

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENT POLICY

RATIONALE

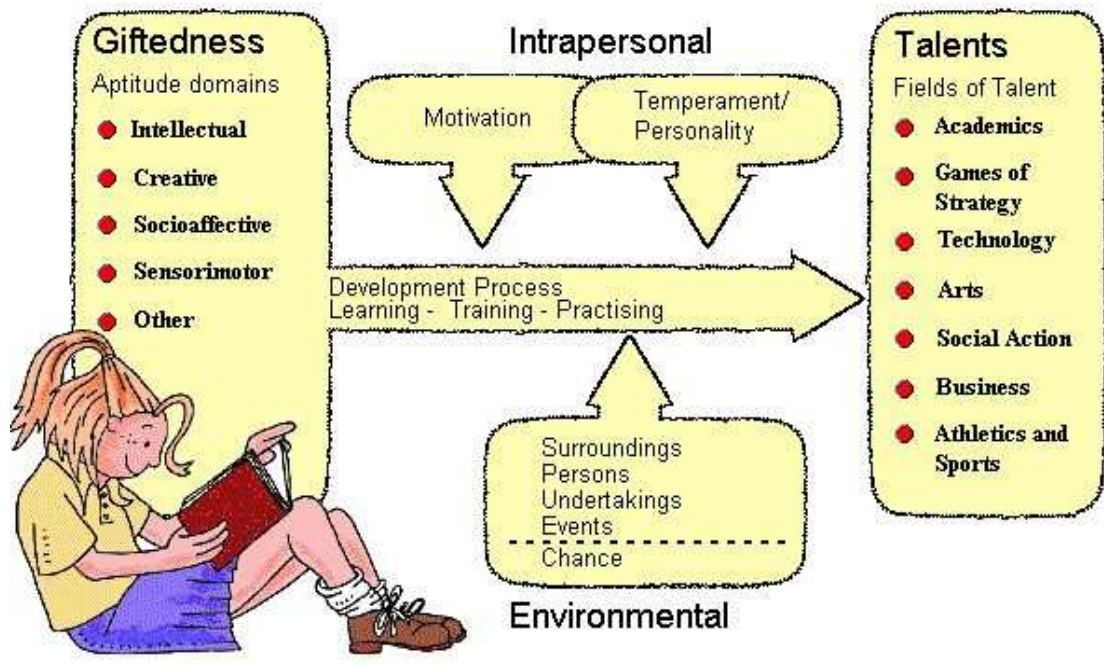
“The central aim of education in N.S.W. is concerned with the need to develop the potential of each child... Specific provision must be made for the talented child if this aim of education is to be realised.”

N.S.W. Department of Education: The Education of Children with Special Talents.

“In my model the term *giftedness* designates the possession and use of untrained and spontaneously expressed natural abilities (called aptitudes or gifts), in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places a child at least among the top 15% of his or her age peers. By contrast, the term *talent* designates the superior mastery of systematically developed abilities (or skills) and knowledge in at least one field of human activity to a degree that places a child’s achievement within at least the upper 15% of age-peers who are active in that field or fields.

Professor Francoys Gagné (University of Quebec)

The Gagné model of Giftedness provides an interesting and comprehensive view of the process of talent development and has been adopted by the NSWDET.



At Girraween High School a Gifted and Talented Student Policy is seen to be necessary because...

- * All children need opportunities to develop their individual capacities and abilities
- * Gifted and talented children should have their needs identified and met
- * It is only when gifted and talented children have these needs met that they have the opportunity to develop fully
- * Fostering talent is of value both to the welfare of the individual and to society.

The importance of the school's role in identifying and fostering these gifts and talents cannot be overestimated. It is therefore necessary to make specific provision for the gifted and talented student with early identification initiated by the school with the support of parents and the community. As a result of the enrolment policy at Girraween High School we are in a special position to do this.

AIMS

1. To identify students with talents and the areas in which they are talented.
2. To provide opportunities for gifted and talented students to reach their full potential.
3. To recognise those gifts and talents in an appropriate way.

OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a set of criteria of identify gifted and talented students.
2. To provide meaningful learning opportunities which:
 - * actively value and encourage individual differences (unusual ideas and originality)
 - * provide activities that invite curiosity and manipulation of ideas and materials.
 - * expose students to creative individuals and their works.
 - * emphasise production of ideas and products by students rather than simply consumption of knowledge.
 - * actively involve students in their learning, in making choices, setting goals, using initiative.
3. To identify resources both within and outside the school and link these with the talented student's needs.
4. To provide a caring environment to encourage each student to develop self-esteem and to reach his/her full potential.

5. To promote an ethos where learning and achievement are valued (letting tall poppies flower).

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The school is to provide a curriculum structure which suits the needs of gifted and talented students.
2. Each faculty is to provide a challenging but realistic program of study for gifted and talented students. This may include acceleration and/or enrichment of studies.
3. Each faculty is to develop effective methods to teach gifted and talented children.

Learning experiences should reflect the objectives listed previously under “Objectives” paragraph 2.

The following are some approaches we can employ in the classroom to meet these objectives:

The teacher can

- * offer support and encouragement to the student to explore interesting exercises that develop skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation (ie. the higher order thinking skills).

- * show acceptance of unusual approaches.

Students can be provided with

- * a wide and varied reading program

- * a range of first-hand experiences

- * the opportunity to respond to open-ended questions

- * the freedom of choice to investigate some areas of interest

- * participation in devising some programs of study

- * time to explore ideas, materials and media

- * the opportunity to analyse problems, how they arose, at which point intervention would have changed the course of events: future perspectives

- * formal debates

- * large/small group discussions: preparation of delivery of speeches, reports, reviews

4. Students are to be offered additional challenging experiences by provision of:

- * Visiting speakers (eg. parents, grandparents, university staff, community

representatives)

* Extension courses run by tertiary institutions

* Excursions

* State/National academic competitions

The school undertakes to pay for each student in the junior years to enter the English, Maths and Science competitions. By way of encouragement the school will provide some financial assistance to students who are selected through academic competition to attend co-curricular courses.

* G.H.S. invitation inter-school competitions.

For example the Year 8 Invitation Debating Day.

* Extra-curricular activities : music, drama, sport, debating, community work

5. Student abilities are to be recognised and teachers aim to award marks in Years 7 and 8 to a class mean of between 75 and 85.
6. Under-achievers are to be identified and positive efforts made to assist them. The Student Welfare Committee has produced support materials for this purpose.
7. The importance of the role of parents in the process of education should be recognised and effective communication with parents be maintained.
8. Excellence in effort or achievement is to be rewarded through the Merit Awards system and the annual Presentation Evening.
9. Student leadership will be developed through the Student Council and the Prefects.

EVALUATION

Faculties are expected to evaluate annually the effectiveness of their implementation of some aspect or aspects of this policy and to make recommendations to the executive concerning any modifications to, or extensions of the policy.

*Girraween High School Talented Student Policy 1989. Amended 1996.
Amended 1998.*

APPENDIX

1. ACCELERATED PROGRESSION

Rationale

“All students must be provided with the opportunity to develop their potential to the greatest extent possible”.

(Carrick, 1989)

The students of Girraween High School have been selected on both potential and demonstrated performance at levels higher than those which are usual for their age. Consequently our programs include strategies that permit faster progression, deeper conceptualization and broader understanding and application of curricular material. However it is to be expected that some exceptional students will need opportunities for accelerated progression.

Aim

The aim of accelerated progression is to make provision for a special group of students who need additional intellectual challenges beyond the existing lateral extension and enrichment programs.

Selection of Students

Selected Students will have undergone a comprehensive assessment of intellectual functioning, academic skill levels and social and emotional adjustment. Their performance will generally be well in advance of their next year cohort, although there may be evidence of underachievement. The Profiles documents for each subject will provide valuable information in determining students ability levels. Consideration for acceleration will require the full support of the student, parents, and school.

The School Principal will determine the appropriateness for acceleration according to the Board of Studies guidelines.
(Guidelines for Accelerated Progression, Revised 1993).

Implementation

Acceleration

* “Is possible in all subjects, in one subject or in a number of subjects”
(Guidelines for Accelerated Progression, 1993, P2)

* must be on the basis of compression of the curriculum or curriculum “compacting”, not “omission”.

(ibid, P7)

* The development and expansion of options for accelerated progression may require adaptive school organization in timetabling.

* Individual acceleration programs must meet the requirements of the Board of Studies curriculum and credentialling requirements.

(ibid, P2)

* An accelerative program is a long term commitment and must address issues of continuity in later years.

* Student progress should be formally reviewed each semester through consultation with the student, parents and teachers.

* “Acceleration cannot be considered in isolation. Enrichment and extension are related concepts and their influences overlap”.

(Braggett, 1993)

References

Report of the Committee of Review of N.S.W. Schools, September, 1989.

Guidelines for Accelerated Progression, Revised, 1993 Board of Studies

Acceleration and Accelerated Learners, Braggett, 1993.