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**The Gifted and Talented in New Zealand Secondary Schools: An  
Overview of Procedures and Practices in Mathematics**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Educational Studies (Mathematics)  
at Massey University**

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## ABSTRACT

A large nation-wide survey was carried out to collect data on the extent and nature of programs currently offered to gifted and talented mathematicians in New Zealand secondary schools. Quantitative data was collected on the identification of gifted and talented mathematics students, school-wide policy on the gifted and talented, ability grouping, acceleration and enrichment as well as demographic factors associated with the research variables.

Open questionnaire responses by Heads of Mathematics Departments indicated strong interest in the educational provisions for the gifted and talented. A semi-structured interview was also used with three secondary schools in order to expand upon the issues that had arisen from the postal surveys.

It appears that the situation of the gifted and talented in New Zealand secondary schools is still unsatisfactory. Only 60 % of respondents reported having identified gifted and talented students within their school, 32 % of respondent schools had a written policy on the gifted and talented, just over a third of respondent schools had no forms of ability grouping and just under a half of the respondent schools did not have an acceleration program. The Development Band Certificate was used in 45 % of respondent schools.

The research raises concerns about the lack of well conceived, continuous programs in mathematics available to gifted and talented students in New Zealand secondary schools.

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