

# **S.A.G.E.**

## **Special and Gifted Education**

### **AREA 15**

#### *Guidelines, Ideas and Recommendations*

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Special Thanks to The Plano ISD Council of PTAs SAGE who provided not only the bulk of the information for this manual, but also the initiative behind SAGE in North Texas.

We stand on the shoulders of giants.

# SAGE PURPOSE

## Mission

We endeavor to promote a close alliance between parents and educators of diverse learners in hopes of benefiting all children

## Objectives

SAGE campus, council and area representatives will develop strong relationships with parents, teachers, administration, PTAs, and local and state-wide legislators.

We implement our mission through:

- Education
- Support
- Communication
- Advocacy

## Vision of Victory

*A voice and vote for SAGE on every campus PTA*

1. PTAs, parents, teachers and administration know what SAGE is and look to SAGE as a credible and reliable resource and partner
2. We effectively promote the SAGE mission and communicate our vision in order to shift the mindset about the value of meeting the needs of diverse learners
3. We are useful facilitators of communication between parents and teachers (KP: what about *teamwork* instead of *communication*?)
4. All districts have ample inclusion opportunities, and the school community values the richness of these relationships for all students
5. We engender on-going administrative participation in SAGE, and administrators see SAGE as partners in the process
6. SAGE is promoted on a national and state PTA level as an inclusive approach to meeting these student populations' needs
7. We have strong district to district SAGE Council-level relationships in order to support, encourage and inspire each other as a cohesive unit
8. We stand for equality of standards for special education students and teachers as compared to general education
9. Legislators understand and support the needs of diverse learners
10. SAGE partners with community resources

# JOB DESCRIPTIONS

## AREA SAGE Chair

- Support, encourage and inspire Council Chairs as needed and help Councils adapt Area Guidelines to their district needs and unique characteristics
- Promote SAGE in the greater community and encourage new SAGE units at other Councils and local campuses
- Represent SAGE in Area and State-wide PTA
- Facilitate Council SAGE Chairs' idea-sharing including hosting at least one annual meeting (preferably two) of Area 15 SAGE Council representatives
- Facilitate one to two training and information meetings for SAGE representatives and prospective reps across the Area
- Review Guidelines annually and make changes as needed with approval of Council Chairs
- Serve on Area board

## Council SAGE Chair

- Adapt Area guidelines to your district needs and unique characteristics
- Communicate Council unit goals and procedures with Local Unit Chairs and Representatives
- Facilitate and enable Local Units in achieving goals as listed in these guidelines
- Communicate with PTA Presidents, PTA Campus Chairs/Representatives as well as Campus Principals and appropriate staff
- Understand your district administrative structure and communicate the structure to your local units; know and communicate with your district administrators
- Serve on appropriate parent advisory boards in the district that concern special and/or gifted students when possible
- Develop a SAGE database to facilitate efficient communication
- Advocate and promote SAGE chair voting representation on PTA boards
- Develop educational and training programs not already offered in the community in order to bring awareness and support families.
- Strongly encouraged to have two sub-chairs or administrative liaisons (one each for Special and for Gifted/Talented) to adequately communicate with campus and district staff

## Local Unit SAGE Chair

- Facilitate communication between parents and the SAGE committee in accordance with district and PTA communication guidelines.
- Communicate the SAGE committee activities to parents, students and teachers on their campus via email, campus newsletter, brochures, mailings, back-to-school packets, etc.
- Facilitate building of a SAGE database to support Council Chair
- Ensure inclusion of special and gifted children in all PTA sponsored activities.
- Be a resource for other PTA board members about the needs of diverse learners
- Greet and reach out to new families of special and gifted children
- Be the Special Education Resource and Gifted Education room parent, ensuring those teachers are remembered in connection with PTA events. Establish workroom help for these teachers as needed. [Note: In some districts the Gifted Education teacher for a local campus may only be the School Counselor or may be a team of teachers and staff.]
- Strongly encouraged to have two sub-chairs or administrative liaisons (one each for Special and for Gifted/Talented) to adequately communicate with campus and district staff
- Advocate for the exceptional learner.

# SAGE COUNCIL COMMITTEE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

## SAGE Council Chair

1. Oversee and coordinate the efforts of the committee.
2. Report the activities of the committee to the board and general membership.
3. Maintain a listing of families served by the SAGE committee.
4. Train and support local unit SAGE chairs.
5. Facilitate schools without a local SAGE chair
6. Promote the goals and objectives of the SAGE committee through out the school district.
7. Serve as liaison between the school district and the SAGE committee.\*\*
8. Perform other duties as assigned by the President.
9. Network and build relationships within district and the community.

## Special Education Liaison\*\*

1. Serves as the liaison between the Special Education department administrators and the committee
2. Supports the Communication committee member in identifying programs unique to the gifted community
3. Ensures the committee includes programs and support for the disability community

## Gifted and Talented Liaison\*\*

1. Serves as the liaison between the Gifted and Talented program administrators and the committee
2. Supports the Communication committee member in identifying programs unique to the gifted and talented community
3. Ensures the committee includes programs and support for the gifted and talented community

\*\*Liaisons may not be necessary depending on district administrative structure and size. Some Councils may choose to have one District Liaison committee position. Separate liaisons can be useful in ensuring that either group does not receive unequal attention by SAGE Council.

## Communication

1. Address ways to communicate effectively as specifically applicable to your district
2. Pursue creative uses of technology including but not limited to utilizing widely available internet solutions (facebook, meet-up and many others) to make SAGE committee efforts more efficient and broader-reaching
3. Pursue district resources for AV presentation and production
4. Maintain the SAGE email database and actively pursue new members including collaborating with local unit SAGE chairs
5. Communicate SAGE events and highlight community events of particular note to your district via the SAGE database

## Website

1. Develop and maintain a website linked through the Council website
2. Maintain a calendar of SAGE hosted events
3. Maintain links to community resources or links to sites that summarize resources (municipal, charitable, ability/disability-identified, parent-based)
4. Highlight specific resources of special interest to your district

## Education

1. Develop programs using parent, school district and community resources.
2. Gather information from parents and teachers on types of programs to be offered.
3. Coordinate parent panels as needed by professional training organizations.
4. Pursue creative internet solutions to make education programs accessible to a broader audience and for longer duration
5. Develop assessment of program success by participants; track history of results for future committees and adapt programs to responses as necessary

## Connection

1. Define, write and maintain guidelines for formation of individual connection groups. Facilitate the establishment of connection groups as needed
2. Pursue innovations in providing support and connecting families
3. Provide information on connection groups activities for dissemination, including, but not limited to the calendar and website
6. Develop assessment of group success by participants; track history of results for future committees and adapt programs to responses as necessary

## Legislative Liaison

1. Serve as a liaison between the Federal and Texas Legislative process, school boards and the SAGE committee as it pertains to public schools
2. Be a resource for the SAGE committee
3. Aid in identifying needs of the district

## SAMPLE Plan of Work

**POSSIBLE SAGE GOALS:****COMMUNICATION**

Extend our reach into the district network using the following:

- E-news
- Special Education team leaders
- GT team leaders
- School Board of Trustees
- Community leaders
- Local media

Improve communications and attendance of SAGE events through the following:

- local chair communications
- partnering with ISD departments

Continue to train, support and expand the network of local unit SAGE chairs.

Host a training coffee for local SAGE chairs

Host two local SAGE chair meetings for brainstorm and information sharing

Speak to principals and other administrators on the importance of this position at their local unit.

Raise awareness of inclusion in ISD schools with National Inclusion Week in December.

Successfully recruit, train and implement five new positions on SAGE committee:

- Legislative Liaison
- East, West and Central Cluster Liaisons
- Website manager

**EDUCATION**

Schedule and host “brown bag” lunches with parent- and teacher-interest topics.

Schedule evening meetings with parent- and teacher-interest topics.

Maintain web page listing of community recourses

Maintain web pages of information pertinent to SAGE topics

Explore academic decathlon opportunities.

Conduct SENG training pilot clinic in the Fall 2008.

Create SPED pilot clinic modeled after SENG clinic in Spring 2009.

**CONNECTION**

Conduct a major overhaul of general email list and establish consistent flow of email addresses from local chairman.

Assist ISD SPED department with their “New Parent Orientation” as needed.

Finalize and make available for publishing the “SPED New Parent Handbook”.

Maintain web page listing contact information for support groups

Maintain contact with new and existing groups to monitor development.

Continue to encourage new group formations based on parent and teacher interest and need.

**This enrollment enters your email into the SAGE database for announcements of speakers, school and community events relating to these diverse learning areas. All information will be kept private.**

**NOTE: The only required information is your e-mail. Other information will help us better understand what our families' needs and wants may be.**

**Contact information for SAGE communications only: (Please PRINT carefully)**

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Preferred method of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Translation services required (please specify language): \_\_\_\_\_

Check: written \_\_\_\_\_ spoken \_\_\_\_\_ Am. Sign \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Information:**

Name	Grade	School	Spec. Needs	G&T
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_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**SUPPORT GROUP INQUIRY/REQUEST**

Do you want to be contacted regarding joining a support group? Circle one: **Yes** **No**

If so, please specify:

\_\_\_\_\_ Specific need (please state): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ General special needs

\_\_\_\_\_ Talented and Gifted

Support Group interests (please check all that apply):

\_\_\_\_\_ Networking \_\_\_\_\_ Informational topics

\_\_\_\_\_ Share 'n Tell (doctors, therapies, activities) \_\_\_\_\_ Educational updates

\_\_\_\_\_ Play groups/making new friends \_\_\_\_\_ Training opportunities

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in being a leader/contact for your group and be listed on the

FISD SAGE Support Group website? **Yes** **No**

Interested in participating on a Parent Panel at professional training opportunities? **Yes** **No**

**PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR LOCAL PTA**



Because Every Child is Unique

Frisco SAGE (Special and Gifted Education) is a committee of the Frisco Council of PTA's. We endeavor to promote a close alliance between parents and educators of diverse learners in hopes of benefiting all children. For more information, please contact the SAGE chair at [friscosage@gmail.com](mailto:friscosage@gmail.com) or 972-977-9380.