

# Newsletter

Volume 25

## The Leading Edge

FOR GIFTED EDUCATION IN B.C.

**The Association of the  
Educators for the Gifted,  
Talented and Creative  
Children of B.C.**

**B.C.T.F.**



Spring/Summer 2008

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to new members and renewed members! I met many of you at our Gifted '07 Conference last October where Jim Delisle spoke about the social and emotional needs of gifted students. We also welcomed Colleen Crisp, the new Diversity Branch coordinator with responsibilities for gifted learners. However, in January 2008, we discovered that Colleen had left the Ministry. To date, we have no news of a replacement for Colleen. The Ministry of Education's actions are a puzzle to us as they do not appear to be helpful to gifted students, their parents or their teachers. Regardless, the Association for Educators of Gifted, Talented, and Creative Children has been busy with several new initiatives.

At the BCTF sponsored Public Education Conference addressing Equity and Inclusion in January, Marcia Garries, and I held sessions with parents, trustees, and teachers over two days on the question "Where are the gifted?" The educational needs of gifted children in this province are an equity issue for all of us. The lack of funding, the lack of programming and the lack of assessment in many districts in the province is not equitable and is doing a disservice to gifted students and the twice-exceptional students who are in our classrooms. The connections we made at each session of this conference we hope will lead to communicating the support of our PSA to teachers, parents and trustees as they advocate for the needs of gifted children.

At the end of February, student teachers and teachers in their first five years of teaching attended the provincial BCTF New Teachers' Conference, and the AEGTCCBC was there. Cheryl Atwater presented "Critical Thinking and Creative Problem Solving" to support new teach-

ers from around the province with engaging classroom strategies and to highlight the needs of gifted children in their classes. This session introduced a new generation of teachers to their role as educators of gifted, talented and creative children in BC.

Gifted students are in classrooms all around the province, so our next event was a regional conference in the North. Barbara Johnson was in Prince George, March 7th, sharing with teachers "Survival Skills for Teaching Gifted Students". The reason that we even need to talk about 'survival skills' is a result of classroom teachers being asked to do more with less, in overcrowded classrooms, with too many special needs students and fewer special needs services. We thank Barbara for sharing her vast experience with those North Central Zone teachers. She comes to us through her PITA connection and long membership in the PSA.

All around the province the numbers of identified gifted students in school districts continue to decline. You will see the data from the Ministry in the Gifted Headcount by District included in this newsletter. Some districts over the last five years have recorded on average a 70% decline of identified gifted students. But the gifted students ARE still there, and so are we!

The regional mini-conference on Friday, April 25, in Kelowna entitled Supporting the Gifted: the Other Part of Diversity features Louise Malfesi, from Coquitlam, on "Differentiated Strategies for the Gifted" and "Problem Solving/Critical Thinking for the Gifted". Barbara Johnson will also present, "A Survival Guide for Teaching Gifted Students" and "Thinking Games: The Power of

*(President's Message continued)*

Learning through Play". This mini-regional conference is in partnership with the Provincial Intermediate Teachers' Association and has financial support from the BCTF. For details and on-line registration go to - [www.pita.ca](http://www.pita.ca).

Our co-editors are beginning work with the Vernon School District to renew gifted options for programming. We are hopeful that this will begin a resurgence of identifying gifted children and establishing gifted options in the Okanagan and we welcome any of you to join us in the PSA.

Currently, we are working on our annual Gifted '08 Provincial Specialist Association conference for Friday, October 24, with Susan Winebrenner as our featured speaker. Susan Winebrenner is a full-time consultant who works with school districts to help them translate current educational research into classroom practice. In today's standards-driven era, how can teachers motivate and chal-

lenge gifted learners and ensure that all students reach their potential? Visit [www.susanwinebrenner.com](http://www.susanwinebrenner.com). Watch for the flyer and registration information coming to your school in June. Visit our website [www.bctf.ca/AEGTCCBC](http://www.bctf.ca/AEGTCCBC) for details.

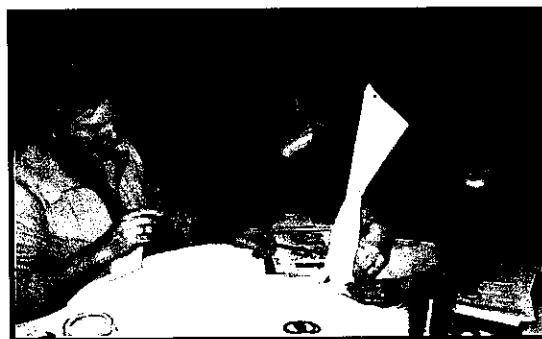
Please join us by using the membership form in this newsletter. Your PD funds in most local teacher unions are available for PSA membership purchase. Please complete the Ezine survey on the reverse side, and return to us.

We invite you to connect with us through our website, newsletter, email and upcoming events in order to communicate your issues and concerns, so that we can all be committed to the needs of the gifted, talented and creative children of BC.

Charlene Watts, President  
[www.bctf.ca/AEGTCCBC](http://www.bctf.ca/AEGTCCBC)



Creative problem-solving team challenges



New Teachers' Conference March '08

## EDITORS' MESSAGE

In the last newsletter we gave statistics showing the 60 percent decline of identified/reported gifted students in British Columbia over the last 10 years. On the last page of this newsletter, you will find the gifted headcount by school district in this province for the last five years. You may want to check the increase or decrease in your own school district. It is your own decision how or if you will use this information.

Leslie and I have written a letter to our school board trustees (S.D. #83) thanking them for keeping identified enrolment stable (the 5.7 decline would be due to declining enrolment).

Check to see if your district has a parent chapter of

the Gifted Children's Association. They are a powerful advocacy group for our gifted children. Perhaps you could share the headcount information with the parent group as we will be doing.

The disaster of what is happening to gifted students in British Columbia continues. Our PSA will develop an action plan to find solutions to support teachers and students in B.C. classrooms. If we care, we must try to do something more than just express shock and dismay. If you care, let us know you would like to be part of possible solutions.

Stay tuned....

*Patricia Clough and Leslie Lowe*

The Leading Edge for Gifted Education  
The Association of  
Educators of Gifted, Talented  
and Creative Children of B.C.

## REMEMBER OUR WEBSITE

Visit our Web Page at:  
[www.bctf.bc.ca/PSAs/AEGTCCBC](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/PSAs/AEGTCCBC)

## Gifted Headcount by District (British Columbia)

SD#	District Name	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	% decline
92	Nisga'a	7					100.0%
87	Stikine	3	2	2			100.0%
51	Boundary	15	13	12	12		100.0%
50	Haida Gwaii/Q Charlotti	2					100.0%
49	Central Coast	1					100.0%
75	Mission	173	187	180	194	3	98.3%
57	Prince George	1113	977	1048	568	21	98.1%
81	Fort Nelson	34	22	6	1	1	97.1%
5	Southeast Kootenay	51	18	4	3	3	94.1%
64	Gulf Islands	26	16	12	8	4	84.6%
74	Gold Trail	19	13	5	3	3	84.2%
91	Nechako Lakes	6	4	7		1	83.3%
85	Vancouver Island North	25	29	10	8	5	80.0%
58	Nicola-Similkameen	21	12	8	7	5	76.2%
59	Peace River South	131	115	77	58	32	75.6%
8	Kootenay Lake	74	60	55	31	20	73.0%
40	New Westminster	243	125	126	89	68	72.0%
35	Langley	342	363	98	73	107	68.7%
23	Central Okanagan	629	446	311	285	197	68.7%
46	Sunshine Coast	92	73	44	33	29	68.5%
28	Quesnel	68	49	45	33	25	63.2%
54	Bulkley Valley	46	29	21	24	18	60.9%
22	Vernon	171	158	117	109	67	60.8%
20	Kootenay-Columbia	88	78	55	60	36	59.1%
48	Howe Sound	111	109	73	56	48	56.8%
33	Chilliwack	161	128	95	89	71	55.9%
52	Prince Rupert	84	105	56	53	38	54.8%
39	Vancouver	3160	2529	2255	1695	1518	52.0%
10	Arrow Lakes	6	5	6	6	3	50.0%
6	Rocky Mountain	68	64	58	53	34	50.0%
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	361	352	314	281	184	49.0%
60	Peace River North	99	119	106	96	53	46.5%
36	Surrey	1715	1127	1132	1109	938	45.3%
73	Kamloops/Thompson	365	340	315	254	211	42.2%
70	Alberni	117	99	109	94	68	41.9%
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	136	136	125	111	85	37.5%
19	Revelstoke	27	23	19	16	17	37.0%
82	Coast Mountains	50	41	39	40	33	34.0%
38	Richmond	880	861	894	736	605	31.2%
78	Fraser-Cascade	39	34	32	31	28	28.2%
72	Campbell River	38	29	20	24	28	26.3%
79	Cowichan Valley	250	229	201	197	191	23.6%
69	Qualicum	134	104	96	91	109	18.7%
42	Maple Ridge	260	278	258	237	222	14.6%
67	Okanagan Skaha	226	274	220	193	194	14.2%
71	Comox Valley	138	114	123	126	119	13.8%
34	Abbotsford	404	376	359	355	355	12.1%
61	Greater Victoria	535	475	436	484	488	8.8%
63	Saanich	214	252	259	247	197	7.9%
53	Okanagan Similkameen	32	20	18	22	30	6.2%
83	N. Okanagan-Shuswap	335	309	336	314	316	5.7%
44	North Vancouver	612	580	595	601	602	1.6%
47	Powell River	28	42	34	32	29	-3.6%
62	Sooke	168	169	191	173	177	-5.4%
41	Burnaby	430	454	498	487	475	-10.5%
93	Francophone Education	9	8	6	4	10	-11.1%
37	Delta	315	329	399	466	440	-39.7%
45	West Vancouver	155	209	332	185	223	-43.9%
43	Coquitlam	731	776	889	1025	1096	-49.9%
	<b>Provincial</b>	<b>15773</b>	<b>13888</b>	<b>13141</b>	<b>11582</b>	<b>9880</b>	<b>37.4%</b>

# The Gifted Garage Sale

James R. Delisle, Ph.D.  
(reprinted with permission)

According to our government, the latest recession is finally over. Still, it seems to me that lots of states are wrangling with diminished budgets for schools in general and gifted programs in particular. So, if we are to maintain our own livelihoods and our field's existence, we're going to have to become innovative in our approaches to fundraising.

As a way to gain some much-needed cash, I thought that we could hold a gifted garage sale, ridding ourselves of some cumbersome things and ideas that we haven't used in quite some time. Flush with the new money this sale would raise, we could begin rebuilding our base of operation that takes into account the changing focus of our field.

So...let's see what we can afford to do without.

One item I know we can sell off is all those extra desks that gifted kids used to sit in when we had resource room programs. Remember resource rooms?

Gifted kids would get together for one day a week – even more in some school districts – and they would engage in all manner of activities that focused on the specific cognitive and affective needs they had that their classroom counterparts did not. The desks might look a bit frayed, filled as they are with sarcastic graffiti and stained with a few tears that were the result of intense discussions on the high points and hassles of being smart. Still, after a good scrubbing, any trace that a gifted kid once used this desk would be expunged.

Good as new, some of these desks could be shuffled into regular classrooms, where gifted kids now sit all day, every day, having their needs met along with everyone else's. With the excess desks sold, I suggest we buy multiple copies of any ASCD or NAGC publication that has the word differentiation in its title and distribute these books to the classroom teachers now fully responsible for meeting the needs of gifted students. We better do this quickly, though, as the next educational panacea to come along might make these differentiation manuals hard to find in just a few more years.

Another bunch of stuff to tag for quick sale would be all of those old gifted education textbooks that have been collecting dust on our shelves for the past two decades. We couldn't price them very high, for who would want to read books that did not contain the latest in jargon, like the PCM (Parallel Curriculum Model), or the benefits on "cluster grouping," or the life-changing impact of the SEM (Schoolwide Enrichment Model)? With all of these new-fangled ideas and innovations, it's hard to imagine that anyone would want to read Virgil Ward's Differential Educa-

tion for the Gifted (way too complex!), or T. Earnest Newland's *The Gifted in Socio-Educational Perspective* (since we don't test for social or emotional development in kids, how important can it be?), or the American Association for Gifted Children's *On Being Gifted* (since when did gifted teenagers think they could write their own book telling us what their needs are?). Also, think of the shelf space we would save if we simply got rid of Lewis Terman's five-volume series, *Genetic Studies of Genius*? After all, we all know how politically incorrect it is to state that some children may actually have the genetic predisposition to be gifted, so the sooner we relegate Terman to the "two-for-one" table, the better off we'll be. And, with all the extra shelf space, we now have a place to store those differentiation books we just purchased for all of our teachers!

Looking in another direction to find a new source of revenue, a whole bunch of money could be raised if we sold off those identification tools we once used to determine which children were gifted and which ones weren't. After all, enlightened minds now know that the once-maligned mantra of gifted child education's foes – "All children are gifted in some way" – has become the byword of many of today's gifted "experts." With multiple talents and multiple intelligences eliminating the need to examine children's IQs and gifted students being assigned to any ol' class in order to make it "fair" that every teacher get at least a few smart kids, who cares about individual levels of giftedness? What's wrong with placing a kid with an IQ of 130 in the same type of program as a kid with an IQ of 165? Hey, they're both smart kids right? How could their individual needs be that much different? Actually, our colleagues in special education may even follow our lead and sell off their own identification tools, since inclusion places kids with IQs of 60 and IQs of 80 into the same classrooms anyway. If it's right for them, how could it be wrong for us? As an added bonus, think of all the time and energy we'll save – and "time is money!" – in explaining to parents who want to know why their gifted child is not enrolled in a special program that their child is, indeed, being served appropriately. A quick "But, your gifted son is being served....in the regular classroom!" Can become the "one-size-fits-all" response we've been seeking all these long years!

A final collection of unneeded materials to sell to the highest bidder would be any and all books, journals, curricular materials, and videotapes about how to deal with that perennial pest, the under-achieving gifted students. These so-called "underachievers" have been around almost since our field's founding (and throughout human

*(The Gifted Garage Sale continued)*

history, perhaps), and we still haven't provided extensive and effective programs to address their concerns about school being boring or passionless. So, why continue wasting our time and energies trying to engage students who have so little regard for their own intellects that they won't even use them to get good grades? If putting these kids on contracts doesn't work, or if taking away their extracurriculars doesn't result in a turnaround, what's the point in spending valuable time and resources on them? Let's sell off any material that has the word underachievement in its title and spend the money on students who play the game of school just like they're supposed to do. It's a tough world, and if these underachieving crybabies want to succeed in it, they better learn to put off their intellectual duffs, and strive to do what we all know they

can: "reach their fullest potential." With the money we save, we may need to purchase a few extra cubicles for the in-school suspension room, as there may be an uptick in student enrolment there, at least until those underachievers either smarten up or drop out.

There you have it. An easy way to get the field of gifted child education out of the fiscal quagmire in which it currently exists. With a little luck and not a whole lot of energy, we might even reach the pinnacle of success and become so homogenized with the regular education program that no one will even know we're there. Of course, that would probably upset people like Virgil Ward, T. Ernest Newland, and Lewis Terman, but since they are all deceased and we've already sold off their books, I doubt anyone will take much notice.

## **GCABC Local Member Groups**

Many families have found that participation in a Gifted Children's Association of British Columbia local member group has provided them with both useful information, and a much needed connection to community. For the children, attending the children's sessions provides an opportunity to connect with other children with similar learning styles.

As a member of the Gifted Children's Association, you are welcome at ANY of the active local member group meetings. (note – admission fees vary from group to group, please check with meeting organizer). Extensive information on giftedness, access to resources, informa-

tion about events, and membership registration can be found at <http://www.gcabc.ca>.

If there is not a group formed in your area, and you are interested in starting a group, please contact Laura Mack <mailto:whitelightpromo@telus.net> or 604-929-7961 to receive the GCABC LMG Best Practices document. This will provide you with an overview of the steps involved in organizing and running effective meetings. We also have an extensive list of facilitators and presenters for both parents and children. We are here to support you, and are willing to work with you to start a group in your area.

### **SUPPORTING THE GIFTED: THE OTHER PART OF DIVERSITY**

**April 25, 2008 Friday 9:00 – 3:00**

Registration 8:30 am.

Hollywood Road Education Centre,

1040 Hollywood Road

**Kelowna**

\$95 includes lunch

\$55 for TOCs and students

For details and on-line registration: [www.pita.ca](http://www.pita.ca)

Contact: kelowna-registrar @pita.ca

**REGISTER FOR GIFTED WORKSHOPS**

## Other Exciting Web Resources from Gifted Child Today

### NUMBER SENSE

<http://mathforum.org/k12/mathtips/mathtips.html>

Ever found yourself without a calculator needing to figure out a math problem? Learn to “beat the calculator” with this Web site that offers tips and tricks for finding percentages and squaring, and multiplying and dividing numbers, which will make doing calculations in your head much easier. The math problems and puzzles also offered will keep even the most critical thinkers on their toes. This site provides a wealth of information for people of all ages who are interested in math.

### WHAT’S IN A NAME?

<http://www.behindthename.com>

Ever wonder what your name means or where it came from? You can find the answers to these questions and more on this Web site. Search for names from the Bible, from mythology, or from various countries, languages, and traditions, or search for names by meaning and description. You also can find the most popular names, anagram names, namesakes, name days, and suggested names for twins. Or, make up new names with the Random Name Generator.

### SEUSSVILLE

<http://www.seussville.com>

This is a fun Web site for all Dr. Seuss fans. Activities include coloring, matching, and concentration games, as well as other interactive activities that include Elephant Ball, Dr. Seuss Sticker Game, and Green Eggs and Ham Picture Scramble. In addition, you can create your own story with the Seussville Story Maker or enjoy some of the best Seuss quotes with the Quote Maker. The site also provides the biography of Dr. Seuss and a list of upcoming events sponsored by the National Education Association.

### PANDAS LIVE VIDEO

<http://animal.discovery.com/cams/cams.html>

Can’t make a trip to Smithsonian’s National Zoo in Washington, DC? No problem! You can watch Mei Xiang, a giant panda, and her cub, Tai Shan, during daylight hours from the comfort of your own home computer by going to this Web site. In addition to reading about these two special pandas and the plight of their species worldwide, you can get an inside look into the life of a panda keeper,

watch panda behaviour clips, view panda pictures, work panda puzzles, and try your hand at some challenging panda trivia.

### GOOGLE

<http://google.com/holidaylogos.html>

Have you ever noticed the Google search engine logo change its look on a holiday? On this Web site, you can see a collection of the holiday logos used since 1999, as well as other logos created by Google fans. Those who are curious can learn more about the faces behind Google, the services and tools offered by the company, and even the latest job openings. In addition, viewers can read the Google blog, shop at the Google store, or submit top-level URLs.

### CELLS

<http://www.cellsalive.com>

Visit this Web site for interactive information on cell biology, microbiology, immunology, and microscopy, where you can watch animated demonstrations of the cell cycle, mitosis, or meiosis, or an animation that compares the relative sizes of cells and organisms sitting on a pinhead. You can even watch footage of the growth of cancer cells in real time. Also available are cell and crystal galleries, quizzes, jigsaw and word puzzles, and a number of related resources.

#### ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS FOR GIFTED, TALENTED AND CREATIVE CHILDREN OF B.C. EXECUTIVE

<b>President</b>	Charlene Watts
<b>Vice-President</b>	Sandra Webster-Worthy
<b>Treasurer</b>	Patricia Clough
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	David Halme
<b>Publication/ Newsletter Editors</b>	Leslie Lowe and Patricia Clough
<b>Conference Chair</b>	Linnea Lanstrom
<b>Conference Committee</b>	Charlene Watts Cheryl Atwater Marcia Garries
<b>Conference Venues</b>	Cheryl Atwater David Halme
<b>Members at Large</b>	
<b>University Liaison</b>	Lannie Kanevsky
<b>Website</b>	Cheryl Atwater

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STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS (Note 1)  
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED June 30, 2007

Balance, July 1, 2006	\$	16,930.24
<u>Receipts</u>		
BCTF Grant	4,750.00	
Membership/subscription fees	3,047.04	
Interest	583.13	
Other	115.75	
		8,495.92
<u>Disbursements</u>		
Executive meetings	3,293.26	
Publication - newsletter	1,475.49	
Publication - other	1,220.31	
Operating	324.21	
Chapter support	250.00	
Curriculum development	400.00	
Miscellaneous	70.07	
Conference - operating	2,132.38	
Conference-catering	635.10	
Conference - printing	28.37	
Conference - promotions	140.00	
Conference - committee costs	3,215.38	
Conference - miscellaneous	537.82	
		(13,722.39)
Balance, June 30, 2007	\$	11,703.77

Notes:

1. This statement reflects only funds held by the BC Teachers' Federation on behalf of the Association of Educators of the Gifted, Talented and Creative Children in BC.



World Council for Gifted and Talented Children Biennial World Conference

# Youth Summit - Vancouver 2009

Hosted by the Lower Mainland Gifted Contact (LMGC) Committee  
August 2nd to August 7th, 2009

## Promoting the Dream;

## Visions of a Better Future

PHOTO BY IANIV & ARTIE

### Why be a Delegate?

- Meet like minded students from around the world (over 60 countries represented at the 2007 Youth Summit)
- Be inspired by keynote speaker **Simon Jackson**, founder of the **Spirit Bear Youth Coalition** ([http://speakers.ca/jackson\\_simon.aspx](http://speakers.ca/jackson_simon.aspx))
- Enjoy student living at University of British Columbia's scenic campus ([www.ubconferences.com](http://www.ubconferences.com))
- Investigate, problem-solve and create action plans that will unite you with students from around the world in realizing a dream for a better future

*Registration for 15-18 year olds begins in October 2008;*

*for more information contact: **Pegi Furanna** at [pfuranna@ndrs.org](mailto:pfuranna@ndrs.org)*



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