

*GATE District Advisory Committee
Representative*

**Nuts and Bolts
Handbook
2018-2019**

Table of Contents:

- **Welcome and Thank You**
 - **Launch Your GATE DAC Representative Service**
 - **Where to Start When You Need Help or Have Questions**
 - **What can a GATE DAC Representative Do to Help with a GATE Parent Meeting?**
 - **School Site GATE Parent Meetings**
 - **Possible Agenda for Fall GATE Parent Meeting**
 - **GATE Meeting Sign-in Sheet**
 - **2018-2019 GATE DAC Meeting Schedule**
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Welcome and Thank You

Welcome to the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Community. Thank you sharing your time and talents to insure that each San Diego Unified School District student has the opportunity to learn and grow to his or her full potential. Your insights and ability to communicate with other parents and teachers at your school site are an invaluable resource.

The GATE DAC's mission is to help parents, educators, and public decision-makers recognize, value, and support the abilities and talents of our children and youth identified as gifted.

As your school site's GATE DAC Representative you will be actively engaged in fostering parent involvement and in the growth of the Gifted and Talented Education Community at your school site and in our district. As your school site's representative you will cast the one vote for your school site on each issue that is voted upon. You will be part of a group that includes parent representatives from every school site in San Diego Unified School District; representing all students identified as gifted from grades 3 through 12.

The GATE DAC meets monthly during the school year to share information of interest to parents about the district's GATE program, practices, and events. GATE DAC representatives are the conduit that carries this information back to each school site, and shares the questions and concerns of each site with the greater community. Representation on the GATE DAC is a valuable asset for both schools and parents.

No background in Gifted and Talented Education is required to be a GATE DAC school site representative, and most parents find the GATE DAC to be extremely informative and rewarding. So thank you once again for your involvement and commitment to our students and GATE DAC.



LAUNCH Your GATE DAC Representative Service!

As your school site's GATE DAC representative you are the main point of contact responsible for conveying information between the District, school, and parents. Your role is to attend and report back on the monthly GATE DAC meetings, help organize the GATE Parent Meetings at your school, and facilitate communication between the school and GATE parents.

Here is a suggested action list that will help make your tenure as GATE District Advisory Committee Representative a success!

During the first four weeks of school:

Introduce yourself to the administrator in charge of GATE at your site. This will probably be the principal at the elementary level, or a vice-principal at the secondary level. Help set 2 dates for GATE Parent Meetings - one in the fall and one in the spring. You just want to get on the school's master calendar to reserve the auditorium, cafeteria, or library for an hour and a half meeting in the evening.

Ask for a box in the school's mailroom. Get to know the office staff at your site. Your office should allow you to use their copy machine and paper to print informational flyers related to GATE activities, or help you post them on the school website or PeachJar.

Ask the office who the site GATE Team Leader is and introduce yourself. They can be very helpful in planning parent meetings and making suggestions as to the GATE needs on the site; also in disseminating information to parents. **Offer your contact information** to the GATE Team Leader and the other GATE teachers as a place to direct people with questions or who want to get involved.

Find out when the monthly School Site Council meetings are held. Even if you can't make a commitment to *serve* on the "SSC" you are allowed to *sit-in* and represent the GATE program at your site. The SSC makes site-based decisions regarding spending. If you don't have time to attend, recruit another GATE parent to attend on your behalf (or ask someone who already serves on the SSC to report back to you).

During the first 2 months:

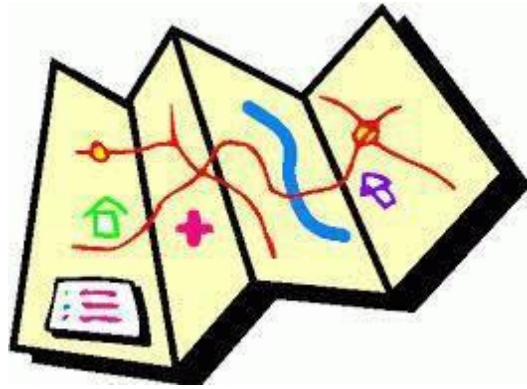
Encourage GATE parents at your site to attend the monthly GATE DAC meetings. Dates are available on the GATE website. It will help them understand what is happening on a district-wide level and learn more about the GATE program.

Open communications with GATE parents. Find out how the school prefers to communicate with parents (e.g., school website, newsletters, PeachJar, Konstella, Parent Connect phone messaging, bulletin boards, etc.). Introduce yourself to the PTA and find out if you can piggy-back on their events and communications. Ask to have an information table at school events such as “Back to School Night”, movie night, science night, carnivals, etc. Create a poster board to display information about GATE activities or showcase student’s work.

Get involved at the Cluster Level. Get to know the other GATE DAC reps from your Cluster and work cooperatively to hold joint events involving multiple schools. Understand your school Cluster feeder pattern and find out when Cluster meetings are held so one of you can participate, represent GATE needs, and report back to the other reps.

Educate yourself. Explore the district’s GATE website at www.sandiegounified.org/gifted-and-talented-education-gate. Find the District organizational chart at www.sandiegounified.org/district-organization-chart (note that the GATE department falls under Jim Solo, *Executive Director of Leadership & Learning* whereas GATE testing & identification is under the *Executive Director of Special Education*). Learn who your Area Superintendent and Board of Education trustee is.

Learn about Giftedness and Best Practices. Check out these websites: *National Assoc. for Gifted Children* nagc.org; *California Association for the Gifted* cag.org; *Hoagies Gifted* hoagiesgifted.org; *Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted* sengifted.org.



Where to start when you need help or have questions:

*Note- very rarely will you have to go beyond the administrator level,
The full hierarchy is noted for informational purposes.

Begin with:

- 1.) GATE Website
www.sandiegounified.org/gifted-and-talented-education-gate
- 2.) Your student's classroom teacher
- 3.) The school site GATE Team Leader
- 4.) Your school site administrator (Principal)
- 5.) Your site's School Psychologist
- 6.) Department of Leadership and Learning
Contact- Chris Marra (619) 725-7241 cmarra@sandi.net

What can a DAC representative do to help with a GATE parent meeting?

Make contact. Talk with the principal or GATE Team Leader to help organize the fall GATE parent meeting (usually scheduled in late September or early October). You could offer to help in one or more of the following ways (you don't need to do it all yourself; enlist other parents to assist you). Remember, the more you can do, the more you unburden the teachers so that they can spend their time on classroom activities.

Advertise the meeting. Create a flyer to share via PeachJar (or on school website). Ask the principal to review and approve your draft flyer. Or have the office staff copy it for distribution to the GATE families and teachers as appropriate.

Prepare a brief statement. As the GATE DAC representative, you should expect to say a few words at the meeting about what the GATE DAC is, how you plan to inform parents of what you learn there, and how they can contact you with questions or concerns.

Obtain handouts. Make copies, or ask someone at the school site to make copies of handouts for the expected audience size. Typically, these are handouts that you will get at the GATE DAC meetings or from the GATE website, such as flyers for Distinguished Lectures, workshops, or other announcements.

Arrange for refreshments. While certainly not necessary, you may wish to arrange for some simple refreshments before or after the meeting. This gives parents and staff a chance to talk with each other informally. Keep in mind that serving refreshments adds work and requires parents to help.

Set up and clean up. Arrange chairs, organize a clip-board with sign-in sheets (and pens), help set up A-V system, queue up power points, distribute handouts, be a greeter, etc.

Be reliable. Whatever role you end up playing, be sure to follow through. Complete your tasks promptly and notify others when you are done. This lets the staff know that you can be counted on and are a team player

School Site GATE Parent Meetings

Reasons for holding parent meetings:

- Demonstration of the school's commitment to its GATE program
- Explanation of what the school's GATE program is doing for students who are identified as gifted
- Introduction of GATE teachers and their curriculum plans
- Informing parents about the GATE District Advisory Committee
- Explaining where parents can find additional help
- Introducing the concept of social-emotional (as well as academic) needs
- Allowing parents of students identified as gifted to develop contacts with each other and establish and develop a community

Questions to be answered:

- What are the typical characteristics of students identified as gifted? How can these characteristics become assets?
- What structures need to be in place to insure that students identified as gifted are receiving instruction designed to best meet their needs?
- What are the site's GATE program options?
- How are GATE classes differentiated? What will parents notice?
- How can we support both academic as well as social-emotional needs?
- Who can help with questions about giftedness, gifted education, and parenting?

A successful meeting involves:

- Asking the principal, GATE team leader and GATE teachers, and DAC representatives to attend
- Working with the principal and GATE team leader to advertise the meeting in advance by contacting parents using fliers, email, and the Parent Connect phone messaging system
- Explaining how and why GATE differs from the regular classroom
- Giving specifics of how the curriculum is differentiated e.g., providing examples of student work (but NOT going into the specific needs of individual students)
- Presenting specific opportunities for parents to get involved, including supporting school and classroom events

Possible Agenda for Fall GATE Parent Meeting

Agenda

Opening and Welcome

Principal

Introduction of GATE Team Leader

Why GATE Classes?

GATE Team Leader

**Organization of GATE Programs
at our school site**

**Curriculum Modifications for
Differentiated Instruction**

Introduction of GATE Team

Overview of GATE Program

**Individual GATE
Team Members**

Role of the GATE DAC

**GATE DAC
Representative**

Important Dates

Instructional Program
Break into small groups by
class to discuss this year's plan

GATE Teachers

2018-2019 GATE DAC Meetings:

Held on the 2nd Monday of each month from 6:30-8pm at the
Harold Ballard Center Auditorium in Old Town.

Free childcare, parking, and Spanish translation services provided.

September 10, 2018

October 8, 2018

November 05, 2018

December 10, 2018 - Steering Committee

(all are welcome but no childcare or translation available on this date)

January 14, 2019

February 11, 2019

March 11, 2019

April 8, 2019

May 13, 2019

June 13, 2019 - Steering Committee

(all are welcome but no childcare or translation available on this date)

Contact: Mary Ann Hawke, GATE DAC Chair
hawkema@gmail.com

Ballard Parent Center Auditorium - 6:30-8:00PM
2375 Congress St.
San Diego, CA 92110