Developing Clusters

Local schools combining for enrichment immersion
School Clusters:
What are they?

- A group of schools joining together to provide the gifted with learning experiences which match, as closely as possible, interest and ability.
Rationale

- To provide varied and valuable learning experiences for our ‘g & t’ within and across the intelligence domains which challenge and motivate a group of ‘likeminded’ students.
A Model: Boroondara Secondary Schools Gifted Cluster (7-10)

- 15 local secondary schools.
- Government, Catholic, Independent.
- Single sex, co-educational schools.
- Years 7 -10.
- Half day and whole day immersion.
- Teacher interest based: across all curriculum areas.
- School offering a unit controls every aspect of the unit.
Offering A Unit

- Standard proforma (see information pack).
- School offering mandates: the numbers, cost, other requisites, venue, activities, times.
- Schools applying for places accept the host school’s conditions, organises transport to and from, staffing (if needed), other requisites.
- Visiting schools identify students according to unit presented and type of students requested by host school.
Getting Started # 1

- Call a meeting of interested local schools.
- Be inclusive of all schools in your area with year levels appropriate to cluster.
- Choose a convenor.
- Meet once a term at the outset (could be reduced later).
- Like each other: be friendly/positive
Getting Started # 2

- Get school ‘movers and shakers’ on board
- Aim to offer one unit at your school per year (run by you initially?).
- Therefore, 6 schools = 6 units minimum per year across subject domains.
- Offer constructive feedback
- Meet and discuss at next scheduled cluster meeting.
Advantages

- Inexpensive
- Economy of effort for delivery of an excellent product for g & t
- Networking
- Meeting of minds and passions
- Experience different educational settings
- Breaking down petty barriers between schools
- Expertise at schools well utilized.
Possible Pitfalls

- School Jealously: “The Numbers Game”
- Paperwork (adopt KISS principle)
- Time to organise (especially convenor)
- Unit appropriateness
- Inappropriate identification of g & t
- Cluster gets too large
- Transportation on the day
- Medical/Health information
Boroondara Cluster 2011

- Camberwell High School
- PLC
- Camberwell Boys’ Grammar School
- Ruyton Girls’ School
- Methodist Ladies’ College
- Kew High School
- Strathcona Baptist Girls’ Grammar School
- Siena College
- Fintona Girls’ School
- Camberwell Girls’ Grammar School
- Scotch College
- Bialik
- Genezzano FCJ