complete than others in that, in addition to scientific research that supports the design of the program, they offer teaching strategies that guide the implementation of the model itself.



The professional training gained at the University of Connecticut, helped the researcher get a deeper understanding of the dynamics that generated in the field of Gifted Education and suggested that the choice of a model to be implemented in Italian schools had to include all the three validated approaches of Acceleration, Enrichment and Differentiation. The criteria adopted by the researcher responded to both scientific and ethical principles:

- a model supported by scientific research
- a whole-school approach to talent development, (inclusive model)
- differentiation / acceleration / enrichment strategies
- flexible model
- provision of practical tools for teachers
- direct intervention for counteracting underachievement and prevents drop out
- supports twice-exceptional students
- a model that guarantees equity of minorities and underrepresented populations
- for free

The SEM meets all the above listed requirements and its flexibility suggested it could be easily adaptable to the bureaucratic peculiarities of the Italian school system.

The research in Italy on the SEM examines how the SEM implementation in Italian Public Schools can have positive changes in student and teacher attitudes toward education of the gifted on the part of classroom teachers and the general student population and more favourable attitudes toward special programming on the part of parents. The study also investigates if students in treatment schools creativity is enhanced by participating in self-selected enrichment activities. The overall study results in more favourable attitudes toward the entire concept of gifted education and talent development by school principals, teachers, parents and students. The results exceeded the researcher's expectations: in September 2019 the first SEM class in Italy was inaugurated at the treatment Public School in Vicenza and the first SEM Elementary School was inaugurated in Vicenza.

Moreover, data analysis after two years of SEM implementation in a treatment school showed an increase in students' creative productivity: they produced an outstanding number of original creative products they presented to an authentic audience.

Another positive aspect of this research study is that, in absence of National Guidelines in Gifted Education and no national identification system to identify high ability students, the SEM proved to be a valuable and practical approach for teachers who, after receiving proper SEM training by the Enrichment Specialist, were able to promote students' creative productivity and enhance individual potential.

We have just entered a new century, and it is quite evident that we should adopt different strategies to promote talent development in all students, simultaneously providing our most able young people with maximum opportunities to become creative and productive adults who will contribute to solving the problems of our contemporary civilization. It is the responsibility of policy makers, scholars and educators to do everything possible to nurture the gifts and talents of our students and to develop the 21st Century thinking skills in the new generations. The future of our societies depends on it.



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THE VALUE OF AN ACADEMIC-IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM



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The nerves kicked in the minute Dr Rena Subotnik's plane touched down in Sydney Australia on the 15th February for our Academic-in-Residence Program for 2020. They stemmed not from the five days of professional learning with over 250 staff but rather we were concerned the unprecedented Australian weather and the ongoing spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) would somehow influence the conference we had planned for a good year and a half. While those issues were certainly in the back of our minds, seeing Rena on our first day of conferencing was truly exciting and became the vibe for the rest of her visit with us.

The SCS Academic-in-Residence Program

So what is the SCS Academic-in-Residence Program and why is it so widely valued in our educational community? We've been fortunate over the past few years to have invited a number of international academics to work with our growing population of Newman schools including Dr Ron Ritchhart, Dr Lannie Kanevsky and Professor Karen With 76 of our Primary and Rogers. Secondary schools actively engaged in the Selective Gifted Newman Education Program, high guality ongoing professional learning is a vital part of the SCS Gifted Education Standards Framework, which schools work towards to become recognised as a 'Newman Accredited School' in their local communities. As Education Officers in the system, Jennie and I, plus our team of experienced colleagues, are responsible for coordinating and delivering the professional learning for our teachers. Developing an arterial theme for the year helps to guide the learning our teachers are both requesting and requiring at whatever point in the journey they find themselves.

The main reason having an Academic-in-Residence is vital for our school system is that they set the tone for the year which gives our school leaders the educational nourishment required to begin the term before the busyness of school interferes with their own personal learning. Principals and other school leaders and teachers know full-well that the first few weeks at the beginning of a school year



can set up a false sense of security, since the pace can quickly turn into putting-out-fires with parents, students and teachers, while simultaneously trying to meet the demands from educational authorities across the profession and keeping morale in the school as positive as possible. So the program is designed to give our school leaders the opportunity to fill their cup with inspiration for the vision of their schools' gifted and talented agendas. We found this has not only come from the international Academic-in-Residence sessions but from the case studies shared by their peers who are doing tremendous work in their own school communities.

Invigorating the Gifted Education Agenda from Ability to Eminence

In our system of Newman schools, we found that the ability of teachers to identify and provide equitable provisions within the curriculum for gifted learners is well developed in our experienced schools or on the right track with our newer schools, however, we have not yet explored moving the gift into the learner's specific talent, as per Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness



and Talent (Gagné, 2000), as explicitly as we would like. Our schools have worked incredibly hard at delivering the environmental and intrapersonal catalysts that enhance educational opportunities for gifted students. We focus a lot of our regular professional learning throughout the year in the provisions area where enrichment. curriculum, pedagogy and grouping are developed. Many of our schools are dwelling in the developmental processes of the model that lead into competencies and this is where they tend to remain due to timing and resourcing limitations. This is where a learner's talent development to competence may become inhibited in the context of a busy school so viewing the developmental model (Worrell, eminence Subotnik to & Olszewski-Kubilius, 2018) was something our schools welcomed as a theme to open the vear.

Since the inception of the program, our goal been to help teachers recognise has giftedness in their students, identify it using a wide range of qualitative and quantitative assessments then provide equitable provisions such as curriculum embedded classroom programs reflective of gifted pedagogy that are open for all students to access, especially those that have diverse learning backgrounds like our 2e and EAL/D learners. As a result of this deliberate focus, many of our schools rely on the talent to be developed by outside agencies during the school year, tertiary institutions or the workplace. But talent development has its place in schools just as much as the



identification of gifted students and the delivery of differentiated programs. The Developmental Model of Eminence (Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius & Worrell, 2011) is one way to view the movement of a learner from childhood ability through to eminence in the adult world. Knowing that domains peak and end in various time frames of a learner's life helped our teachers to understand that the chronological age of a student in a classroom does not always align with what a student might require in their specific domain of talent. Recognising practical ways to support the learner during these moments of ebb and flow in talent development can make the greatest difference to the learning of a gifted child. Having Rena articulate the model with various case studies increased teachers' learning gain in talent development and complemented the work we do with these schools year after year.

Key Focus of the 2020 Program

Rena unpacked with our schools the Top 20 Principles from Psychology for PreK-12 Creative, Talented and Gifted Students' Teaching and Learning, developed by the American Psychological Association (Brody, et al, 2017). Each of the three days was specifically designed to cater for the needs schools requested support with, in particular, How Do Students Think and Learn?, What Motivates Students? and Why are Social Interpersonal Relationships Context, and Emotional Well-being Important to

Student Learning?. Principals and Newman Facilitators were able to select the session that suited their schools best. Each day had a strong focus on how to build the talent of gifted learners within the time they are in school, rather than leaving it to the parents to juggle after school hours or just waiting until the end of high school. The significance of embedding opportunities for talent development during school time is vital, especially since that is where they spend most of their weekdays. Rena shared techniques related to the performance of elite athletes and performing artists (Worrell, Olszewski-Kubilius & Subotnik, 2019), which were helpful for our comprehensive conceptualise schools to possibilities beyond what they have already attempted or are currently practising.

Some highlights from Rena's presentations that our Principals and teachers valued are shared below;

- Giftedness is manifested within domains and with development, achievement becomes the hallmark of giftedness. It is important for teachers to pay greater attention to domain specific talent trajectories.
- Ability moves to competency, expertise then eminence which could take the shape of artistry and scholarly creative productivity.
- Psychosocial skills can be developed and are important to the fruition of talent. Teachers should put greater emphasis on the deliberate development of psychosocial skills (e.g., motivation, risk-taking) that support the transition to higher stages of talent development.



• Teachers should not expect general giftedness nor global advanced development. Look for giftedness within domains, especially as students get older and are exposed to various subjects.

• Learn about students' situational learning as a clue to domain abilities and incorporate into the classroom-especially with under-achieving students-e.g., what are they doing outside of school?

• Provide programming-enrichment and acceleration - within domains.

• For older students, provide authentic, problem-based learning opportunities with adult professionals (mentors) within domains.

• Intrinsic motivation may be lacking because optimal challenge is lacking (flow) or situations requiring hard work may be perceived as a threat.

• Problems emerge from poor placement that lead to difficulty finding peers, dealing with expectations, and negative perfectionism.

• About 20 to 30% of gifted students have self-critical, evaluative concerns that cause them anxiety.

• Adults are not always aware of gifted students' emotional distress because many of them maintain high achievement that masks anxiety.

With these eye openers, Rena fostered in teachers a deeper analysis of the work they are doing with their gifted students. It put perspective in an area that we, as a system, have not yet explicitly explored, which found most of our school leaders critically thinking about how to improve the way they are catering for gifted students and how they might help specific students manifest the gift into competency and expertise before they leave school, a concept we are only just consciously thinking about now that our grasp of giftedness is sealed.

Progressing Teachers and Leaders Beyond the Known

We have some great pockets of how talent is being developed and encouraged in some schools, especially those who are loosely connected to the Australian Institute of Sport or the Conservatorium of Music. Strict guidelines regarding curriculum expectations from our national educational authority and perhaps even the chance factor have a lot to do with how many of these opportunities are a reality for a lot of our students, particularly those in challenging socio-economic areas.





This is why our Academic-in Residence program is vital as it opens the door to alternate possibilities that can be actioned with gifted students requiring talent development in a specific domain. These days also give Principals and Newman Facilitators a kind of 'professional permission' to delve into conversations with other teachers and leaders who may not be aware of, or value, the possibilities on offer due to competing school agendas. We know how hard it can be to advocate to others when in a specialist field!

Within the three days, our very own SCS gifted education personnel complemented Rena's keynotes by delivering workshops that covered Social and Emotional Learning, an introduction to Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011) and the sharing of case studies where schools have used mentoring programs and acceleration processes to help develop the talents of their students.

We were fortunate to have Rena share her expertise with our system leaders for two after the Principal and Newman days Facilitator conference sessions. which bolsters our own proficiency in cutting edge research and strategies in the international gifted and talented field. Rena shared her expertise on creative and critical thinking skills, which form one of seven branches in our general capabilities within the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012). Our SCS STEM team joined us for a collaborative day of learning with Rena where we applied a creative and critical thinking gap analysis against our Newman schools then developed practical ways to align the competencies with classroom programs via a range of initiatives. It also gave us some ideas on where to take our professional learning as a system in 2021.





The Value of Our 2020 Academic-in-Residence Program

Some of the feedback we received from Rena's time with us are listed below;

Hearing from leading academics in the field is hugely beneficial, especially those who can offer a broad perspective (experts from outside of our own organisation).
I Enjoyed Rena Subotnik's presentation. We saw the relevance of it and it enabled us to link our Professional Learning to these focus areas in talent development.

• Dr Rena clearly articulated the Top Twenty Principles Project and how it can apply to the students within our school.

It allowed clarification of how to address the diverse needs within the group identified for the Newman projects we are wanting to run in our school.

• Rena's work and suggestions offered a great perspective into student motivation.

• It was great listening to Rena and listening to how other schools set up mentorship programs in their schools.

• Rena was very easy to listen to and offered many practical suggestions in addition to theoretical knowledge on what motivates students.

• I enjoyed the talent development model presented by Dr Subotnik.

• Rena presented current research in an engaging and practical way.

• Keep the expertise coming. I love the drive towards 'talent development' and professional learning about how we can do this in our schools.

• I enjoyed the teaching and learning that is based on scientific evidence and international perspectives.

Conclusion

We continue hope the to Academic-in-Residence Program at Sydney Catholic Schools. With such a wealth of international experience. sharing this expertise can certainly make the world of difference to our gifted and talented students within our classrooms on a daily basis. Talent development has its place in our schools and our system is open to possibilities Dr Rena Subotnik delivered this week. The nerves we felt at the beginning of this journey have now been replaced with passion to proactively move our gifted learners from ability to eminence and to shape our school leaders' unconscious potential to deliberate action for the betterment of society's future.





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CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 2020 World Giftedness Center International Conference, November 2-5, 2020, Dubai 2020 EXPO Convention Center, United Arab Emirates (UAE)



The 2020 World Giftedness Center International Conference aims to bring together leading researchers, scholars, educators and practitioners from around the world to exchange and share their research findings, ongoing research activities and experience about gifted and talented education. This conference is organized with the intention to provide delegates with an exceptional platform to discuss new trends, recent innovations, initiatives and challenges within the area of gifted and talented education.

Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness 2020 July 30 - August 3, 2020, in Daegu, Korea Beyond Intelligence: Entrepreneurship, Leadership, and Ethical Minds



http://www.apfggiftedness.org/

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



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

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

ICGYSEducation

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

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

https://icgyse.net/about-icgyse/



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



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

https://worldgifted2021.com/

6th International Conference on Lifelong Education and Leadership for all (ICLEL) July 13- 16, 2020, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina



www.iclel.com



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