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Dear Member of Parliament

The recent budget cuts signal the beginning of the end for the support of gifted and talented students in New Zealand at a time when we are finally gaining international recognition for being forward thinking and enlightened in this field.

Consultation with a wide range of interest groups (parents, students, educators), the appointment of a national co-ordination team, specialist advisers, free professional development opportunities for teachers, a contestable funding pool and a mandated National Administration Guideline that promises gifted students an appropriate education, have contributed significantly to this improvement to our international reputation.

Ironically, just as the goals of the 2002 Initiatives in Gifted and Talented Education are beginning to be realised, and awareness is increasing amongst educators, the National Government has decided to undermine the very initiatives implemented to achieve these goals.

We ask that you challenge this decision and demonstrate your support for the gifted and talented children of New Zealand, a group whose special needs have only very recently begun to be acknowledged and provided for.

Please show your support during Gifted Awareness Week (15 to 22 June 2009): we ask that you promote excellence and reject the mediocrity that this budget decision endorses. Keep gifted and talented education in New Zealand on the world stage.

Yours sincerely

Tracy Riley, Chairperson

On behalf of the Board of *giftEDnz*
Rosemary Cathcart, REACH Education
Ann Easter, University of Waikato
Anne Sturgess, Edgecumbe College
Louise Tapper, University of Canterbury