VAGTC



Annual Report

October 2021

Collaborative advocacy for gifted and talented learners since 1978

www.VAGTC.org.au

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About the VAGTC 2021

The VAGTC is a parent and educator led, not-for-profit incorporated body that is committed to advocating for the identification and appropriate support, education, and development of gifted potential in children across the state of Victoria. One of the aims of the VAGTC is to raise the awareness in the educational community of the research evidence that underpins gifted education, creativity, and talent development, and to develop community (families, educators, and policymakers) knowledge and understanding of gifted potential and best practices inside and outside the classroom. The VAGTC is committed to raising community awareness and knowledge of the needs of children diagnosed as twice exceptional — gifted potential and with learning challenges or disabilities — including appropriate teaching strategies for their talent development. The VAGTC provides professional development programs, conferences, publications and seminars for educators and families across Victoria. The VAGTC promotes collaboration between academics, educators, and psychological experts as well as government agencies and relevant organizations to build awareness and acceptance and advise on educational policies that support the needs and potential of children and students in Victoria.

As a not-for-profit incorporated body, the VAGTC operates under a constitution and is committed to the following:

- To recognize and identify the existence and needs of the gifted potential of children and students in Victoria and enable their talent development
- To act as a professional association for educators and families interested in supporting and developing gifted potential in children and students
- To encourage and support professional learning for educators and families across Victoria through our DET-supported training programs, as well as our collaborative endeavours
- To raise the awareness in the educational community of the research evidence that underpins gifted education, creativity, and talent development
- To develop educators' knowledge and understanding of gifted children and best practices inside and outside the classroom
- To raise awareness and knowledge amongst educators and parents of the needs of gifted students diagnosed as twice exceptional (high potential and with learning challenges) including appropriate teaching strategies for their talent development
- To develop and support educational programs for gifted students
- To promote collaboration between academics, educators, and psychological experts as well as government agencies to encourage awareness, acceptance, and support of the needs and potential of children and students in Victoria
- To collaborate with appropriate organizations and agencies to advise on educational policies for gifted children and students
- To lobby key stakeholders in Victoria including politicians, universities, and schools
- To collaborate and facilitate research on the nature of giftedness to further develop the field of gifted education both in Australia and internationally
- To maintain contacts with similar organizations and associations within Australia, as a Victorian affiliate with the Australian Association for the Education of Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) and the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC)
- To do all other things which are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above purposes

The VAGTC is committed to upholding best practices and abiding by policies as set out by our Constitution and the laws and regulations of Australia. Ours is a shared commitment to maintain the highest standards of ethics and to reflect the values of the VAGTC in everything we do.

Our Vision for the Future 2022 and Beyond

Following our 'Strategy Days' in 2019 with Debra Masters, which provided us with key insights into the skillset of our volunteers, our strengths as a team, our strengths as a brand, and the gaps we need to fill, in 2020 we reviewed and developed a range of policy documents related to key operational areas, restructured our document storage, and revamped our website. Policy documents related to key operational areas were also developed or reviewed and updated.

So how did this prepare us for 2021?

In 2021 we have continued to refer to our VISION Statement, PURPOSE and MISSION Statement, and our TAG LINE as a constant guide of why we do what we do. These Statements can be seen below. VAGTC VISION – Internal use

• To be an enduring and self-sustaining organization which strategically and collaboratively advocates for gifted and talented learners.

VAGTC PURPOSE/MISSION STATEMENT – For broad public use

• To advocate for gifted learners as they explore and develop their talents.

VAGTC TAG LINE – For broad public use

• Collaborative advocacy for gifted and talented learners since 1978.

With the ever-present pandemic limiting our face-to-face contact in 2021, this year we have relied on upskilling our IT skills and perfecting our use of Zoom, both to meet, and to facilitate our core business, be it writing publications, consulting with schools, or facilitating Seminars. We have continued to develop important policies and have worked to keep each other accountable through ensuring our professional practice and governance is of the highest quality. Our monthly Committee Meetings check in on potential conflicts of interest, and further ways in which our organisational processes can be improved.

Additionally, this year we have highlighted the skills of our Committee Members and tried to use the skills of our people for optimal benefit. So those that are best at Presenting Seminars, Present Seminars, those that are best a writing, write. Those with skills in Governance, Govern etc. This has enabled a small Committee to streamline their practice and be highly effective. Something that has been particularly important given Covid restrictions.

With a new President, there will be new direction, but I imagine that Future Actions Days will see us focus again on Organizational Sustainability Streams and Areas of Strategy as we look to what the VAGTC needs to focus on in 2022 and beyond. These will likely consider our Financial needs now and into the future, the Services that we provide, our future Marketing, need for ongoing Policy Development, and our ongoing Partnerships, and strategies required to enable the effectiveness and growth of the VAGTC.

Mark Smith

President VAGTC



VAGTC President's Report 2021

The last 18 months have been a significant ongoing challenge and I trust you are all travelling as well as you can wherever you reside and work within our State. During this time, the VAGTC have seen an increased need for support among our gifted and talented network; be it students, parents, or educators. Again, the online environment has enabled us to reach out to our Members and supporters more broadly, be it through our Consult group, Parent Seminars or support of schools and staff through our Educator Seminars and tailored presentations.

In the second half of 2020, we delivered 6 Parent Seminars and 3 Educator Seminars. These offerings attracted about 200 attendees. We again thank the Department of Education and Training (DET) for their ongoing support with our Parent Seminars. At the same time, we published our second edition of VISION Magazine for the year on the theme: 'Practical Giftedness and Wisdom'. This edition was close to our most popular yet, featuring original articles by Dr Robert Sternberg (USA), Dr John Munro (Aus), and Dr Melinda Webber (NZ), not to mention many other local educators and students who also shared their experiences through stories, articles, or Artworks.

The 8th Edition of our Resource Book was also completed during the latter part of 2020. This saw a lengthened edition with an increased broad range of online Links and resources shared as part of this publication. The hope was that this would assist families with Links to great activities, special interest groups and competitions as they supported their children whilst embarking in an extended period of online learning. Many thanks to Dr Anna Pollard, our VAGTC Secretary who edited this edition of our Resource Book.

'Thriving as Gifted' was our Gifted Awareness theme for 2021 and it was hoped that we might see opportunities for face-to-face interaction with educators, parents and of course students. Sadly, due to Covid-19 this has not transpired. To address the theme and enable gifted children to thrive, we needed to think creatively in terms of our Partnership with the DET, our Publications and our Consulting. Our Parent Seminar team lead by Ms Kathy Harrison and Ms Amy Horneman looked to the polls from the seminar participants in 2020, and in response set about developing a new set of seminars based on the most frequently asked questions of attendees. This resulted in new interactive focuses that we believed would best support our stakeholders. These included:

- Supporting Social and Emotional Needs
- What's Possible for School Based Provision
- Working Collaboratively with your Child's School
- Thriving Through Educational Transitions

Additionally, we had two Q&A Seminars with Expert Panels. In all, 7 Parent Seminars took place in Semester 1, with a further 6 Parent Seminars scheduled for Semester 2, with all taking place online. Since the end of June 2020 to the end of this year, based on attendance and bookings, we will have delivered seminars to almost 700 registrants.

To further assist educators, we have been active with our Consult Group leading to significant support of schools by way of expert Presenting and Consulting. This has enabled new Talent Development programs to emerge and new networks to be established in schools, and among parent groups across Victoria.

The VAGTC Committee have again been very proud of the quality of our VISION Magazine in 2021. Edition one this year saw us address 'Underachievement and Disengagement,' and still to come this year is Edition two, 'Parenting Gifted Children, The Joys and Challenges'. We continue to be amazed by the generosity of world leaders in our field as they willingly contribute to these publications to further build and extend our knowledge. We are grateful to Ms Amy Horneman, our VISION Editor for her amazing work in compiling these publications so professionally.

Given our readership and the success of our Publications, this year we also approached the Department of Education with a plan for our creation of a 'Parent Advocacy Book, Most Frequently Asked Questions' resource. This has seen the compilation of a very comprehensive resource with 8 key focuses. This resource will be completed by the end of this year and will then be available for distribution to our Members and Department of Education parents across the State. Whilst this has been written for parents, teachers too have highlighted its benefits for them in their work also.

All VAGTC Members receive copies of our Publications with every new edition as part of their Membership. This includes the VISION Magazine twice a year, and the Resource Book, updated every two years. The writing and professional publication of these resources is a significant financial commitment. Shortly our VAGTC Members will also receive electronic versions of our 'Parent Advocacy Book'. To support the cost of these publications we are looking at a small fee increase to our Membership costs from the start of 2022. Details of this increase, which will impact schools more than individual members will be shared at our upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM).

I do hope that you can join us online for our AGM on October 27, when we will be joined by Guest Speaker: Dr Kate Niederer, from New Zealand. I will be standing down as VAGTC President at this year's AGM, after 3 years in the role. I have enjoyed the opportunity to lead the VAGTC and I am proud of what we have achieved in that time, but it is time for a new President with fresh ideas and a broad set of skills to take on the role moving forward. In 2022 I will continue as a member of the Committee, with my key role to support the new President next year. I wish to thank those that serve at the VAGTC. This includes Executive Members: Dr Susan Nikakis (Vice President) Publications and Pastoral Support, Ms Catherine Frost (Treasurer) Chartered Accountant, Financial Governance and Parent Support, and Dr Anna Pollard (Secretary) and Publications. Executive is well supported by Committee Members: Mr Michael Bond (Policy & Governance), Ms Amy Horneman (VISION Editor and Seminar Writer/Presenter), Ms Kathy Harrison (Seminar Writer/Presenter), Ms Irene Anderson (Website Support and Educational Process Advice). Though I mention some of their key individual roles above, most of our small but dynamic committee fulfil multiple responsibilities, roles, and support. For a team of volunteers, I have been in awe of the work ethic and achievements of this group, and I sincerely thank them for their work. I also wish to thank our part-time Administrator, Ms Julia Sale for the important role she plays.

Thanks also to all of you, our loyal VAGTC Members that we value so much. Wishing you well for a successful year ahead.

Yours Sincerely,

Momilto

Mr Mark Smith - President VAGTC

VAGTC Vice President's Report 2021

Albert Einstein once said, "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." As we draw towards the conclusion of, yet another year dominated by the coronavirus I reflect on the many opportunities the VAGTC committee has created for parents and teachers of gifted students. Parent and teacher seminars were offered in an online environment, and they were extremely well received. Committee members responded to requests for assistance or information via our consultation service which was also available online. Our committee meetings continued and were expertly chaired by President Mark Smith as he skillfully included all members in their respective Zoom frames!

The VAGTC committee was never on mute as we conducted numerous seminars remotely. Congratulations to committee members Anna Pollard, Kathy Harrison, and Amy Horneman on their excellent presentations. There was nothing remote about the wonderful interactions between parents and educators and our committee. Irene Anderson focused on making our website more user friendly for those thousands our viewers. Michael Bond worked from home on our Covid response as one of the many policies he has developed to make us an even more efficient and proactive organization. Our wonderful treasurer Catherine Frost kept us 'balanced 'in these most uncertain times.

We liaised with the AAEGT and as a VAGTC committee attended many professional learning opportunities which were, yes, online! This committee has taken every challenge as an opportunity to continue to advocate for our gifted children. Albert Einstein was a gifted child once!

Dr Susan Nikakis VAGTC Vice President

Our Events:

Gifted Awareness Week (GAW) Annual Report – 2020 / 2021

The goals of GAW are:

- To promote awareness of issues for gifted individuals and to offer some possible tools and solutions for navigating these issues.
- To model ways of providing for gifted students through advice, practical solutions, and offerings.
- To promote networking opportunities for participants, teachers, and students alike.

Selected activities and events are offered to engage our Gifted and Talented learning community, which focus on a range of academic and passion areas, and appealing to the wide range of our stakeholders, be they students, teachers, or parents. Due to Covid-19 Lockdowns we were limited in terms of student activities and offerings in 2020 and 2021. Instead, we tried to reach students via their Parents and Educators. Below is a list in calendar order of the activities that took place in the second half of 2020:

(Key Throughout: **Bold Black: Seminars** & **Bold Blue: Publications**)

Term 3

- Wednesday, July 1 VAGTC Committee Meeting 7 6 to 9pm
- Monday, July 20 Region 8 South-East Metro Parent Seminar Online PART 1
- Thursday, July 23 Region 8 South-East Metro Parent Seminar Online PART 2
- Thursday, July 30 Catering for Gifted Students with Remote Learning 4 to 5pm plus Q&A
- VISION 1 Published: Student Wellbeing and Voice
- Monday, August 3 Region 4 South-West Metro Parent Seminar Online PART 1
- Thursday, August 6 Region 4 South-West Metro Parent Seminar Online PART 2
- Wednesday, August 12 VAGTC Committee Meeting 8 6.30 to 8.30pm.
- Monday, August 17 Region 5 North-East Rural Parent Seminar Online PART 1
- Thursday, August 20 Region 5 North-East Rural Parent Seminar Online PART 2
- Friday, August 28/Saturday, August 29 National Education Summit City. POSTPONED to 2022.
- Monday, August 31 Region 6 North-East Metro Parent Seminar Online PART 1
- Tuesday, September 1 Catering for Gifted Students with Remote Learning STEAM -Online PL via Zoom 4 to 5pm plus Q&A
- Wednesday, September 2 VAGTC Committee Meeting 9 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Wednesday, September 2 Catering for Gifted Students with Remote Learning Humanities - Online PL via Zoom 4 to 5pm plus Q&A
- Thursday, September 3 Region 6 North-East Metro Parent Seminar Online PART 2
- Monday, September 7 CEM Twilight Seminar Western Region, Online 3 to 4pm
- Saturday, September 12 AAEGT Conference All Day Online 9am to 4pm
- Monday, September 14 Region 7 South-East Rural Parent Seminar Online PART 1
- Thursday, September 17 Region 7 South-East Rural Parent Seminar Online PART 2

Term 4

- Monday, October 5 Region 3 South-Rural Parent Seminar Online PART 1
- Thursday, October 8 Region 3 South-West Rural Parent Seminar Online PART 2

- Wednesday, October 7 VAGTC Committee Meeting 10 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Wednesday, October 28 VAGTC AGM and Committee Meeting 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Friday, October 30 VISION Magazine Deadline for VISION 2, 2020
- Wednesday, November 4 VAGTC Committee Meeting 11 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Wednesday, December 2 VAGTC Committee Meeting 12 6.30 to 8.30pm
- VISION 2, 2020 Published: Practical Intelligence and Wisdom

Gifted Awareness Week has historically been during a week in late March, but for the Australian Association for the Education of Gifted and Talented, and the State and Territory affiliates across the country, the GAW theme is very relevant for the full year. The 2020 theme was: 'Well Being: A No Limits Approach,' and what a fitting theme that turned out to be in a year dominated by a global pandemic. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020 many of the planned activity were either moved online, postponed or in some cases even cancelled.

The first half of 2021 again saw us working on our Publications or what we could do online. During Term 1 we set our course and plans around seminar participants Poll feedback from 2020 as well as the GAW theme for 2021 'Thriving as Gifted'. Our Seminar topics reflected the GAW theme, and the needs of seminar participants in 2020 Seminars. All our Committee Meetings were also held online. Please see below for our events in Term 1 and 2, and those proposed in Terms 3 and 4 2021:

Term 1

- Tuesday, January 19 AAEGT Affiliates Meeting 1 for 2 Reps 7.30 to 9pm
- Wednesday, January 20 VAGTC Committee Meeting 1 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Wednesday, March 3 VAGTC Committee Meeting 2 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Tuesday, March 9 Parent Seminar 1 Gifted and High Ability Children 101: 7.30 to 9pm ONLINE
- Monday, March 22 Parent Seminar 2 Supporting Social and Emotional Needs: 7.30 to 8.30pm ONLINE
- Monday, March 29 Parent Seminar 3 Gifted and High Ability Children. Frequently Asked Questions: 7.30 to 8.30pm ONLINE
- Wednesday, April 7 VAGTC Committee Meeting 3 6.30 to 8.30pm

Term 2

- Wednesday, April 21 AAEGT Affiliates Meeting 2 for 2 Reps 7.30 to 9pm
- Thursday, April 29 Parent Seminar 4 Parent Networks: 7.30 to 8.30pm ONLINE
- Wednesday, May 5 VAGTC Committee Meeting 4 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Wednesday, May 12 Parent Seminar 5 What's Possible for School Based Provision for Gifted and High Ability Learners: 7.30 to 8.30pm ONLINE
- Sunday, May 23 to Saturday, May 29 Gifted Awareness Week Theme: Thriving as Gifted.
- Sunday, May 23 AAEGT Presentation 11am EST 'Thriving, not just Surviving' Prof Karen Rogers and Dr Peta Hay
- Monday, May 31 VISION Magazine Deadline for VISION 1, 2021.
- Wednesday, June 2 VAGTC Committee Meeting 5 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Monday, June 7 Parent Seminar 6 Gifted and High Ability Children 101: 7.30 to 9pm ONLINE
- Tuesday, June 22 Parent Seminar 7 Gifted and High Ability Learners: Panel and Q & A:
 7.30 to 9pm ONLINE

Term 3

- Wednesday, July 14 VAGTC Committee Meeting 6 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Monday, July 19 Parent Seminar 8 Supporting Social and Emotional Needs: 7.30 to 8.30pm ONLINE

- Saturday, July 31/Sunday, August 1 24th Biennial WCGTC World Conference Part 1
- Wednesday, August 4 VAGTC Committee Meeting 7 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Saturday, August 7/Sunday, August 8 24th Biennial WCGTC World Conference Part 2
- Wednesday, September 1 VAGTC Committee Meeting 8 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Tuesday, August 17 Parent Seminar 9 What's Possible for School Based Provision for Gifted and High Ability Learners: 7.30 to 8.30pm ONLINE
- Thursday, September 2 Parent Seminar 10 Working Collaboratively with your Child's School: 7.30 to 8.30pm ONLINE
- Monday, September 13 Parent Seminar 11 Gifted and High Ability Children 101: 7.30 to 9pm ONLINE

Term 4

- Wednesday, October 6 VAGTC Committee Meeting 9 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Thursday, October 21 Parent Seminar 12 Thriving Through Transitions: How to Support Gifted kids as they Transition Within Their Schooling Journey: 7.30 to 8.30pm ONLINE
- Wednesday, October 27 VAGTC Annual General Meeting with Presenter 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Thursday, October 28 VISION Magazine Deadline for VISION 2, 2021
- Wednesday, November 3 VAGTC Committee Meeting 10 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Tuesday, November 9 Parent Seminar 13 Gifted and High Ability Learners: Panel and Q & A: 7.30 to 9pm ONLINE
- Wednesday, December 1 VAGTC Breakup and Dinner 6.30 pm onwards

Thanks very much to the VAGTC Committee, for supporting and assisting with the planning of the Activities and Events that have been on offer over the last year.

Mark Smith
President VAGTC

VAGTC Consult Report 2021

Report Period: July 2020 - July 2021

Please note that the first months of this report cycle were covered in last year's report. This report tracks the reporting period but also refers to events in the first months of the 2020-2021 cycle.

July 2020 - December 2020

VAGTC Consult - via Facebook Messenger

VAGTC has provided free advice to non-members making enquiries via our Facebook presence. It was resolved that we would provide up to half an hour of free advice as an introductory service to non-members. We could then direct people as to where they could find appropriate support if they needed further help. Enquiries have predominantly been from parents and have occurred at a rate of approximately one a week with more enquiries during school holidays. Members of the Consult team have taken turns in responding to questions; however, it has been challenging when, at times, Consult Team members' email addresses have not been receiving consult emails. This has led to some having to take the bulk of the responsibility for responding to the requests. Thanks go to Mark, Kathy, Amy, Anna, and Susan for providing this service.

Members have also sought advice and support and our interactions with them have been ongoing.

It was hoped that providing this service would result in an increase in membership. A couple of families who have accessed both the free consultation and parent seminars have taken up membership. But many recipients of help have not taken up membership.

VAGTC Consult - Schools

Provision of professional learning services to schools has developed over 2020/2021 with a detailed outline of possible seminars advertised on our website. A schedule of fees was also put together by Catherine and Mark which allows VAGTC to engage presenters at a set hourly rate while also covering administration costs and a modest surplus.

Six schools engaged VAGTC in the 20/21 reporting period. Due to ongoing lockdowns and restrictions on visiting schools, several have been postponed or cancelled. More recently, one school accepted the offer to move the seminar to the online environment, and one further school had half of the seminars in a 5-part series online due to snap lockdowns. Online is not the preferred option for most schools. While the selection of seminars provides a starting point for schools to identify their professional learning needs, it is more common for a tailored schedule to be negotiated with the presenter. This requires considerable extra time on the part of the presenter but ensures better outcomes for the client school. VAGTC has provided seminars as whole day professional retreats, after school meetings (face to face and online) and as a series of regular sessions. Schools appreciate the flexibility offered.

VAGTC advertised for extra seminar presenters in 2020. However, we were not able to move forward in engaging more people as the nature of postponements and cancellations meant that we couldn't offer secure bookings. The one exception was when Bernadette Sheedy was included in our online panel Q&A seminar.

All our post seminar evaluations exceeded expectations with participants rating the quality and extent of their learning highly. Our key challenges were the uncertainty of whether we

were going to be able to deliver planned sessions, with ongoing cancellations and postponements. Also, the lack of updates to the VAGTC website for extended periods meant that the only way that schools could find out about what we offer was by targeted emails, word of mouth or our Facebook presence.

Key challenges for 2021/22 are to build the presenter team, regularly update information on the website, and streamline administrative processes. It is anticipated that the bulk of offerings will still be online with face-to-face seminars limited to single schools and small groups. It is hoped that considerable revision of the website undertaken recently will make it easier to find us. As restrictions lift, we also anticipate that the demand for PL by DET schools seeking to use their Student Excellence funding for professional learning will increase.

The Committee resolved to set aside a portion of income from seminars to the Yvonne Perret Scholarship Fund. Seminars in the coming year will have 2% allocated to the fund.

VAGTC Educator Seminars - online

Online professional learning, with fees to cover costs, were piloted in the second lockdown. A repeat of the April educator seminar was offered in July with Amy and Susan. Kathy presented a STEM online resource seminar and Susan and Anna a Humanities online resource seminar. While numbers were relatively low, all were greatly appreciated.

VAGTC DET Partnership/ VAGTC Parent Seminars 2020/21 - Annual Report 2021

Report Period: July 2020 - July 2021

VAGTC is now into the second year of a three-year agreement with DET to provide seminars for parents. The initial plan - to provide face to face seminars in each of the regions - was adjusted to online provision last year. As reported in 2020, rapid upskilling of VAGTC committee members along with a subscription to Zoom allowed us to continue to provide seminars. Feedback from the Student Excellence Unit at DET suggests that our flexibility in approach allowed us to fulfil our contract where many others were unable to do so during lockdown. In response to surveys of parents and feedback during seminars, we modified our offerings for late 2020 and into 2021 to include new topics of interest to parents. These included STEM, social and emotional wellbeing (twice), what can be done in schools to cater for gifted students (twice), forming gifted networks for parents, how to communicate with your school, and two sessions of Frequently Asked Questions where participants could ask their own questions of the presenter/s or hear responses to questions that had been asked in the past. The video which was produced last year was made available to seminar participants to view prior to attending Gifted 101 seminars (the original presentation) and other seminars as needed. New material has been developed and delivered by Kathy Harrison, Amy Horneman and Susan Nikakis. Overall, we delivered 12 parent seminars between July 2020 and June 2021.

Online registrations picked up in 2021 as people became more familiar with services moving online. Numbers were between 20 and 40 for most sessions. Attendance (devices) was generally a third to a half of registrations, so presenters were only engaged for expected attendance. Actual people viewing presentations was slightly higher as often there was more

than one person per device connected. Most participants were parents, though a few were also educators (averaging about 15%). As the seminars constitute professional learning for teachers, certification for teacher participants is now available on request. The largest seminar was the second FAQ evening, where a panel of *experts* were available to answer questions from the audience. The panel included Dr Joe Santoro, Bernadette Sheedy, and Kathy Harrison, and was facilitated by Amy Horneman. Other seminars were led by Kathy Harrison and Amy Horneman with support from Susan Nikakis, Mark Smith, and Anna Pollard. A total of 513 registrations were logged via Trybooking overall (see below for the complete list). Without exception, feedback from participants was extremely positive and several individuals returned for several of the new topics.

All participants responding to exit surveys reported learning a significant amount from the seminars. When asked whether they would like further seminars of a similar type, all said yes or that they would consider whether they could attend. The topics that were reported as being most useful were provisions for gifted students in a school, social and emotional considerations, how to liaise with your school, and identification. Where a Q&A time was available, this was always mentioned as a highlight of the session. Participants consistently took the opportunity to engage presenters in discussion. The presenters' flexibility in response to the needs of those attending the seminars was appreciated.

We discovered through the process of rapidly upskilling for online delivery of seminars that IT skill is very important for presenters. Ready access to admin support from the VAGTC administrator was vital for the success of the seminars and upholding the ongoing professional reputation of our organisation. Setting up processes for designing polls, capturing polling data and creating consistent meeting templates ensured quality control across all parent seminars, regardless of presenter.

Seminars between 1/7/2020 - 30/06/2021

Seminar Name	Date	Nos.
VAGTC Free Parent Seminar 3: South-East Metro	20/07/2020	64
Catering for Gifted Students with Remote Learning	30/07/2020	14
VAGTC Free Parent Seminar 4: Southwest Metro	3/08/2020	18
VAGTC Free Parent Seminar 5: Northeast Rural	17/08/2021	6
VAGTC Short Online Seminar - Steam Focus	31/08/2020	4
VAGTC Free Parent Seminar: North-East Metro	1/09/2020	41
VAGTC Short Online Seminar - English / Humanities Focus	2/09/2020	3
VAGTC Free Parent Seminar 7: South-East Rural	15/09/2020	7
VAGTC Seminar: Gifted & High Ability Children 101 Online	9/03/2021	23
VAGTC Seminar: Supporting Social & Emotional Needs	22/03/2021	37
Gifted & High Ability Children Frequently Asked Questions	29/03/2021	23
VAGTC Seminar: Parent Networks	29/04/2021	26
What's Possible for School-Based Provision for Gifted and High Ability Learners	12/05/2021	37
Gifted & High Ability Children 101 Online	7/06/2021	56
Gifted & High Ability Learners: Panel with Q & A	22/06/2021	154
TOTAL:		513

VAGTC DET Partnership/ VAGTC Parent FAQ Book 2021

As costing for the parent seminars was originally calculated for face-to-face sessions including travel and accommodation, savings in running online sessions were allocated to the FAQ resource writing project. Mark Smith has been in constant discussion with DET representatives about the progress and delivery of the project. Susan Nikakis and Anna Pollard were invited to write for the project. Amy Horneman and Kathy Harrison provided advice and questions based on their experience delivering seminars to parents. As writing progresses, they are to provide feedback, editorial comment and support where needed. Kathy Harrison was appointed by the VAGTC committee to coordinate the project and provide advice and technical input regarding delivering in electronic format. This project is ongoing with delivery of the resource scheduled for October 2021.

Recommendations

In response to the recommendations in the 2019/2020 report (see excerpt from last year's report below):

- 1. Delivery of parent seminars was revised, and specialised topics were covered.
- 2. The proposal to include network contacts on our website has not yet been enacted, but a seminar on Networks was delivered to interested parents and teachers.
- 3. Development of a Frequently Asked Questions resource has commenced.
- 4. Fee-for-service online seminars for educators have not been expanded as most of the bookings that we have received have been for face-to-face seminars with schools.

Recommendations from 2019/2020 report:

- 1. That the delivery of parent seminars for 2021 be revised, taking into consideration the need to deliver predominantly via Zoom and:
 - a. screen fatigue requiring shorter sessions and less sessions
 - b. requests for some specialised short sessions
 - c. not restricting attendance to regions for online but rather allowing participants to select according to scheduling needs or to interest areas, depending on the topic of the seminar 2.
- 2. Make available a list of network contacts, for both parents and educators, via our website, in response to multiple requests from seminar participants.
- 3. Ongoing consultation with DET to include discussion of development of parent resources not limited to their website.
- 4. VAGTC to further expand teacher professional learning seminars online, under the model of charging fees to cover services.

Recommendations for 2021/2022

- 1. That the Consult Team create a 'roster' so that they can share the unpaid load of responding to consult emails/queries. For example, if there were 4 members of the Consult Team, they could take a week each per month and be the nominated first response.
- 2. Solidify and maintain transparent processes for allocating presenters to all seminars: the process is currently that the President and the Treasurer make decisions in consultation with each other as to who would be best suited to taking school consults/parent seminars. This avoids conflicts of interest with committee members who are also members of the Consult Team.
- 3. Plan for mostly online parent seminars, but with the aim of developing effective strategies for supporting parents who wish to meet face-to-face through the networks that are being established. Parents have expressed that face-to-face networking is extremely important and valuable to them.
- 4. Continue to find a process for setting up and advertising parent networks through our website so that when we run seminars, we can point parents to this service.
- 5. Consider ways we can expand our marketing presence for resources and seminars: particularly DET schools/parents who are targeted as beneficiaries of DET's funding.
- 6. Expand the scope of the FAQ book from being an online DET resource to a published resource that we can sell.
- 7. In seminar polls, collect data in the initial poll about which school sector participants are representing, with the aim of expanding support for DET parents and schools in the future.

The committee discuss the idea of increasing scholarship fund (Yvonne Perret) contributions from the income received from all fee-paying seminar registrations. We would like to honor the committee's resolution to continue this scholarship

By Ms Kathy Harrison & Ms Amy Horneman

VAGTC Secretary's Report 2021

The VAGTC Committee has made excellent progress throughout 2021 despite the challenges created by a second year of COVID-19 lockdowns. We have continued to make significant inroads into improving and expanding the range of services we offer to our members including the development of teaching resources and advisory services to schools and families, delivery of online teacher and parent seminars, the ongoing upgrade of both Dropbox and our web site, the review of policy and governance documents, and the writing of our Parent Frequently Asked Questions Book, funded by DET.

It has been my pleasure, as secretary of the VAGTC, to document the deliberations of the VAGTC Committee this year. My goal has been to facilitate the communications of the committee by maintaining accurate records of the meeting minutes and to disseminate that information in a timely manner. I have also implemented the use of a new Meeting Agenda and Meeting Minutes and I thank Mr Michael Bond for his support in providing proformas and suggestions for improvement in this area. The committee has also reviewed the role of office bearers and revised some of the duties to ensure the most equitable and efficient operation of the committee. Once again, this year we were forced by the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions to conduct VAGTC monthly committee meetings and our seminars online. Thanks to the support of our administrative staff member, Julia Sale, these meetings have been set up and were conducted effectively using Zoom. Ms Kathy Harrison has also provided her technical support in the management of Zoom for seminars and Parent FAQ Book meetings which have facilitated the efficient working of the teams.

In 2021 the VAGTC have undertaken the writing of the DET funded, *Parent Frequently Asked Questions Book*, collaboratively written by Dr Anna Pollard and Dr Susan Nikakis, with the support of Ms Amy Horneman and Ms Kathy Harrison in the editing process. It is hoped that this text will provide a valuable resource for parents of gifted children in that it will contain answers to frequently asked questions by parents via the consult email and in parent seminars. The completed text will be uploaded to the DET and VAGTC websites for easy access by parents.

Possible areas of growth in 2022 will be:

- Publication of our Parent Frequently Asked Questions Book on the DET and VAGTC website
- Establishment of an online version of the VAGTC Resource Book in Flip Book Format

In 2022 we will review and publish the 9th edition of the VAGTC Resource Book and two further editions of Vision Magazine. The purpose of the Resource Book is to provide a range of enrichment resources including student competitions, programs, opportunities, and ideas. It also includes useful web sites for research into areas of interest and a list of bibliography and contact details of professional service providers for gifted children.

Overall, 2021 has been a productive and rewarding year for the VAGTC Committee and I commend fellow members on the excellent work that has been done advocating for gifted children via practical support of their families, and teachers. It has been a privilege and pleasure to be involved with the work of the VAGTC this year. The committee is a productive and purposeful team and has an excellent track record of achieving its goals.

Dr Anna Pollard Secretary VAGTC

Our Partnerships 2021

The VAGTC seeks to work with other organisations to identify mutually beneficial opportunities to reach a wider audience and spread the message about educating and supporting gifted and talented children, generally and in specific domains. This is done to enable these children to be their best selves. Participating organisations have included educational networks, schools, teacher professional organisations, parent groups, and business partners.

For the last seven years we have partnered with the Victorian Department of Education and Training to deliver Seminars in gifted education to parents and or educators. In recent years we partnered with Catholic Education Melbourne to present the Twilight Seminars with Professor John Munro, Dr Susan Nikakis (Committee Member), and other guest speakers.

Schools are an important partner in our efforts, and we thank the many schools that have collaborated with us in previous years to organise and/or host events. We look forward to continuing our partnership with host schools after the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

We also hope to further develop existing relationships with teachers' professional organisations to share research and practices in specific subject domains.

We historically have worked closely with parent groups such as Parents Victoria and Victorian Parents Council to support their efforts to advocate for best practices in family-school relationships. Business partners have included Hawker Brownlow, Eastern Press, Universal Securities, CHIP Centre Geelong, Tournament of Minds and Education HQ. These groups or business partners have donated in-kind to our organisation – from ongoing office space to promotional goods and services.

The VAGTC will continue to build our current partnership relationships and seek to establish new partnerships over the coming year.

Mark Smith
President VAGTC

VAGTC Governance Committee's Report 2021

The VAGTC Governance Committee was established in November 2017 and has been a standing committee since this time. This subcommittee is responsible for identifying governance standards and practices applicable to the VAGTC, reviewing the existing governance practices of the organisation, and considering promotion and enhancement of governance practices within the VAGTC.

The VAGTC Committee highlighted governance as a key focus area for improvement in 2018. The VAGTC Committee is committed to maintaining a high standard of governance and recognises the importance of governance for the overall operation of the VAGTC.

The Governance Committee has continued to work towards developing policies to support the operations of the VAGTC. Furthermore, the Governance Committee makes reports and recommendations to the VAGTC Committee on new and evolving compliance matters. The Committee regularly updates the VAGTC Committee about its activities and make appropriate recommendations to the VAGTC Committee. The development of sound and effective governance practices is fundamental to the smooth, effective, and transparent operation of the VAGTC and its ability to attract members, protect the rights of members and stakeholders and enhance the overall image of the organisation.

During the past year, a broad range of policies and resources have been formulated or reviewed by the Governance Committee in support of the VAGTC's governance framework including the Risk Management Policy (Policy No. 12), agenda template for committee meetings, and the publishing of an updated VAGTC COVID Safe Plan. The Governance Committee also provided guidance on the development of additional governance resources. Policy documents will be reviewed regularly by the VAGT Committee and the Governance Committee and will be updated in line with the amendments of applicable legislations, relevant guidelines, and good practice. The policies developed during 2021 build on the work completed during 2018, 2019, and 2020.

The Governance Committee has identified priority areas for 2021 including:

- Development of policies and procedures in the areas of bullying and sexual harassment.
- Further implementation of the Child Safe Standards and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations; and
- The Ongoing reviewing of existing policy and procedures.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the members of the Governance Committee for the past year: Ms Anna Pollard and Mr Mark Smith. Their expertise has been most beneficial in the enhancement of the governance practices of the VAGTC.

Michael Bond Chair, Governance Committee

VAGTC Treasurer's Report 2021

As a non-profit organisation our goal is to generate enough income each year to provide services to our current members and to cover our organisation's annual operational costs. It not our aim to generate a surplus for the benefit of future members, however we do still need to ensure that our organisation has enough surplus funds set aside to ensure that we are able to continue to operate and support our members if our profit was to decrease dramatically in any particular year due to circumstances outside of our control.

The accounts are prepared on an accrual method of accounting for income and expenses as it allows income generated to be matched with the corresponding expenses therefore giving our members a clearer picture of our financial position for the financial year.

As an organisation we are aiming to get to a point where we can generate enough income through memberships, sale of publications and presenting seminars to cover our organisation's annual operational costs, the publication of our Vison magazine twice a year and the publication of our Resource book every two years.

This year, whilst we have made a loss of \$14,038, we have again seen many positives. Our seminar income has increased significantly as we have designed several new seminar offerings and with the promotion on our website and through our consult operations the income generated by these seminars has increased by over 300%. We expect these seminars to increase again next year as we hopefully move back to more face-to-face seminars in schools. Our memberships have increased by 6.5% compared to the 2020 financial year without any increases in prices and our day-to-day operational expenses have remained steady.

Our major additional expenses this year were in relation to our Vision magazine and Resource book. This year we decided to outsource the layout of the Vision magazine which cost us an additional \$3,121 for the two issues. We found that this was necessary as we as a committee didn't have the time and resources to design the layout ourselves for each journal. It also means that our journal continues to be a premium product. This year was also a year that our Resource Book was updated. The cost of printing this and sending it out was \$4,735.

We are now in the middle of our three-year funding agreement with the Department of Education and Training to support parents of gifted and talented children over the next three years. This has seen a reduction in the amount of funding that we have received from the Department of Education and Training, however it has given us continued certainty given that it was a three-year deal.

Our net assets have decreased during the year; however we have finished the year in a solid financial position with total net current assets of \$79,128.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my third year as Treasurer of the VAGTC and look forward to continuing to assist with the good work that the VAGTC is doing in the future.

Catherine Frost Treasurer, VAGTC

Our Financial Performance 2021

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED & TALENTED CHILDREN INC

Reg No: A0010359P ABN: 93 904 346 898

INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
INCOME	•	•
Memberships	10,065	9,454
Sales - Books, DVD & Magazines	2,600	2,661
Government Grants	28,443	36,625
Interest	215	713
Conference, Seminars & Events	4,969	1,164
Other Income	1,530	1,410
TOTAL INCOME	\$47,822	\$52,027
		
EXPENSES		
Audit & Accounting Fees	1,700	1,700
Administration Expenses	13,200	15,642
Amortisation & Depreciation	1,565	679
Conference/Seminar Expense	22,293	21,005
Committee Expenses	664	1,835
Computer Expenses	1,391	1,936
Fees & Charges	228	235
Insurance	198	192
Memberships & Subscriptions	3,873	4,359
Other Expenses	143	58
Printing & Stationery	14,975	8,873
Postage	1,630	257
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$61,860	\$56,770
PROFIT FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES	(\$14,038)	(\$4,742)
RETAINED PROFITS AT START OF YEAR	\$98,502	\$103,245
RETAINED PROFITS AT END OF YEAR	\$84,464	\$98,502

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED & TALENTED CHILDREN INC

Reg No: A0010359P ABN: 93 904 346 898

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Nat Aust Bank - Cheque Account 12-157-9485	31,999	25,636
Paypal Account	6,698	2,761
Nat Aust Bank - Term Deposit	52,351	52,043
TOTAL CASH AT BANK	91,049	80,439
Accounts Receivable	124	24,419
Sundry Debtors & Accruals	2,015	3,913
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$93,188	\$108,772
FIXED ASSETS		
Office Equipment	580	399
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(257)	(92)
	323	307
Website	7,000	7,000
Less Accumulated Amortisation	(1,987)	(587)
	5,013	6,413
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	\$5,336	\$6,720
TOTAL ASSETS	\$98,524	\$115,492
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	6,331	1,508
GST Payable	4,697	3,278
Income Received in Advance	795	10,570
Sundry Creditors & Accruals	1,966	1,364
Sponsorship - Scholarship	271	271
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITES	\$14,060	\$16,991
NET ASSETS	\$84,464	\$98,502
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Retained Profits at End of Year	\$84,464	\$98,502

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED & TALENTED CHILDREN INC

ABN: 93 904 346 898 Reg. No. 10359 P

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2021

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

These financial statements are a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the following Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting require.

Australian Accounting Standards or other mandatory professional reporting requirements have not been fully been applied.

The following is a summary of the accounting policies adopted in the preparation of its financial statements.

(a) Accrual Basis of Accounting

The statements are prepared on an accrual basis of accounting.

The statements use historical costs and do not take into account changing money values. Prior year accounts were prepared on a cash basis of accounting with all grant monies reported as income even though related expenses have not yet been incurred.

(b) Good & Services Tax

The Association is registered for GST.

(c) Income Tax

The Association is exempt from income tax under section 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

2. Association Liabilities

The Association has not incurred liabilities other than in the ordinary course of its activities. Such liabilities can be met from available funds.

The Association funds have not been offered as security and no financial guarantees have been given in the name of the Association.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED & TALENTED CHILDREN INC.

ABN: 93 904 346 898 REG. No. 10359 P

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee have determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report:

- Presents fairly the financial position of the Victorian Association for Gifted & Talented Children Inc as at 30th June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Victorian Association for Gifted & Talented Children Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

Mark Smith President Catherine Frost Treasurer

15th October 2021

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED & TALENTED CHILDREN INC.

ABN: 93 904 346 898 REG. No. 10359 P

Independent Audit Report for the year ended 30 June 2021 to the Members of Victorian Association for Gifted & Talented Children Inc

Scope

We have audited the financial reports, being special purpose financial report for the year ended 30 June 2021 comprising Income & Expenditure Statement, Statement of Assets & Liabilities, Notes to Financial Statements and the Statement by Committee Members.

The committee is responsible for the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies used are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the needs of members. The committee's responsibilities also include establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation of and fair presentation of the financial report that is free of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

We have conducted an independent audit of the financial reports in order to express an opinion on them to the members. No opinion is expressed as to whether or not the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluation the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluation the overall presentation of the financial report. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of the Victorian Association for Gifted & Talented Children Inc as at 30th June 2021 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

Lindsay Coster FCA Coster Galgut Pty Ltd 20/ 10 /2021

ABN 66 005 054 866

Our Team 2021

Mr Mark Smith - President

Master of Education: (Gifted and Talented), completed via course work and research (Monash University). Most passionate about mentoring and inquiry learning programs that engage and inspire gifted learners, enabling passion research, processes for learning, and ultimate student autonomy. Presenter and writer of VAGTC seminars. Former Head of Gifted and Talented at Carey Grammar and the Mentone Grammar. Current Head of Enrichment Programs at Mentone Grammar.

Dr Susan Nikakis - Vice President

Doctor of Education. Thesis title: "What Makes an Expert Teacher of the Gifted". Senior Gifted Education Officer for Catholic Education Melbourne. Supervisor, Doctoral students, Australian Catholic University. A passionate advocate for gifted children, with the mantra 'different not more.

Ms Catherine Frost - Treasurer

Chartered Accountant, working in public practice for more than 20 years.

Catherine brings a wealth of knowledge in relation to accounting, taxation, and strategic planning to the organisation. She is also a parent who is passionate about gifted education and the wellbeing of our gifted students, as well as raising awareness in the general community.

Dr Anna Pollard - Secretary

B.Ed. [La Trobe], Grad Dip Secondary (Sec) [La Trobe], Bachelor of Arts [La Trobe], Ma Ed, [University of Melbourne], PhD [RMIT University]. Anna has taught in both State and Catholic school sectors as a leading teacher and gifted education program manager. She has also provided teacher professional development for teacher associations and has been a past lecturer in the pre-service teacher education program at RMIT University Melbourne. Anna's passion is program development, change management and Gifted Education program design. 2020 Secretary VAGTC. Past VAGTC Regional Seminar Leader 2018.

Mr Michael Bond - Policy

Bachelor of Information Systems (University of Tasmania), Master of Science in Education (Troy University). Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Passionate about meeting the unique needs of all students. Chair of VAGTC Governance Subcommittee. Areas of expertise include governance, policy development and implementation, strategy development and implementation, working with a wide range of stakeholders. Vice President of the VAGTC in 2010 and 2011. Served on the VAGTC Committee since 2009.

Ms Kathy Harrison - Seminar Developer & Leader

Master of Education (ICTE), Diploma of Education, Bachelor of Science. Curriculum writer for the Victorian High Ability Program and teacher of VHAP Mathematics through Virtual School Victoria. Former Coordinator of gifted education in the Compass Centre and Exemplary Teacher at Methodist Ladies' College. 2018 recipient of the Australian Mathematics Trust Teaching Award. A passionate gifted student advocate, enthusiastic about social justice and a community volunteer. Expertise and experience in developing and presenting VAGTC seminars, providing coaching and individual consultancy, and exemplar of theory to practice in gifted education.

Ms Irene Anderson

Master of HRM (Charles Sturt University), Bachelor of Education (Australian Catholic University), Diploma of Education – Primary (ACU – previously Christ College). Experienced primary and secondary teacher and lecturer in Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Teaching (ACU). Extensive experience as a Senior Education Advisor and Digital Content Manager at Independent Schools Victoria, providing professional learning and support for leadership and staff in schools. Committed to advocating for, and supporting, education opportunities for all students.

Ms Amy Horneman - Seminar Leader

Master of Arts (Applied Linguistics), Bachelor of Arts/Education (Secondary). Gifted education practitioner (Northside Christian College) and VAGTC seminar presenter. Passionate about fostering positive home-school partnerships, advocating with and for parents of gifted children and seeing all (but particularly gifted) children happy and loving learning inside and outside of school.