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About the VAGTC

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 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.

VAGTC President's Report 2023

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world: Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead Smith

It is amazing to see what a small band of passionate educators and parents can achieve in a year! I feel privileged to work alongside the VAGTC committee with the vast range of experience and expertise offered to help gifted children, their families and the educators and schools striving to nurture the children in our care. This past year has had its challenges with ill health and major life events making life challenging for many committee members. However, the team has pulled together brilliantly.

The importance of continuing advocacy has been highlighted at national and international gifted education gatherings this year. Dr Julia Link Roberts said in her recent keynote address that you may have policy in place but a change in staffing can quickly change things as policy is changed or no longer implemented. Continuing advocacy is essential and ensures that both policy and practice are aligned. We are so grateful for the constant advocacy of our parents, educators, and affiliated organisations. This allows us to keep the needs of gifted children at the forefront of considerations. She also highlighted the importance of positive partnerships and relationships with decision makers. Again, we appreciate the positive partnership that we have with the Student Excellence Unit of DET and the many schools that we work with.

Detailed information about what our various task groups have achieved can be found in the task group reports: Consult, Vision, Website and Finance. I would like to thank the members of each task group for the considerable effort and passion that is put into each area.

Consult

As the convenor of the Consult task group, it was great to see the pool of presenters increase along with the number of people able to work in a support role in seminars. Task group members were Kathy Harrison, Dr Susan Nikakis, Claire Reid, Amy Horneman, Victoria Poulos and Bernadette Sheedy. Looking at the variety of topics and the increasing popularity of our parent seminars, I can see why we are getting interstate visitors. Personally satisfying are the numbers of parents and teachers who are letting us know of the difference that we have made in their lives. Whether that is through a listening ear and timely advice through our individual consult line, returning participants who can tell us how they have used the insight gained in seminars, or teachers and principals who have successfully implemented change in their schools.

A key element in the success of our parent seminar series is the collaborative relationship that we have with members of the Student Excellence Unit in the Department of Education. Their feedback and suggestions are invaluable, and we have been able to network more widely. I was invited to speak to several of the departmental teams early in the year about transformational giftedness along with the needs of gifted and highly able students in Victorian schools. It was gratifying to see the level of interest and in depth questions following the presentation. Our new agreement, secured at the end of 2022, will see funding of parent seminars through to the end of 2025.

Vision

Laura Wilcox and Karen Glauser-Edwards have taken on the huge task of our publication of Vision Magazine in 2023; coordinating gathering articles, editing, arranging layout, printing and distribution. Amy Horneman has stepped down from her central role in editing Vision but continues to be involved. We thank Amy for all the work that she put in and the guidance that she can now offer the Vision team. We are grateful for the efforts of the team along with all the contributors who shared their research and insights in order to further understanding of the needs of gifted students.

This year's topics of 'Strengthening Advocacy for Gifted Children' and 'Managing Expectations of Giftedness and Talent' were well received and Vision continues to be acknowledged as an exemplary magazine for all interested in the education of gifted and talented children.

After considerable discussion, we have decided that going forward, Vision will be provided in electronic format to members. However, we recognise that the feel, look and smell of a physical copy of the magazine is important to some, so members will be able to order a print copy at cost. Vision will also be available through our shop to non-members.

Other publications and communication have been honed throughout the past year. A regular newsletter is allowing us to notify recipients of upcoming events and issues of interest. Thanks to Susan Nikakis for coordinating this. The website includes a sign up for the newsletter for non-members and we hope that our communications will become more targeted and effective as a result.

Website

After a few false starts, we engaged a local web designer to develop our new website. Improved functionality in administering membership, providing information to AAEGT and streamlining payments will improve the efficiency of our administration. Bookings for seminars and enquiries regarding professional learning are all accessible from the website along with general information about VAGTC. It is a work in progress which recently went live. We welcome feedback from members especially as we develop the members area of the website. Ultimately, members will be able to access archived copies of Vision, seminar outlines and some recordings of past presentations.

Our administrator, Julia Sale, provided excellent advice and collaborated on the design of the site as she will be one of the key people to edit and maintain it. Karen Glauser Edwards and Simon Gitson contributed to the early stages of the project. While Claire Reid and myself provided committee input throughout. This was no mean feat with many hours spent considering options, meeting with Snugsite, reflecting on future needs and directions of VAGTC, and keeping the rest of the committee up to date. Thanks for all the ideas, planning and strategizing. We look forward to seeing continued development in response to the needs of our members.

Finance

For the past five years, Catherine Frost has given her considerable expertise to VAGTC, ensuring that finances are accurately reported, payments made and all of our responsibilities to outside regulatory bodies and linked organisations fulfilled. There is a lot that happens behind the scenes! She also managed conflict of interest for presenters, helping to ensure that VAGTC committee members with multiple roles and links to external organisations, did not allow any conflicts of interest to affect the organisation. We thank Catherine for her time and dedication to VAGTC through her professional handling of our finances.

Going forward, we do not yet have a treasurer so Catherine has offered pro bono work by her accounting firm to assist us with record keeping and advice until we can find someone to take on the role of VAGTC Treasurer.

Executive

Between committee meetings there are a multitude of tasks, responses and decisions that need to be undertaken on behalf of the committee. Our executive team has worked behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of our events and activities, spent hours consulting with a diverse range of individuals and organisations, advocated on behalf of VAGTC, liaised with DET and other stakeholders, paid bills, ensured good governance. The list is extensive. My thanks to Dr Susan Nikakis, Claire Reid and Catherine Frost for their creative, good humoured, caring and supportive approach to all challenges no matter how big or small.

World Conference

VAGTC was well represented amongst the Australian delegates and presenters at this year's World Conference for Gifted and Talented Children. I joined Susan and Claire to present the "Student Excellence Program - but wait there's more!". This provided an overview of what is happening in Victoria at the moment and VAGTC's central role in providing advice to parents and consultancy to parents and educators. Having two Victorian High Ability Program course writers on committee is significant. Claire and I were able to show how VHAP is contributing to the provision for highly able Victorian students as well as providing teachers with an exemplary model of curriculum while Susan showcased the work of

VAGTC with parents. There has been a lot of interest internationally in what we are doing with enquiries from as far as Europe and as close as New Zealand.

A contingent from the New Zealand Gifted Education Centre responded to our presentation, arranging a fact finding trip to Melbourne to find out more about the Student Excellence Program and support from VAGTC for both parents and educators. We look forward to further collaboration and cooperation in the future.

Congratulations also to Amy Horneman, Victoria Poulos and past president Mark Smith for their presentation on mentoring. It was a fabulous exploration of the variety of approaches to mentoring gifted students with diverse needs and situations.

Advocacy

Much of what we do behind the scenes is not publicised to ensure the privacy of individuals. It has been a joy to see where our advocacy has made a difference at an individual level but also significant when school policy is changed, and children are given access to opportunities. Along with our regular consult activities, VAGTC has been invited to provide assistance and advocacy for profoundly gifted students in primary schools. We have also worked with schools and the DET to examine policies and propose changes to allow increased access to programs and opportunities for gifted students.

When the change to guidelines concerning applications for placement at schools out of zone was announced, VAGTC made public statements circulated in social media and other channels. We were concerned that gifted students who had not found their needs met at a local school would be denied the opportunity to attend a school that had the resources and specialist training to meet their unique needs. It is not possible for all schools to cater for the vast variety of specialist needs. However, many schools have developed expertise in a particular area such as giftedness or twice exceptionality. It makes sense for students to be able to apply out of zone on the grounds of curriculum or special needs.

Equity of access underpins much of our recent advocacy including access by home educated children to opportunities and programs. But also access by all gifted children to learning at their zone of proximal development. It is vital that all children - including gifted children - have access to an education that will help them to thrive and grow.

Thank you to the VAGTC committee, to our members and our administrator Julia Sale for all the good we have accomplished together this year!

In the words of John Wesley:

“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”

— **John Wesley**

Kathy Harrison
President VAGTC

VAGTC Vice President's Report 2023

“What makes a child gifted and talented may not always be good grades in school, but a different way of looking at the world and learning.”

Chuck Grassley

Gifted Awareness Week

Gifted Awareness Week Australia was founded by the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) to raise awareness of the identification, support and learning needs of gifted children and to celebrate the dedication of individuals and educational bodies who are making a difference in the lives of gifted children and their families. This year it was held in May with the theme **The diverse faces of giftedness** Students could make videos of other students talking about the many ways giftedness impacts their life in all its varied aspects. Students could also write an essay or poem about the theme or represent it visually. The quality of the entries was superb and we as a committee congratulated everyone who contributed. Winners all appeared in the VAGTC magazine Vision

Gifted Twilights

Once again we worked closely with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools and the ACU to deliver Gifted twilights remotely. We are thrilled that Professor John Munro from the ACU will again be presenting gifted twilights in 2024.

Universal Security Services

A big thankyou to Bronwen Bennett for donating a hot desk and meeting areas for the VAGTC at no cost. A gifted advocate herself some of the committee have had Bronwen's security systems installed which are something out of a Jetson's Movie ! Once again we thank Bronwen Bennett from Universal Security Services for donating office space to the VAGTC. Without her generosity we would not have a 'home'.

Our President

Our president has been a leader, a mentor, an expert in the field and an innovator. You have read all we have achieved in Kathy's thorough and informative report. She hasn't given herself the credit that is due because she is humble and keeps the gifted child at the centre of everything the VAGTC pursues.

As I put together the newsletter I am constantly amazed that a hardworking volunteer group of individuals can achieve so much for gifted education.

“Leadership is not a person or a position. It is a complex moral relationship between people based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the good.”

Joanne Ciulla (Author and Educator)

As the VAGTC moves from strength to strength Kathy leads our shared vision of catering for the needs of our gifted children plus empowering both parents and teachers.

Dr Susan Nikakis
VAGTC Vice President

Our Events:

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

Term 3 - 2022

- Wednesday, July 13 - VAGTC Committee Meeting - 6.30 to 8.30pm
- **Thursday, July 28 – Frequently Asked Questions book launch**
- **Thursday, September 15 – VISION Magazine Published Volume 33 No 1 - Facilitating Gifted Students' Thriving in Mixed Ability Classrooms**
- Wednesday, August 3 - VAGTC Committee Meeting – 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Wednesday, September 7 - VAGTC Committee Meeting – 6.30 to 8.30pm
- **Thursday, August 11 – Parent Seminar – Gifted Networks – Starting and Establishing Levels of Support ONLINE**
- **Tuesday, August 23 – Parent Seminar – Q&A Panel – Types of Schooling for Gifted and High Ability Students ONLINE**
- **Wednesday, August 31 – Parent Seminar – Parent Discussion Night ONLINE**
- **Monday, September 13 – Parent Seminar – Executive Functions – What are they and strategies to improve ONLINE**

Term 4 - 2022

- Wednesday, October 5 – VAGTC Committee Meeting 9 – 6.30 to 8.30pm
- **Thursday, October 13 – Parent Seminar – Surviving Through Educational Transitions ONLINE**
- **Thursday, October 24 – Parent Seminar – Parent Discussion Night ONLINE**
- Wednesday, November 9 – VAGTC Annual General Meeting - 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Wednesday, November 2 – VAGTC Committee Meeting – 6.30 to 8.30pm
- **Tuesday, November 15 – Parent Seminar – Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Support of Gifted - ONLINE**
- **Thursday, October 27 – MACS and VAGTC Joint Gifted Twilight Seminar**
- Thursday, December 8 – VAGTC Breakup and Dinner

Term 1 - 2023

- Tuesday 24th January – Strategic Planning Day
- Wednesday, February 7 – VAGTC Committee Meeting 1 – 7.30 to 9pm
- Wednesday, March 7 – VAGTC Committee Meeting 2 – 7.30 to 9pm
- **Thursday, March 9 - Parent Seminar – What is possible in school provision?**
- **Tuesday 21 March – Parent Seminar – Establishing rapport with your child's school ONLINE**
- **Friday, February 24 – VISION Magazine Published for Volume 33, No 2 – Strengthening Advocacy for Gifted Children**
- **Monday, March 27 – Parent Seminar – Parent discussion night - ONLINE**
- Wednesday, April 4 – VAGTC Committee Meeting 3 – 7.30 to 9pm

Term 2 - 2023

- Wednesday, May 2 – VAGTC Committee Meeting 4 – 7.30 to 9pm
- **Wednesday May 3 – Parent Seminar – Supporting Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted Learners ONLINE**
- **Thursday, May 18 – Educator Seminar – Developing Individual Learning/Education Plans (ILPs) for Gifted and High Ability Students: ONLINE**
- **Wednesday, May 24 – Parent Seminar – Voices of gifted and high ability young people. ONLINE**
- Saturday, May 20 to Sunday, May 28 – Gifted Awareness Week – Theme: The diverse faces of giftedness
- Wednesday, June 6 – VAGTC Committee Meeting 5 – 7.30 to 9pm
- **Thursday, June 15 – Parent Seminar – Choosing a good fit school ONLINE**

VAGTC Consult Report 2023

Parent Seminars

Our agreement with DET to provide parent seminars concluded at the end of 2022. This agreement was forged pre-pandemic and was modified significantly to move from face-to-face events to online seminars. During the term of the agreement, we were able to allocate funds to the development of a Frequently Asked Questions Resource for parents along with support for administration and maintenance of our website. Despite the challenges of needing to pivot and reimagine how we could best support families of gifted children and other stakeholders, we delivered on all aspects of the agreement plus extra initiatives.

The popularity of our seminars continues to increase. A new agreement to continue seminars and support some of our operations such as the website was developed and covers the years from 2023 – 2025, coinciding with the extension to the Victorian High Ability Program. A central element of our success is the positive working relationship that we have developed with the Student Excellence Unit. Rather than having one contact person at VAGTC, this year we have ensured that there are several people in each meeting so that relationships are developed and multiple perspectives represented. Our thanks are extended to the SEU for a positive working relationship and their openness to suggestions and encouragement of new initiatives which we have proposed.

| Date | Presentation Title | Type | Presenter(s) | Attended by |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 28/7/2022 | FAQ Launch | Parent Seminar | Kathy Harrison | 48 tickets sold |
| 11/8/2022 | Networks | Parent Seminar | Kathy Harrison and Claire Reid | 66 tickets sold |
| 23/8/2022 | Q&A Panel - Types of Schooling | Parent Seminar | Kathy Harrison/ Karen Glauser-Edwards | 77 tickets sold |
| 31/8/2022 | Parent Support Night | Parent Seminar | Bernadette Sheedy/ Kathy Harrison | 36 tickets sold |
| | Psychologist, Ruth Tesselaar - Executive Functions | Parent Seminar | Ruth Tesselaar/ Claire Reid | 50 tickets sold |
| 13/10/2022 | Thriving Through Transitions | Parent Seminar | Claire Reid/ Kathy Harrison | 60 tickets sold |
| 24/10/2022 | Parent Support Night | Parent Seminar | Dr Susan Nikakis/ Claire | 39 tickets sold |

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|------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | Reid | |
| 27/10/2022 | Gifted Twilight Seminar | Educator Seminar | Prof John Munro | 112 tickets sold |
| 15/11/2022 | Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Support of Gifted | Parent Seminar | Amy Horneman | 74 tickets sold |
| 09/03/2023 | What's possible with school provision? | Parent Seminar | Kathy Harrison | Number of Registrations (trybooking tickets sold): 86 Number Attending: 42 devices - estimate 60 people |
| 21/03/2023 | Establishing Rapport with Your Child's School | Parent Seminar | Dr Susan Nikakis & Claire Reid | Number of Registrations (trybooking tickets sold): 54 Number Attending: 21 logins (~30 attendees) |
| 27/03/2023 | Parent Discussion Night - FAQs | Parent Seminar | Claire Reid, Victoria Poulos & Dr Susan Nikakis | Number of Registrations (trybooking tickets sold): 40 |
| 03/05/2023 | Social and emotional needs | Parent seminar | Bernadette Sheedy and Claire Reid | Number of Registrations (trybooking tickets sold): 248 tickets Number Attending: 24 logins (~30 attendees) |
| 18/05/2023 | ILPS (entry level) | Educator seminar | Kathy Harrison and Dr Susan Nikakis | 12 devices |

Although the reporting period finishes in June, we are keen to share the seminars that have taken place in the time between then and our AGM

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|------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13/07/2023 | Psychologist Ruth Tesselaar on executive functioning | Parent Seminar | Ruth Tesselaar | Number Attending: 40 logins |
| 15/07/2023 | Choosing a good fit school | Parent seminar | Kathy Harrison & Victoria Poulos | Number of Registrations (trybooking tickets sold): 27 Number Attending: 20 logins (~25 attendees) |
| 24/07/2023 | Interpreting school reports | Parent Seminar | Victoria Poulos | Number Attending: 18 logins (~25 attendees) |
| 24/08/2023 | ILPs (Advanced) | Parent Seminar | Kathy Harrison | Number of Registrations (trybooking tickets sold): 86 |

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|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | Number Attending: 40 devices - estimate 60 people One from WA, one SA, 2 NSW |
| 07/09/2023 | Identifying Gifted Students - Assessment Tools other than WISC | Parent Seminar | Dr Susan Nikakis & Claire Reid | Number of Registrations (trybooking tickets sold): 20 Number Attending: 16 logins (~30 attendees) |
| 12/10/2023 | Parent Discussion Night 2E | Parent Seminar | Victoria Poulos & Bernadette Sheedy | 83 tickets sold |

With free registration and no obligation to “turn up on the day”, it has been challenging to anticipate how many people may be in any one seminar. When there are larger numbers of participants, we aim to provide a support person alongside the presenter to help manage aspects of the online environment such as providing practical support to participants who are having technical issues, managing late comers and keeping track of questions posed in the chat. It has proved to be very effective in that the individuals providing tech support have also been experienced in gifted education, so able to answer questions in the background.

The numbers reported above indicate how many people registered for the event and our estimate of how many were behind the screens for each event. Approximately one third of registrants do not attend. However, we get requests from some of these for notes and handouts after the event. We now send handouts to all registrants whether or not they attended and to others who request them after the event.

Participants are surveyed at the conclusion of each seminar to find out whether they found the seminar helpful and to ascertain which aspects and topics were most helpful. They are also invited to suggest further topics. The feedback is invaluable in determining whether to repeat a seminar or hone the content and to identify topics of relevance to parents.

A snapshot of feedback:

Absolutely fabulous information session today. Thank you both!!

Thank you so much Kathy and Claire, a most helpful and insightful session!

I just wanted to say thank you to VAGTC for your support and seminars! You've really empowered us to advocate for our child at school and after a rough term we're so happy to see a light at the end of the tunnel. We really appreciate your information and guidance 💖

Thanks for lovely presentation and patiently answering our question.

Thank you so much for sharing your expertise and experience! Thank you also to the VAGTC for hosting such an informative presentation.

One parent told us that our suggestions in relation to their child entering preschool were 'spot on' and they were returning to the VAGTC to thank us for the guidance.

Whilst seminars are designed for Victorian parents, participants were from all states and territories with the occasional visitor from Singapore and New Zealand. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is due to lack of similar funding for events and seminars in other states. VAGTC is happy to include participants from other states but we also encourage them to connect with their local organisation, especially when an AAEGT affiliate is available.

Special Projects

Professional learning topics for HAPLs

VAGTC tendered to write a differentiated outline of professional learning topics for HAPLs covering the next three years. Kathy Harrison undertook this work with feedback from members of the committee.

Student Forum

On 24th May, we hosted a student voice event, 'An Exceptional Exchange', at the new Centre for Higher Education Studies in South Yarra, Melbourne. Around 45 people attended to hear from the 8 panellists, all of whom are students in Melbourne. The students came from a variety of sectors, including Home Education, DET and independent, and there was a healthy mix of diversity in voice: gender, exceptionality and learning experience. Audience members asked a lot of questions around the students' school/learning, social and emotional experiences. The evening started with an all-in welcome from CHES and VAGTC, then a split into 8 different 'human library' spaces, where the students shared pre-prepared presentations with their audiences and answered questions from them.

The evening finished with a formal all-in panel Q&A discussion, which uncovered some fascinating insights, followed by the opportunity for informal discussions between attendees, panellists and VAGTC Committee Members.

As a result of the interest in this evening, and the connections made by the student panellists, we decided to host a student-led online youth forum: 'Students and the system: A youth forum on education'. The three panellists came from a variety of senior grades and sectors, including Home Education, DE and independent. The panellists met in advance, to brainstorm the topics they felt worthy of discussion, before hosting a conversation for participants to listen in to. Some 93 individual registrations were received for the forum, with 29 devices connecting for the actual event. Those in attendance found the conversation interesting and insightful, as parents, teachers and psychologists working with gifted young people, as well as fellow students.

These student voice events have been successful and well received, and it would be good if resources were available to continue them in the future. They give students, from a variety of sectors and age groups, an important platform for sharing their experiences, insights and wisdom in a respectful and hopeful way.

Educator Seminars

Separate Educator seminars were not funded by DET so we provided a few offerings for individuals at a rate which covered our costs with a small margin to contribute to administration. The entry level seminar on Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) was well received though numbers were lower than we had hoped. After the seminar, we received requests from teachers who had missed the session. It appeared that they were not anticipating the availability of twilight seminars. Committee has resolved to provide regular twilight seminars each term so that teachers can plan to include them in their professional learning plans. Some educators are choosing to come to parent seminars also. There still exists a need for more extended opportunities for individual educators such as all day programs which we have provided to individual schools.

Our full day professional learning seminar was put on hold this year due to a lack of presenters available on the weekend. Feedback from teachers showed that their workload and the current stresses of school life meant that shorter, targeted professional learning was preferable.

We have partnered with several individual primary schools to provide one day intensive professional learning for the whole staff. And secondary schools have engaged us to work with groups of teachers. These schools are across State, Catholic and independent sectors. Feedback from these schools has been overwhelmingly positive.

A Twilight Seminar open to members of VAGTC was offered by Prof John Munro in October last year with 112 people signing up for the event. We are grateful for Prof Munro's continued support of educators and VAGTC through these engaging and thought provoking seminars.

Report by: Kathy Harrison, Claire Reid, Amy Horneman, Susan Nikakis, Karen Glauser-Edwards

VAGTC Website Task Group Report 2023

This year, the committee undertook an important but huge task of redesigning our website. We wanted to create a more user-friendly, intuitive and responsive site for our members and for those who come in search of support from VAGTC. We also wanted to streamline services such as membership payments and the ability to sign up for seminars within the site itself. A lot of time and energy, in sourcing and working with a website builder, has resulted in a fantastic new site which has just launched; please have a look around and let us know what you think! <https://vagtc.org.au/>

Report by: Claire Reid

VAGTC Publications 2023

Vision

VISION has continued as a biannual publication, with all members of VAGTC receiving a copy as part of their membership, and the Tasmanian Association for the Gifted (TAG) ordering copies for their members as well.

Volume 33(2) explored the topic of 'Strengthening Advocacy for Gifted Children', with contributions sourced from a range of voices, including students, parents, teachers and psychologists from around Australia and the United States. Submissions addressed the diverse needs of gifted children, including those with twice-exceptionalities, and provided practice ideas for differentiation, parent advocacy, self-advocacy and collaboration.

Volume 34(1), 'Managing Expectations of Giftedness and Talent', drew on the experiences of students, teachers and parents, both in the education system presently and reflecting on past achievements. Teachers, parents and psychologists from Australia and the United States contributed their perspectives on the topic. Submissions from students entering secondary school and VCE explored the challenges faced, including those of a student recently arrived in Australia. The Centre for Higher Education Studies' (CHES) submission quickly garnered attention on social media.

Submissions for Volume 34(2), 'Enriching Gifted and Talented Minds', are currently being collected and collated.

VISION continues to provide a platform for all stakeholders, within the gifted and talented sphere, and affords educational practitioners and researchers the opportunity to communicate their experience and findings to the wider community.

Regular Newsletter/Advertising

This year we began sending newsletters at least once a term with reminders and interesting information about gifted children. Dr Susan Nikakis was the organiser. Targeted communications were sent to highlight upcoming special events. This newsletter will be available to all who sign up via our new website in the future, helping us to hone our communications.

Our administrator Julia Sale has shared information via our social media channels. This has proved to be extraordinarily effective with registrations jumping immediately following posts. The parents of gifted children FaceBook groups have also begun to share our promotional materials. Permission was granted to Kathy Harrison to post our events.

Report by: Laura Wilcox, Amy Horneman, Dr Susan Nikakis, Karen Glauser-Edwards

VAGTC Treasurer's Report 2023

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, we have made a small loss of \$180 which is a significant improvement on the loss of \$11,995 in 2022. We have seen a decrease in seminar income compared to 2022 as that year saw a significant increase as schools booked seminars they had delayed during the Covid period. Our membership income has increased by around 9%, slightly down from last years 10% increase but showing a good upwards trend. Our day to day operational expenses have remained steady.

One of the reasons that the net profit has improved by such a large amount this year is because we didn't fully expend our grant income received from DET this year. A number of committee members donated their time (value of \$8,100) to DET run activities and the DET allowed this donation of time to contribute to our grant acquittal in this instance. It is not something that we will be able to do going forward.

Our major unfunded expense this year was our Vision magazine \$9,706 and our Website costs of \$3,988 (we since spent a further \$2,196 on the website). We do sell copies of our Vison magazine to the Tasmanian Association for the Gifted who provide it to their members. We received \$3,188 from TAG during the year. In 2024, the committee is intending to change the way that Vison magazine is delivered to our members with a digital copy being made available. A hard copy will still be available but at an extra cost. This change is due to the significant cost of producing the magazine in hard copy format.

We are in the first year of a new three-year funding agreement with the Department of Education and Training to support parents of gifted and talented children. This funding is for \$24,100per year.

Our net assets have remained fairly stable during the year with us finishing the year in a solid financial position with total net current assets of \$72,289.

Given that we would have made a loss of over \$8,000 if had of had to repay the portion of the grant income that we didn't fully expend, and we have been consistently making losses over the last few years, we have determined that we will need to increase membership fees from 1 January 2024.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my fifth and final year as Treasurer of the VAGTC and hope that the incoming Treasurer enjoys it as much as I have.

Catherine Frost
Treasurer, VAGTC

Our Financial Performance 2023

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED & TALENTED CHILDREN INC

Reg No: A0010359P ABN: 93 904 346 898

INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

| | 2023 \$ | 2022 \$ |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Memberships | 12,175 | 11,210 |
| Sales - Books, DVD & Magazines | 3,966 | 4,370 |
| Government Grants | 28,550 | 25,000 |
| Interest | 996 | 45 |
| Conference, Seminars & Events | 2,408 | 10,899 |
| Other Income | 3,120 | 1,800 |
| TOTAL INCOME | <u>51,215</u> | <u>53,324</u> |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Audit & Accounting Fees | 1,700 | 1,700 |
| Administration Expenses | 14,890 | 14,400 |
| Amortisation & Depreciation | 1,477 | 1,569 |
| Conference/Seminar Expense | 15,977 | 13,986 |
| Committee Expenses | 579 | 616 |
| Computer Expenses | 609 | 662 |
| Fees & Charges | 284 | 484 |
| Insurance | 227 | 231 |
| Memberships & Subscriptions | 4,775 | 4,494 |
| Other Expenses | 279 | 280 |
| Printing & Stationery | 10,164 | 26,105 |
| Postage | 434 | 793 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | <u>51,395</u> | <u>65,320</u> |
| (LOSS) PROFIT FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES | <u>(180)</u> | <u>(11,995)</u> |
| RETAINED PROFITS AT START OF YEAR | <u>72,469</u> | <u>84,464</u> |
| RETAINED PROFITS AT END OF YEAR | <u>72,289</u> | <u>72,469</u> |

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED & TALENTED CHILDREN INC

Reg No: A0010359P ABN: 93 904 346 898

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | |
| National Australia Bank Cheque Account | 17,695 | 14,888 |
| Paypal Account | 4,095 | 6,155 |
| TryBooking Account | 1,006 | 3,792 |
| National Australia Bank - Term Deposit | <u>52,790</u> | <u>52,399</u> |
| TOTAL CASH AT BANK | 75,586 | 77,234 |
| Accounts Receivable | 14,278 | 4,477 |
| Sundry Debtors & Accruals | <u>2,087</u> | <u>908</u> |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | <u>91,951</u> | <u>82,619</u> |
| FIXED ASSETS | | |
| Office Equipment | 580 | 580 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | <u>(503)</u> | <u>(426)</u> |
| | 77 | 154 |
| Website | 10,988 | 7,000 |
| Less Accumulated Amortisation | <u>(4,787)</u> | <u>(3,387)</u> |
| | <u>6,201</u> | <u>3,613</u> |
| TOTAL FIXED ASSETS | <u>6,278</u> | <u>3,767</u> |
| TOTAL ASSETS | <u>98,229</u> | <u>86,386</u> |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | |
| Accounts Payable | 7,925 | 4,820 |
| Goods & Services Tax Payable | 4,218 | 7,429 |
| Income Received in Advance | 10,932 | 899 |
| Sundry Creditors & Accruals | 2,491 | 395 |
| Sponsorship - Scholarship | <u>374</u> | <u>374</u> |
| TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITES | <u>25,940</u> | <u>13,917</u> |
| NET ASSETS | <u>72,289</u> | <u>72,469</u> |
| MEMBERS' FUNDS | | |
| Retained Profits at End of Year | <u>72,289</u> | <u>72,469</u> |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

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 2023

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

Financial Reporting Framework

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 as the users of the financial statements are able to obtain additional information to meet their needs.

Statement of Compliance

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the basis of recognition and measurement specified by all Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are based on historical costs. They do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated specifically, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

(a) Grant Income

Grant monies received are recognised as income over the period services are delivered.

(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.

3. Mortgages Charges ad Securities

No mortgages, charges or securities affect any property of the association at the end of its financial year and no association assets are held in a trust by a person or body on behalf of the association.

**VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED & TALENTED
CHILDREN INC**

ABN: 93 904 346 896 REG. No. 10359 P

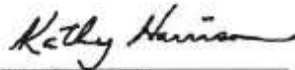
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

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

In the opinion of the committee the financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Victorian Association for Gifted & Talented Children Inc as at 30th June 2023 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. 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:



Kathy Harrison
President



Catherine Frost
Treasurer

3rd November 2023

Audit Report 2023

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 2023 to the Members of Victorian Association for Gifted & Talented Children Inc

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Victorian Association for Gifted & Talented Children Inc. (the Association), which comprises the assets and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2023, the income and expenditure statement for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the certification by members of the committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report gives a true and fair view of, the financial position of the association as at 30 June 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 : *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



3rd November 2023

Martin Reichenberg
Chartered Accountant
Coster Galgut Pty Ltd
 39 Clunies Ross Crescent Mulgrave Victoria 3170

Our Team 2022

Ms Kathy Harrison - President

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.

Dr Susan Nikakis – Vice President

Dr Susan Nikakis, currently works for Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) where she recommends improvements such as pedagogical changes to cater for the education of gifted students. She supervises Doctoral students at the University of Melbourne and is the current Vice President of the Victorian Association for Gifted and Talented Children (VAGTC). Susan has written and edited four books centred on the education of gifted students. She has delivered papers and keynote addresses at both international and national conferences. She believes that catering for the learning needs of gifted is a matter of justice.

Ms Catherine Frost – Treasurer

Catherine is a Chartered Accountant, working in public practice for more than 20 years. She 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.

Ms Claire Reid - Secretary

Claire has a BA, BEd, and an MA (Gifted). She has a long-term interest in the area of Gifted Education, and several years of experience writing programs, running events and teaching in the area. During her master's thesis in 2015, she researched the positive social and emotional "flow on effects" of grouping gifted students together for academic purposes. She has a particular interest in supporting the "whole child" when it comes to educating gifted students. More recently she has worked teaching gifted English students right across Victoria in the Victorian High Ability Program. She was also involved in writing the program.

Ms Amy Horneman – General Committee

Master of Arts (Applied Linguistics), Bachelor of Arts/Education (Secondary). Amy started her career in education as a Secondary English and German teacher and has ended up delving deeply into the field of Gifted and Talented Education. She is passionate about mentoring gifted and highly able students; developing students in leadership; collaborating with key stakeholders to implement schoolwide provisions; and fostering positive and effective home-school partnerships, including supporting parents in the joys and challenges of parenting their gifted children. She is currently the coordinator of the gifted education program at Scotch College, and is an active committee member (consultant, seminar writer and presenter, and magazine editor) of VAGTC.

Ms Karen Glauser-Edwards – General Committee

Bachelor of Social Science – Psychology (Honours) (Charles Sturt University), Graduate Diploma of Education – Primary (Monash University), and Bachelor of Arts - Psychology (Edith Cowan University)

Karen is committed to raising the awareness of, and access to, educational experiences and pathways for high ability children. Karen's advocacy and research interests target those policies and processes, which impact upon the availability and accessibility of educational opportunities for high ability students. In focussing on under-represented populations and groups, her efforts extend to the home educating sector, including dual and incremental home educators.

Mr Simon Gitson – General Committee

Simon is the and Director Professional Practice at Catholic Regional College North Keilor and joined the VAGTC committee last year. He is currently studying for a doctorate at Monash University. Simon has worked in in the Catholic education sector for over a decade and is passionate about creating awareness, opportunity and advocacy for gifted and talented students. His expertise includes teaching in VCE, the Victorian Curriculum and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years' Program. He has experience working in the NFP sector, leading a community sports club, overseeing 8 staff and 250 members. He is skilled in grant writing and digital communication and has extensive experience running workshops for small and large groups.

Ms Victoria Poulus – General Committee

Victoria comes with a Masters in Gifted education (UNSW) and is an experienced teacher of gifted education and Japanese. She is the Gifted and Talented Leader at Crest Education and a researcher at UNSW. As a parent of gifted children Victoria is an enthusiastic advocate for gifted students and their families and formerly ran a local support group. Many have benefited from hearing Victoria present at State conferences, National Symposiums, Professional Development seminars and at the World Conference of the WCGTC of which she is an Australian delegate.

Ms Bernadette Sheedy – General Committee

Bernadette has been the gifted coordinator at two secondary schools in Melbourne St Monica's in Epping and Mount Scopus in Burwood. She has presented seminars and papers around the state and the country for the VAGTC and the AAEGT. She is currently working on her PhD with a focus on gifted education at Deakin University.

Ms Laura Wilcox – General Committee

Laura's has experience in mentoring gifted and talented secondary students in both school and external opportunities. She would bring her perspectives on fulfilling student potential including encouraging collaboration between likeminded students. She believes in triangulating data to identify gifted students. She has a BA (hons) from the University of Melbourne, a Post Grad specialising in Gifted education from Monash University and a Diploma in Prof Communications from the UNE.