



30 March 2011

Dear Minister Hide

Thank you for your keynote address and question/answer session at giftEDnz's luncheon on Saturday, 26 March. You demonstrated your understanding and commitment to identifying and providing for gifted and talented learners in New Zealand. We greatly appreciate the opportunity you gave our members to engage with you, exchanging ideas and contemplating future initiatives in the field. We also welcome any advocacy and support you can provide in raising awareness and support amongst your political colleagues, the Ministry of Education, and other constituent groups with whom you work.

Key points raised during the discussion were:

- Initial teacher education and ongoing professional learning and development were identified as two key areas which would better enable equitable educational outcomes for gifted and talented children and young people in New Zealand.
- Identifying and meeting the needs of gifted students at risk of not achieving equitable outcomes, be they in rural areas, in their early years, with disabilities, from low income backgrounds, or culturally diverse, is crucial.
- Principles and practices endorsed in The New Zealand Curriculum provide a solid foundation for gifted education.
- Meeting the needs of ALL gifted and talented students in New Zealand is a worthy and achievable goal that is likely to require the adoption of different educational provisions, particularly if we are to cater for those students who are traditionally underserved in this field (e.g. rural, Maori, Pasifika).
- It is also important that gifted and talented education is better integrated and included in mainstream educational initiatives, as well as special or inclusive education, with the aim of meeting the needs of all our diverse learners.
- Having a dedicated, knowledgeable advocate within the Ministry of Education was also identified as critical in realising this shared vision and ensuring long-term strategic planning.

You presented us with a challenge: to create a shared vision and long-term strategy for gifted and talented education in New Zealand. We warmly embrace this opportunity to work with you and your staff, the Ministry of Education and other key stakeholders to take up this challenge.

While I currently represent our organisation on the Ministry of Education's 2011 Gifted and Talented Policy Advisory Group, we believe the challenge you've proposed requires a working group that extends beyond the terms of reference, representation and membership of the current advisory group.

We'd like to suggest that you initiate such a group immediately, and I, along with representatives of our Board, am happy to meet with you in the near future to discuss ways of doing this. Such a group would need representation from other key educational organisations to ensure the sustainability and viability of a shared vision and strategy, and we will work with you to determine appropriate stakeholder groups. We also recognise the need for any long-term vision and strategy to align and work alongside the work currently being undertaken by the Ministry of Education and we have contacted Karen Sewell to arrange discussions.

We are excited about the opportunity to work with you, on behalf of the Government, and the Ministry of Education staff, to create a 'preferred image' for the future of gifted and talented education in New Zealand. We'd welcome ongoing, regular contact with you throughout this process.

We look forward to hearing from you and working with you.

Sincerely

Tracy Riley, Chairperson, on Behalf of the Board



## Office of Hon Rodney Hide

**MP for Epsom**  
Minister of Local Government  
Minister for Regulatory Reform  
Associate Minister of Education

29 APR 2011

Tracy Riley  
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Dear Tracy

Thank you for your email of 30 March 2011 regarding my address to the Professional Association for Gifted Education (giftednz) on 26 March 2011.

I would like to thank giftednz for providing me the opportunity to address their members and special guests at the annual general meeting.

It is pleasing that giftednz is supportive of working with the Ministry of Education and the wider gifted and talented community to create a shared vision for gifted and talented education.

I have consulted with the Ministry about your concern that the terms of reference for the existing Gifted and Talented Policy Advisory Group may not have the suitable scope to undertake such work. I have been assured that the terms of reference do provide such flexibility. You may wish to bring this matter up with the Policy Advisory Group if you feel that the terms of reference do need to be amended.

The Ministry has further advised me that establishing another advisory group which would require an additional layer of administrative and associated costs, is not the most effective way of utilising the funds that are available for supporting the needs of gifted and talented students.

Thank you for taking the time to write. I look forward to hearing about the progress the Ministry and the gifted and talented community are making towards realising a shared vision for a better future for New Zealand's gifted and talented students.

Yours sincerely



Hon Rodney Hide  
**Associate Minister of Education**