



Chairperson Report 2020 – Dean Tollis

What an honor it is to be standing here reporting to the achievements of Gifted WA and the dedication of an amazing Committee that I have worked with over the past 12 months.

2020 will be a year everyone remembers for different reasons. At Gifted WA it was certainly a challenging time for our dedicated volunteers as we navigate the unfolding of COVID-19 in Western Australia in the middle of Gifted Awareness Week some of the restrictions on gatherings were just commencing and we had to cancel an event.

In March together with Mensa we held a joint event again introducing parents and children to each other with a panel Q&A again with Gifted WA and Chee Wong from Mensa. Even though COVID-19 was developing we allowed people to make their own decisions to attend or not and had plenty of hand Sanitizer present.

We hosted several Caffeine Fueled Networking sessions both in person and via Zoom. Our country members expressed their gratitude at being able to participate in the Zoom sessions. COVID-19 allowed us to explore ways of being more inclusive of our regional members.

It was a challenging time for all of us with many of the committee in the frontline as teachers preparing online programs and managing an ever changing landscape for those of us who are parents we began to home school our kids soon learning how amazing our children's teachers are and the fact they have to see our kids 5 days a week, all year. Wow we take our hats off to all teachers who navigate educating our Gifted Children not to mention the rest of the class. I know for sure know any consideration ever to homeschool was now off the cards.

Jodi Lewin from Comet Bay College kicked of the year with a session on Teaching for Success, Catering to the individual needs of gifted children. This was a great session aimed at teachers with so many great tips and practical applications that teachers could take a way and trial themselves. This session was recorded and has been uploaded to the Members Only section of our Gifted WA website.

After a quiet Term 2 we had Cavelle Monck from Mt Lawley Primary School deliver a talk on 'How to navigate a discussion with your school' here Cavelle shared and insight in how parents might engage and have a conversation with their school, she helped parents understand how schools might receive information and ways to commence discussion about your gifted child. This session had a mix of parents, teachers and even education consultants.

The body that you all become members of just by possessing a Gifted WA membership namely the AAEGT held a One Day online conference that was heavily discounted for our

members to attend. This was incredibly valuable and there was so many great presenters over the day including WA's very own Dr Eileen Slater. The opportunity to host speakers from around the country without the need for travelling meant many people who otherwise wouldn't have been able to attend now attended virtually. I know personally I attended almost every session, while running an Uber service for my kids from piano to mentoring to parties and then piano for the other one and another party. I managed to be online for the whole day whilst navigating 5 events for my kids A big thank you to Melinda Gindy and the team at the AAEGT for hosting this virtual online event.

Last month we had Jan Cox deliver Strategic Planning and Goal Setting for the Classroom at Bateman Primary nearly 40 people mainly teachers attended this event and they walked away with practical strategies to apply in their schools.

2020 has certainly been challenging however we have been able to maintain our focus to deliver quality speakers and topics and look forward to delivering even more exciting events next year.

We are working through our advocacy plan and had the opportunity to meet up with the education minister's policy advisors to frame what we Gifted WA would like to see in future policy. This is just one of many planned advocacy engagements we are working towards. The Gifted and Talented arm of WA Education has also been in touch with us seeking advice and help in some areas and we have also had some solid engagement with PEAC teams from Regional District Offices. We don't have anything solid to report here yet however the wheels are in motion.

We have continued to use Facebook to engage with our members sharing articles and creating our own content encouraging people to comment and have discussions around areas of concern and interest.

The new website and membership platform have had some minor teething issues as we had to cancel PayPal subscriptions and reinstate a new service. We expect this will all be resolved by the end of November as the last of the old renewals kick over.

We are currently at 150 members and whilst down slightly on this time last year we acknowledge some of the automated renewals of the past may have had some members automatically paying for membership that they no longer needed. On reflection the numbers are still double our 2018 membership and the number of school memberships have grown to 28.

2020 also saw the release of our first attempt at merchandising a mug. These look great and the slogan "Gifted isn't better it's different" is a great conversation starter. They are \$12.50 for members and \$15 for nonmembers and can be bought online from our website.

I would like to thank all my fellow committee members who give up 1 ½ to 2 hour every month to attend a committee meeting and put hours of effort in between that working on projects and activities that support the objectives of this great Association.

I would like to make a special call out to Jenny Burton our Secretary who as one of the founding members has served tirelessly as Secretary for the last 4 years. She has kept us all to task with solid minutes, actions items and clear agendas for each meeting. She is an asset to this association and the education system within WA. Jenny's deep understanding of the Gifted space and her ability to influence schools, principals' staff and students is incredible and I would like to personally thank her for her contribution both within Gifted WA and all the great work she does outside this organization. Thank you, Jenny.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Claire Molinari as our Treasurer and her efficiency in this role. Her commitment to keep our records and membership payments and invoice in check have been appreciated by all on the committee.

I could sing the praise of this team for hours, but I would like to wrap up by saying to all of you who put your trust in us to deliver on the objective of this Association thank you. We know our efforts impact the lives of so many in varied ways. We will continue to serve you, listen to you and remain relevant. Thank you