



CARROLL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

2400 N. Carroll Avenue, Southlake, TX 76092 PHONE 817.949.7070 FAX 817.949.7088

"Provide a letter of recommendation describing the impact your group's efforts have had from the perspective of an educator."

Dear TAGT Board,

I am honored to work with Southlake Association of Gifted and Talented, or SAGT. This is my fourth year to work with students who have been identified as being gifted and talented, and I have SAGT to thank for much of my success as a gifted educator. Not only does this organization support teachers and their classrooms, but they also provide support for parents, students, and the community as a whole.

SAGT provides teachers with the opportunity to apply for grants each year, and they are so generous with the money they put back into classrooms. Last year, this organization paid GT teachers' way to attend the TAGT conference in Dallas that provided us with invaluable learning experiences.

I believe that a gifted child flourishes when given the opportunity to connect their classroom learning objectives to real-world applications. Real-world applications, however, are not easily attained through standard department budgets given by the school. SAGT is our first and strongest advocate in providing these materials, whether they be technology, a collection of books or online resources, camps, teacher trainings, or really anything else we could ask of them. They believe in educating the whole child, academically and social-emotionally, and provide us with the resources to do so.

The organization provides a link for parents of gifted children, as well. SAGT hosts parent seminars that provide time for parents to get to know one another, listen to guest speakers, and tackle the latest difficulties that students and parents face. Many parents report having felt "alone" with their child's unique strengths, difficulties, behaviors, etc. until joining SAGT and getting support from other parents. I believe this is such a vital element as a teacher: having supportive parents who work as a team with each other, with their children, and with the teachers. Through SAGT, I have also gotten to build relationships with parents that I otherwise wouldn't have. This is such a special trait of SAGT.

Lastly, SAGT supports students in a special and unique way. Gifted students often feel disconnected from their peers or learning environment, and SAGT works diligently to close that disconnect and give these students a place to flourish and belong. They host fun and educational group outings for students to places such as the zoo, parks, museums, indoor skydiving locations, laser tag, and so much more. They use these fun outings to connect with learning in the classroom, and students build friendships with one another. In addition, SAGT provides students with study skills workshops. In these workshops, students learn tools and strategies that help them to better reach their potential in the classroom and conquer the challenges that many gifted students face in the regular education classroom.

I am so thankful to have such strong support for the Gifted and Talented program in Carroll ISD and in the community beyond. I am very hopeful that SAGT will be able to receive the support they need in order to continue to provide our community with the resources we need to support our gifted youth.

Sincerely,

Leslie Elkins

Leslie Elkins
Gifted and Talented Educator
Johnson Elementary School, CISD