

## Gifted Awareness Week Australia 2020:

15 to 21 March

### Wellbeing: A No Limits Approach

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) will launch the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Gifted Awareness Week Australia.

Over twenty events will be held around Australia in celebration of gifted and high potential learners and to raise awareness of their diverse learning needs. The [Gifted Awareness Week Australia website](#) will feature several resources and articles around the theme of the year.

“In 2020, Australia has strengthened our international connections by launching a joint theme with New Zealand and Jamaica”, AAEGT President Melinda Gindy stated. “Exploring the theme **Wellbeing: A No Limits Approach** raises the importance of engaging and nurturing the whole child”.

“Research shows us that gifted children learn best when they are appropriately challenged. They need access to a suitable curriculum that matches their level of readiness to learn’. Mrs Gindy continued. “What we also learn from the research literature is that flourishing academically is supported by fostering a sense of belonging alongside like minds. When gifted and high potential students are valued, understood, supported and nurtured, they are healthy and happy”.

Gifted Awareness Week Australia comes as Australian education is attempting to recover from discouraging results in the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The percentage of students achieving in the top PISA bands has continued to decline, with the percentage of Australian students achieving highly in Maths falling from 20% to 10% since 2003. Despite Australia having over 400,000 gifted and high potential students in the Australian school system, less than 10% of Australian initial teacher education providers incorporate a mandatory module on gifted education.

“While our recent academic results are disheartening, what we need is action and leadership to help arrest this decline”, Mrs Gindy stated. “As a nation, we are failing to provide our educators with the knowledge and tools they need to nourish our brightest learners.

“The lack of comprehensive national priorities in gifted education means that we have declining academic results, disconnected students and a society stuck in the myth that ‘giftedness is elitist’ and that ‘gifted students will be right on their own’. To ignore the growing bank of Australian research in gifted education is at detriment to our nation and to the wellbeing of the young humans who look to us for guidance and counsel”, Mrs Gindy concluded.

Gifted Awareness Week Australia was founded in 2015 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 positive difference in the lives of gifted children and their families.

**Media contact - Melinda Gindy 0419 974 841**