Steamboat Springs School District
Gifted Education Advisory Committee (GEAC)
Membership Manual

The Steamboat Gifted Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) is an advisory committee that meets periodically to bring together parents, staff, and students in order to make a positive impact on the educational outcomes of gifted students.

Mission

Our district strives to provide gifted learners of all backgrounds, including twice exceptional, multilingual, and those gifted in talent areas, with equitable learning environments that empower them to thrive. Gifted learners will reach their fullest potential through diverse, robust programming that nurtures cognitive and affective engagement, thus driving their pursuit of lifelong growth.

Vision

To champion the development of gifted learners by cultivating tailored educational experiences and programming that honor diverse talents and backgrounds. By fostering dynamic, supportive learning environments in collaboration with the learning community, students receive opportunities and support to grow throughout their personal and academic journeys.

Beliefs

- Gifted abilities exist and should be identified and served in students of all ages from all cultures, races, ethnic backgrounds and socioeconomic groups.
- Gifted learners have unique strengths and needs that must be addressed.
- Cognitive development is enhanced within social and emotional wellness.
- Learners should be active participants and share the responsibility for maximizing the learning opportunities provided.
- District and school administration, teachers, families, and the community share the responsibility to provide relevant and challenging opportunities to develop the individual potential of gifted learners.

Purpose

The purpose of the Gifted Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) is to provide insight, support, and recommendations to the Gifted Education (GE) Department and the Steamboat Springs School District community in order to facilitate the continuous improvement and success of the gifted education program.

GEAC serves in an advisory role rather than as a decision-making body. Members contribute to the committee's collective work rather than representing individual positions or agendas. Students who receive gifted education services are general education students first, which means that the GEAC mission and vision aligns with the district's mission and vision and focus areas determined by the GEAC are connected to the school district's strategic plan.

The following are the prioritized functions and duties of the SSSD GEAC:

- Advise on gifted education related topics and goals at the district level, including the needs and priorities of students identified as gifted.
- Represent gifted students and impact educational decisions made on their behalf.
- Facilitate communication between the district and families by sharing relevant information and perspectives.
- Educate participants on gifted education topics.
- Provide a welcoming space for families and staff to discuss ideas and experiences related to gifted education.
- Inform members of proposed legislation concerning gifted education.
- Share district success stories while maintaining confidentiality.
- Stay abreast of national and state rules, regulations and policies regarding the education of gifted students.
- Communicate and coordinate with GEAC to help create impact at state level.

Members

The GEAC should include parents/guardians, SSSD staff, students, and a school board member. GEAC members represent all of gifted education. Members are not identified to represent any specific subgroup or student population within gifted education. Although, the GEAC acknowledges that each member contributes their expertise and experience when working together as a cohesive advisory committee. Members come to GEAC ready to work as a group and not on individual agendas or specific student situations.

The GEAC also seeks a diversity of membership in regards to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Parent/guardian membership is limited to those with students in their care identified as gifted.

Membership Application

An application process is required for members. The process includes the completion of an application form and possible interview with the co-chairs/district liaison. The application and selection process also works toward members that include the spectrum of representation as described above.

Parent, Staff, and Student application form - English
Parent, Staff, and Student application form - Spanish (coming soon)

GEAC Leadership Roles

Chairperson:

- Shall be a parent/guardian representative.
- Sets meeting dates in collaboration with the District Liaison and Director of Exceptional Student Services.
- Facilitates agenda planning with the District Liaison.
- Co-presides over committee meetings with the District Liaison.

Secretary:

- Takes minutes and keeps time during the meeting.
- Maintains secure records of the organization, with a copy provided to all members.
- May be assigned on a rotating basis.

District Liaison:

- Shall be a member of the Gifted Education department.
- Sets meeting dates in collaboration with the Chairperson and Director of Exceptional Student Services.
- Facilitates agenda planning with the Chairperson.
- Posts/links (i.e., agendas, minutes, other relevant documents) on Google calendar invitations.
- Co-presides over committee meetings with the Chairperson

Meetings

- Schedule: Regular meetings shall be held four times per year (at least 1 time per quarter), and will also include a longer planning retreat either at the end of the school year or the beginning of the next school year.
- Agenda: Meeting agendas will be set by the Chairperson and District Appointed Liaison and distributed to the full Council at least 3 days prior to the meeting.
- Attendance: Members who are absent for three consecutive meetings are subject to removal from the Council by majority vote of the Council.
- Participation: All meetings are open to anyone interested in attending.

Meeting Format

1. **Student Presentation:** Every meeting will begin with a presentation from a student, rooting GEAC in why we are embarking on this shared work. Approximately 10 minutes will be set aside for students to share their story.
2. **Gifted Education Updates and Progress on Gifted Education Monitoring (GEM) Recommendations:** Approximately 15 - 20 minutes of each meeting will feature updates on actions taken by the GE team in response to both student and programming needs, and to the GEM report recommendations.
3. **Valued Voices:** As an advisory group, our goal is to ensure our gifted education programming maximizes every student's potential. To achieve this, we need to hear directly from you through dedicated, collaborative dialogue. Prior to every GEAC meeting, a main topic of discussion will be identified, and relevant resources will be shared in advance for review. Meetings will bring the right educators into the room, including principals, teachers, and staff, to participate alongside families. During this time, GEAC members will engage in an open discussion on the designated topic while district leaders listen, take notes, and seek to understand. Depending on the conversation, the district may identify concrete action steps or simply use the time to listen and gain a deeper perspective.

Valued Voices Guidelines

- **Topic Focus & Preparation:** Discussion will center around the designated topic announced prior to the meeting. Members are encouraged to review any shared resources in advance to support a focused, meaningful conversation.
- **Open Discussion Format:** Rather than a timed public comment period, this session is structured as a collaborative, open dialogue between GEAC Members, district leaders, and invited educators (such as principals and teachers).
- **Listening & Action:** The primary purpose of this segment is for district leadership to listen, take notes, and seek to understand community perspectives. Depending on the topic, input gathered may lead to direct action or be used to inform future decision-making.
- **Focus & Tone:** Shared insights and questions should focus on topics related to gifted education and district matters. Remarks should remain respectful and appropriate for all participants.
- **Constructive Resolution:** To help us keep our focus on collaborative, big-picture programming during meetings, we request that constructive feedback regarding specific staff members or district operations be shared directly with the individuals closest to the situation, such as a teacher, principal, or supervisor, so we can thoughtfully resolve concerns together at the local level. See *C-4 Complaints about School Personnel 10-17-19* for full policy details.
- **Student & Personnel Privacy:** To respect privacy, comments regarding individual personnel or specific students should be submitted directly to district leadership in writing rather than shared during this session.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

To make the most of everyone’s time and focus our collective energy where it matters most, permanent standing sub-committees will no longer meet on an ongoing basis. Instead, specialized sub-committees or working groups will be convened on an ad-hoc basis when a specific, clear need or project arises. Topics or items that require shared understanding, such as reviewing research or foundational data, will be conducted by the entire GEAC committee together during our regular meetings rather than delegated to small groups. When a focused, task-specific initiative is identified, members will be invited to participate for a defined scope and timeline that may include collaboration outside of the quarterly meetings, ensuring our efforts remain purposeful, actionable, and respectful of everyone's capacity.