

From the President of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

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Ladies and gentlemen

I am very pleased and honored to be invited to address your conference at Buenos Aires and to talk about a number of points related to gifted education. I do hope the future will witness strong cooperation between your educational systems and our international organization.

First of all, in the name of the International Centre for Innovation in Education (ICIE) and in my capacity as the president of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC), I would like to express my gratitude to those who contributed so much for gifted education in particular and excellence in education in general in your countries.

It is a great opportunity to have such a conference. This conference is an arena in which we share our concerns, innovative educational practices, strategies and theories as we envision new horizons for a different world.

Many thanks to the conference chair, organizing committee, and all people involved in organizing this conference.

Ladies and gentlemen

I will start my talk with a quote from my friend Robert Sternberg. He said: “in order to succeed in later life, you need creative skills because look at how fast the world is changing.”

Gifted education becomes a must for all nations. There is a rational behind this argument. In other words, why we have to have gifted education, innovation education, and excellence in education?

The rational behind this could be summarized in four points, including:

1. The right of each individual to develop his or her potential;
2. The need for a school to be concerned with individual differences related to gender, abilities, interests, learning styles, expressive styles, and motivation;
3. The right of each individual for opportunity to access appropriate education provisions; and
4. The needs of society for the fully developed talents of all.

Based on our knowledge and expertise, we strongly believe that we should invest in the education of the gifted and talented children. Such investment requires well developed challenging programmes that:

- concentrate on developing and applying high-level skills;
- emphasise problem identification and problem solving;
- emphasise creativity, thinking skills and metacognition;
- provide opportunity for quick mastery of the basic skills through compaction of the curriculum;
- employ effective decision-making and management strategies;
- explore career options;
- are futures oriented;
- require study and mastery of the particular discipline;
- accommodate self-initiated study;
- allow opportunities for self evaluation, external evaluation and display of products; and
- develop positive self- images for students.

But, in order to achieve our ultimate goals we are in need for highly qualified and competent teachers who are willing to serve the gifted and talented children. In other words, the teachers of the gifted and talented children need: **First**, knowledge and appreciation of the nature of high levels of intelligence; **Second**, knowledge and understanding of the cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics, needs, and potential problems experienced by gifted and talented students; **Third**, knowledge of and access to advanced content and ideas; **Fourth**, competencies to develop special provisions for the gifted and talented; **Fifth**, competencies to create an environment which is challenging and safe to explore; **and** a number of behavioural characteristics (e.g., flexibility and sense of humor).

In addition to high quality programs designed to meet the special needs of the gifted and talented children, we have to invest more in educational technology to facilitate such programmes (e.g. Renzulli Learning System).

In the “Digital World” we are moving towards a mobile teaching and Virtual Learning Environments. This world adds another layer of complexity. The current advances enable data to follow us, and to be encrypted, minimized, sent wirelessly, shared and copied effortlessly.

Investment in educational technology will enable us to improve the quality of education; extend gifted programmes; bridge between different cultures and civilizations; to foster creative production; and more?

As the president of the WCGTC, I am willing to work with your countries, your educational systems and all people interested in gifted education and excellence in education. The administration of the WCGTC will employ the advanced international expertise to facilitate building gifted programmes around the world and to make the opportunity a success.

The WCGTC must continue to expand and to extend its activities and resources. My vision is to build on our reputation as a global, professional, leading organization, dedicated to discussing, analyzing, creating, and advancing solutions to the challenges facing the development of gifted education.

Finally, I strongly believe in the importance of gifted education, and we are certainly part of a potential support system for general education, but we also should have a degree of separation that helps develop students who will be the top rank of their professions and fields of interests.

Thank you again for this invitation and wish you a successful conference.

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