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### Focus: Article 29

*"Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full".*

### Statement:

**Gifted children have a right to access rigorous and relevant learning experiences each and every day.**

*"...My child was **crying herself to sleep every night** with the thought of waking up to a new school day the next day.*

*I was crying myself to sleep eventually in the early hours of every morning in **frustration and despair** that everything I was trying was making no difference, and that if things could go so far south in three terms, how was I going to get her through thirteen years?... My tears of despair at this realization of hitting a brick wall were interpreted as tears of acceptance of my child's lack of ability and I was briefly comforted, with a comment even made that "we all find it hard to accept bad news about our children... Our roller-coaster journey has continued. There was, in the words of two very astute and skilled teachers, "**damage to be undone before we can even think of moving forward**". I felt myself, in the eyes of the school, go from being one of "those" parents to one whose story and experiences were credible. I started to slowly get used to walking away from each meeting with staff, feeling positive – impressed nothing was a fight, impressed at how much they were doing for my daughter.*

*I would walk away from each meeting **feeling a little of the tension I had been carrying for so long ease**, though it would be another three or four years before I would truly start to relax and come to just trust that all would likely be taken care of, without needing to seek that reassurance so often...'*

This story, shared by a parent member of Gifted Families Support Group Incorporated (GFSG Inc.), highlights the inconsistency within our education system to support the basic rights of a child with high natural ability in their entitlement of learning.

In 2001, the [Australian Senate Committee](#) of the education of gifted and talented students identified gifted students as the most educationally disadvantaged students in this country: 'All types of interest groups agree that there is a problem with education of gifted children. These children have special needs in the education system; for many their needs are not being met; and many suffer underachievement, boredom, frustration and psychological distress as a result'.



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The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) notes in its [student diversity literature](#) that *'Gifted and talented students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning opportunities drawn from the Australian Curriculum and aligned with their individual learning needs, strengths, interests and goals'*.

Lack of a unified understanding and approach to gifted education, lack of adequate evidence-based teacher professional learning, and failure of systems to mandate state and territory gifted education policies means that our nation sits outside the aspirational pronouncements of the Senate Committee and the foundations of our Australian Curriculum.

GFSG Inc. supports the manifesto of the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT), with whom it is affiliated:

#### **AAEGT Rights of Gifted and Talented Students:**

1. To have access to individualised equitable and socially just educational provisions.
2. To learn and thrive within a climate of acceptance and to be recognised as a valuable asset within Australia.
3. To be supported by mandated and evidence-informed gifted education policies in every State and Territory.
4. To be taught by educators who have undertaken mandatory professional learning in current, evidence-based practices, and who have access to a range of educational models, options and opportunities throughout all schools across all educational sectors.

*Gifted Families Support Group Incorporated (GFSG Inc.) is a not for profit association committed to supporting gifted children, their families and educators. Run solely by volunteers, GFSG Inc. focusses on bringing together 'like-minds' by providing a vast array of supportive events and highlighting the needs of gifted children throughout the state. GFSG Inc. works across all education sectors, education departments and throughout metropolitan, regional and rural communities.*



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