

DIFFERENTIATING RURAL DISTRICT DELIVERY FOR GIFTED LEARNERS

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This presentation will describe the trials and tribulations of a district that has undergone substantial change in its attempt to appropriately and adequately support gifted and talented education, with a focus on K to 10 students in rural public schools.

The Warren Blackwood District has engaged in a journey that has taken school leaders, teachers, students and the communities concerned through a structured change. Central courses which have previously proven to be inadequate in content and delivery, have been distributed in a direct attempt to cater to the individual needs of the gifted learner, in their own school, on a daily basis. This model maintains opportunities to maximise student potential, through extended and enriched curriculum while improving on delivery by encompassing teaching strategies demonstrating best practice.

As a rural district that covers a land mass of in excess of 1.7 million hectares and encompasses 26 schools in coastal towns, from Margaret River and Busselton to farming and timber towns of Pemberton and Manjimup, providing interaction between like-minded gifted students is a complex and expensive challenge. Integrating the facility of the internet in this model enables the provision of valuable peer interaction from all over the district, without students ever having to leave a school therefore reducing loss of effective learning time.