

**MINNESOTA COUNCIL  
FOR THE  
GIFTED & TALENTED**

**HANDBOOK  
FOR  
STARTING A CHAPTER**

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**MCGT HANDBOOK FOR STARTING A CHAPTER**  
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(Revised 2008)

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## THE MINNESOTA COUNCIL FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED

Mission Statement: "The Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented (MCGT) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting better understanding of, and educational services for, gifted and talented children and their families." Its membership is comprised primarily of parents, educators and other professionals.

### **MCGT works to:**

- educate parents and the community about the characteristics, problems and special needs of gifted children;
- create and maintain channels of communication between parents, educators and other interested persons concerning information on development of high potential;
- develop state-wide workshops and seminars for parents, educators and the general public concerning high potential students; and
- promote advocacy and legislation that will expand educational provisions for high potential students.

Members receive information about MCGT activities and a variety of topics about gifted and talented children through Outlook newsletters (published 5 times a year), a website, an email group, special meetings and seminars, chapter meetings, and an annual conference with a special children's program. The MCGT office also has a Resource Center with materials on a wide variety of topics which may be borrowed: books, magazines/journals, articles, videotapes, cassettes.

The current issue of Outlook includes updated lists of the MCGT Board of Directors and chapters (both recognized and developing). Because benefits increase greatly when an active local chapter exists in the area of a member's residence, MCGT provides assistance in the organization of local chapters throughout the state.

The members of MCGT are also encouraged to become involved in the state organization through board membership or work on various committees including legislation, public relations, annual conference, fund-raising, chapter development and others.

MCGT is affiliated and/or collaborates with the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), the Council for Exceptional Children - Talented and Gifted Division (CEC-TAG), The Association for Gifted, and the Minnesota Educators of the Gifted and Talented (MEGT), as well as with organizations concerned with gifted children in other states.

## WHY ORGANIZE A LOCAL CHAPTER FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED?

A parent support group is a unified effort to meet the needs of parents and their gifted and talented children. The most significant people who touch the lives of gifted and talented children are their parents. It is these special adults more than anyone else who have the opportunity and responsibility to guide and support these children into realizing and continually stretching to reach their full potential.

Gifted and talented children have special needs. They require unique guidance, emotional support, and educational opportunities. Gifted and talented children need to be understood by their peers and adults. When these needs are fulfilled, they are able to rise to their greatest capabilities.

Not only do the children have special needs, but so do their parents. In *Teaching Young Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom: Identifying, Nurturing and Challenging Ages 4-9* (1997), Joan Smutny and her co-authors wrote: "Parents of gifted children need support from other parents and from educators and other professionals who understand the challenges of living with highly able and creative children. They need to know that they are not alone and that there are people who are willing to help them." Fears of rejection, scorn, envy, and loneliness can be eased when parents meet other parents to talk and share concerns and plans for these children. Sally Yahnke Walker said (in *How to Understand, Live With and Stick Up for Your Gifted Child*, 1991): "You'll get a lot out of joining a parent support group. Such groups offer moral support, companionship, the chance to exchange ideas and increase your knowledge, and contacts with other adults who may join with you in advocating for your kids."

A safe and responsive environment can provide the necessary emotional support parents are seeking. A parent support group can do not only this, but can also open communication channels between the schools and community to enhance appropriate educational opportunities for gifted and talented children. When these lines are open and parents, teachers and community forces are sharing and planning together, many of the problems and concerns of gifted and talented children and their parents can be resolved. When the home, school and community work together, the child's special needs may be addressed more quickly and conscientiously.

### **MCGT provides these services and information to its chapters:**

Rebates of a portion of the MCGT membership paid by its chapter's members.

Chapter contact meetings (at least once a year) for chapter presidents and other interested individuals to exchange concerns and information.

A list of speakers that may be contacted for chapter meetings.

A list of other chapter contacts.

Two handbooks of organizational information and procedures.

Membership application forms.

Information from the MCGT office on requested special topics.

Posting of chapter events on the MCGT web-site when requested.

## GETTING A LOCAL CHAPTER STARTED

### **GOAL 1:**

Develop a list of educators (superintendent, principals, counselors, teachers, school board members, gifted/talented coordinator), parents and community members who would be receptive to the formation of a local chapter.

Suggestions to accomplish it:

1. Call MCGT to request a Chapter Development Handbook.
2. Contact teachers and administrators for names of potentially interested parents. If these names cannot be released, ask if the educators would be willing to distribute information to those parents.
3. Send a flyer home with parents (sample in appendix).
4. Print notices in the school district newsletter and/or community flyer.
5. Make announcements at school functions (carnivals, concerts, parent/teacher organization meetings, parent/teacher conferences).
6. Put up posters in schools, libraries, local shopping centers, stores.
7. Submit a news release to the local paper (sample in appendix).
8. Arrange for announcements on a local radio station (sample in appendix).
9. Publish your intentions in the MCGT state newsletter as a developing chapter.
10. Always include a phone number and/or email address so parents can contact someone for more information.

### **GOAL 2:**

Hold an organizational and motivational meeting.

Suggestions to accomplish it:

1. Plan a fairly short program, possibly with a speaker, aimed to generate enthusiasm for a chapter.
2. Set a date that allows ample time for publicity (see goal 1).
3. Hold the meeting in an easily accessible location.
4. Extend personal invitations to educators.
5. Set up a concise meeting agenda (see example following goal 5).
6. Have MCGT membership forms available. (Make copies for the chapter to keep, then send original forms and checks made out to MCGT by each member to the MCGT Membership Chair, 5701 Normandale Rd., Suite 315, Edina, MN 55424.)
7. Have each person complete an informational survey (sample in Appendix D in this handbook). Ask them to fill in their professions and hobbies so that when something needs to be done in an area of their expertise,

they can be contacted.

8. Establish a core of individuals to assess needs and to organize the next meeting.
9. Plan to set up a chapter bank account to use when the chapter is accepted by the MCGT board and the chapter receives rebates for its members. Take care when choosing a bank. Some do not cater to non-profit organizations and impose service charges for deposits and checks written. Use the MCGT letter establishing non-profit 501(c)(3) status. This letter (Appendix I in this handbook) contains the necessary federal tax identification number.

**GOAL 3:**

Hold a second meeting.

Suggestions to accomplish it:

1. Publicize the meeting (as you should do for every meeting. See goal 1).
2. Put together a meeting agenda (as you should do for every meeting).
3. Have MCGT membership forms available.
4. Have informational surveys available for newcomers to complete.
5. Set up committees that have been deemed necessary, including one to draft local chapter by-laws (sample in this handbook).

**GOAL 4:**

Hold a third meeting.

Suggestions to accomplish it:

1. Business part of meeting:
  - Present the slate of officers and vote.
  - Continue to develop the chapter by-laws, if not completed. Vote on the by-laws if they are completed.
  - Review the summary of the informational surveys.
  - Announce plans for future meetings.
2. Meeting options this time might include a speaker, small group discussions or interaction with someone from your local school district administration.

**GOAL 5:**

Send necessary information to the MCGT Board of Directors to become an official chapter. (Until now, the group has been designated a developing chapter.)

Suggestions to accomplish this:

Be sure to include:

1. Local chapter by-laws
2. Chapter membership list, including information gathered from MCGT membership forms.
3. A letter requesting affiliation as a chapter with MCGT. (At least seven paid members are required. Some people may have paid directly to MCGT; call the office to find out.)
4. Names, addresses, e-mail, and positions of local officers.
5. Information about chapter bank account.

## **SUGGESTED MEETING AGENDA FOR CHAPTER ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

1. Welcome those attending and introduce those who set up the meeting. Pass around sign-in sheet.
2. Ask which schools are represented. To find out what niches people fill, ask for hands to be raised by parents (elementary, middle school, high school), by educators, by administrators, by any others. Some people will raise their hands for more than one question. Then, to find out more about the folks who are there, do an "ice breaker": go around the room with each person introducing themselves and their "niche" and indicating briefly why they are there and/or what they hope to get out of being part of a chapter. (Of course, if you have a hundred people, you'll have to think of something else!)
3. Present information about MCGT and as much as you have about the potential chapter: goals, objectives, activities, resources, etc.
4. Explain membership dues and how they are used by MCGT. State that a portion of the dues will remain with the local chapter for its use. Distribute MCGT membership forms. Show/pass around a sample of a recent Outlook (MCGT newsletter), or obtain copies from the MCGT office or the newsletter editor.
5. Discuss possible goals of a local chapter.
  - Divide into small groups, each with a large sheet of paper and marker.
  - Have each group select a recorder.
  - Ask each group to brainstorm on what the chapter should work toward accomplishing, things a local chapter can do to further the cause of gifted and talented education, to more adequately meet the needs of g/t children and their families, and to help with programming for g/t students. All ideas should be recorded, keeping them brief for now and elaborating on them later.
  - Each small group should select three of its ideas to share with the entire group. Write these on another large sheet of paper. After all groups have reported, ask if there are any other ideas that came up that need to be on the list.
6. Discuss possible chapter activities.
  - Group as before, with the same group rules.
  - Ask each group to list possible ways to accomplish goals, such as

information dissemination, opportunities for interaction, topics for future meetings, etc.

- Report in the same way as before.
7. Collect all the sheets and save them for future reference. Plan to transcribe at least the summary sheets for the two topics.
  8. Pass out informational surveys and request they be returned before people leave.
  9. Select a small steering committee to plan future meetings, to publicize the forming chapter, and to work on nominations for local chapter officers.
  10. Adjourn promptly, at a reasonable hour. Remember - you cannot do everything in one evening. The suggested meeting length is 1 to 1-1/2 hours.

## SAMPLE CHAPTER BY LAWS

LOCATION Area Council for the Gifted and Talented  
A chapter of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented  
Chapter Bylaws

### 1. Name and Affiliation

- 1.1. The name of this nonprofit organization shall be LOCATION Area Council for the Gifted and Talented." It shall serve the geographic area primarily described as LOCATION Area School District NUMBER.
- 1.2. It shall be a duly recognized chapter of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented. As such, it is subject to MCGT's general supervision and control pursuant to Article VI, Section 4 of the MCGT bylaws.
- 1.3. In this document, the LOCATION Area Council for the Gifted and Talented shall be referred to as the [abbreviated name] or the LOCATION Chapter.
- 1.4. LOCATION Chapter's affiliation with MCGT provides it with group exemption status under the Internal Revenue Code pursuant to Section 501(c)(3).

### 2. Aims and Purposes

- 2.1. To provide and support programs that increase the quality of education for gifted and talented children and to support the parenting of gifted and talented children.
- 2.2. To increase public awareness of the need for educational opportunities for gifted and talented children.
- 2.3. To open and encourage communication regarding the needs of gifted and talented children.
- 2.4. To encourage and support special university, state, and local programs in the education of gifted and talented students.
- 2.5. To assist parents, teachers and other community members in the development and dissemination of materials for gifted and talented students.
- 2.6. To develop and disseminate materials for gifted and talented children.
- 2.7. To provide information about local and state policies that improve the educational opportunities for gifted and talented children.
- 2.8. To connect with similar groups who share these aims and purposes.

### 3. Membership

- 3.1. Membership in this organization shall be open to all individuals who have paid the current year's fees to LOCATION Chapter and MCGT. These members will be considered to be in good standing and will be welcome to vote at all general membership meetings.
- 3.2. Honorary annual membership may be given by the President or co-Presidents to any person having contributed in an outstanding manner to projects of this organization or to the educational welfare of gifted and talented children.
- 3.3. Annual membership scholarships may be granted at the discretion of the Board.
- 3.4. A "voting member" is any individual present at a meeting who is in good standing, including honorary and scholarship memberships. Each current membership shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the LOCATION Chapter.

#### 4. Officers

- 4.1. The Officers of LOCATION Chapter shall be: President or Co-Presidents, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the immediate Past President or Co-Presidents.
- 4.2. The term of each office shall be one year beginning June 1.

#### 5. Duties of Officers

- 5.1. The President or Co-Presidents shall:
  - A. Preside over membership events, general membership meetings and Executive Board meetings.
  - B. Function as the chief executive and business representative of LOCATION Chapter.
  - C. Appoint all committees, unless otherwise requested by the membership.
  - D. Represent LOCATION Chapter in any activities related to the education or interests of gifted and talented children and delegate any general member to so represent LOCATION Chapter if the President or the Vice Presidents are unable to serve.
  - E. Serve as a member of the Executive Board.
- 5.2. The Vice President shall:
  - A. Act in the place and with the authority of the President or Co-Presidents in the event of the absence or inability of the aforementioned to function in any of his/her assigned duties.
  - B. Assist the President or Co-Presidents as needed.

- C. Serve as a member of the Executive Board.
- 5.3. The Secretary shall:
  - A. Keep accurate minutes of all membership and Executive Board meetings and provide copies to the Executive Board members, at least, one week prior to the meetings during the school year via email.
  - B. Have responsibility for necessary correspondence.
  - C. Serve as a member of the Executive Board.
  - D. Keep and maintain an attendance record at all meetings.
- 5.4. The Treasurer shall:
  - A. Collect and forward as directed, the portion of membership dues designated for the MCGT.
  - B. Keep a true and accurate account of all transactions of LOCATION Chapter.
  - C. Present a financial report at each meeting.
  - D. Maintain an accurate dues record for each member and notify members when it is time to renew their membership.
  - E. Keep membership records up-to-date and maintain lists of all current and former members, including name, address, and telephone number.
  - F. Serve as a member of the Executive Board.
  - G. Report any donations received by LOCATION Chapter.
  - H. Attend Executive Board meetings and provide the President or Co-Presidents with complete financial reports no later than one week prior to annual budget meeting for their review and preparation.

## 6. Board

- 6.1. The Board is composed of the Chapter officers.
- 6.2. Meeting of the Board shall be held regularly during the school year. The date of such meetings shall be set by the president or co-presidents. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the Board.
- 6.3. The Board shall fill any vacancy in its membership from members of the Chapter in good standing.
- 6.4. Termination of Board membership due to conduct detrimental to the purpose, goals and/or philosophy of the LOCATION MCGT Chapter requires a 2/3 majority vote of the Board. Said membership in question shall be given no less than 10 days written notice of the termination vote and an opportunity to defend against any and all charges in writing.
- 6.5. The Board shall have the authority to appoint additional members of the Board.

## 7. Election of Officers

- 7.1. Chapter officers shall be elected once yearly by simple majority at the spring meeting of the LOCATION Chapter.
- 7.2. All Chapter members in good standing shall be eligible to vote for Chapter officers.

## 8. Dues and Income

- 8.1. All persons joining the LOCATION Chapter of the Gifted and Talented must also join the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented. Dues for both organizations must be paid at the same time.
- 8.2. Chapter dues will be set by the Board in accordance with MCGT guidelines and will be payable annually on the date the member joined MCGT.
- 8.3. Receipt of donations or grants will be reported by the treasurer to the Board on a monthly basis.

## 9. Amendments

- 9.1. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by the Board or by a Chapter member as necessary to achieve the LOCATION Chapter's purposes, goals and objectives.
- 9.2. Amendments shall be introduced at an Board meeting. Changes to amendments shall be entertained and must be agreed to by the proposer.
- 9.3. A simple majority of the Board votes is required to pass the amendment.
- 9.4. Amendments shall take effect immediately upon their adoption.

## 10. Operating Policies

- 10.1. The Board is empowered to issue operating policies to provide members with the necessary procedures for day-to-day activities.

## 11. Dissolution

- 11.1. In the event that the LOCATION Chapter of MCGT is dissolved, its board shall pay all outstanding debts and claims and shall distribute any remaining property of the LOCATION Chapter to state treasury of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented.

These bylaws shall be made available upon request to any LOCATION Chapter member in good standing.

Adopted [date]

## REQUEST FOR OFFICIAL CHAPTER STATUS

Bloomington Council for the Gifted and Talented  
xxxxx Drive  
Bloomington, MN 55420-5543

April 18, 2000

Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented  
5701 Normandale Road Suite 345  
Edina, MN 55424

To the Board of Directors:

Please accept this as a request for chapter status for the newly-formed xxxxx Chapter. We have met twice, have over xx members, have a board of four officers, and have a draft of our by-laws. When we finalize our bylaws we will forward a copy to MCGT. Our officers are:

President: Karen xxxx  
xxxx Drive  
Bloomington, MN 55420

Vice President: Nels xxxx  
xxxx Circle  
Bloomington, MN 55431

Treasurer: Kirsten xxxx  
xxxx Drive  
Bloomington, MN 55438

Secretary: Ruth xxxx  
xxxx Drive  
Bloomington, MN 55437

We have a Planning Committee already at work setting up our meetings for the 2000-2001 school year. We are excited by the response we are getting from Bloomington residents.

Thank you very much -

Karen xxxx  
BCGT President

**APPENDICES  
AND  
SAMPLES**

## CASE STUDY: A CHAPTER IS FORMED

This is the story of a chapter forming in a city in Minnesota. It is the narrative of the chapter president, and copies of all the documents referred to are included in the appendix.

### December, 1999:

OK, I can't avoid it any longer. There are a lot of people out there who want a chapter in our area, and it looks like I will get to be the one to pull it all together.

**TASK:** Email Betty Johnson ([betty.johnson@mcgt.net](mailto:betty.johnson@mcgt.net)) to ask for a list of all current MCGT members living locally.

### January, 2000

The holidays are past, and it's time to get down to business. I got the list from Betty - there are only 9 members in the city! Unbelievable!! Huge potential here.

**TASK:** Send a letter to the 9 members inviting them to a meeting (see attachment A)

**TASK:** Draft a local Council for the Gifted and Talented brochure (see attachment B)

**TASK:** Call the district coordinator (or, in our case, the member of the administration who is assigned to oversee G&T issues) and inform him of what we are doing. Ask for help in room reservations. Pick dates for meetings in March, April & May out of a hat, depending on what rooms are available!

**TASK:** Create Agenda for first meeting

### February, 2000

Hold meeting - 6 of the 9 show up and 1 calls to say she can't come. The time is right! I share my thoughts on why we need a chapter, and we talk about what the current situation is here (pretty bleak). One member volunteers to be treasurer! Yeah! We go over the draft brochure and they make some excellent suggestions. We brainstorm about how to advertise our March meeting.

**TASK:** Create flyer to be posted all over town (see attachment C)

**TASK:** Mail press releases to all schools in district (public and private) (see attachment D)

**TASK:** Mail letter of introduction with flyer (C) to all principals, all G&T teachers, appropriate administrators, and all school board members (see attachment E)

**TASK:** Mail press release to local newspaper with date you want it published. (see attachment F)

**TASK:** Mail flyers to all churches and public libraries in city with explanatory letter (see attachment G)

**TASK:** Determine content of second public meeting (we chose a speaker) so that you can advertise it at the first meeting. If using a speaker, coordinate all details.

### March, 2000

OK, the flyers are everywhere, I'm hearing from people that they will be attending. Time to figure out what I'm going to say! My goals for the evening are that half of the people who attend actually join and pay their dues, and that I get 6 volunteers to be on a planning committee.

**TASK:** Create a mailing list / membership form with an interest survey, and a chance to volunteer. (see attachment H)

**TASK:** Determine what other handouts you will pass out (see attachments I, J, & K for our choices)

**TASK:** Create flyer for next meeting and distribute.

**TASK:** Write speech! Include introductions, brief overview of MCGT, why a chapter is needed locally, what the chapter will do, why they should join as opposed to just coming to the meetings, and why their help is needed. Have audience participation by asking them why they came - what are they hoping to get from this organization? Write list on board and keep it for future reference.

**TASK:** Ask one of original members to take notes at meeting.

**TASK:** Open bank account at TCF (they offer no-cost checking to non-profits). Take along proof of non-profit status found in Chapter Handbook.

### April, 2000:

First meeting was a great success! Over 60 people came, 32 of them joined that night, 5 more mailed their checks within a week, and 10 people volunteered to be on the planning committee! Hooray! Now to get ready for meeting #2.

**TASK:** Mail letter and handouts to people who could not come to meeting but expressed interest (see attachment L)

**TASK:** Check in with speaker frequently to answer questions, give directions, and make sure they don't forget!

**TASK:** Set up email list of all attendees for quick and easy notification about meetings or other informative notices.

**TASK:** Determine content of next meeting and create flyer to distribute at this meeting.

**TASK:** Send press release to local newspaper and schools. Send letters (or emails)

to same list as before (principals, teachers, administrators and board members. Perhaps word invitation a little more strongly since NONE of them showed up last month!)

**TASK:** Prepare handouts for second meeting. Revise membership survey to remove the volunteer for planning group question since we have enough volunteers.

**TASK:** Schedule first planning committee meeting for the hour prior to regularly scheduled meeting. Plan to brainstorm about where we go from here. Share MCGT Speaker Resource List to get ideas for future speakers. Ask for volunteers to be vice-president and secretary so that we can become an official MCGT chapter. Hand out Effective Advocacy article (see attachment M)

**TASK:** Write letter to MCGT requesting official chapter status. (see attachment N)

### May, 2000

Plan for third meeting by doing all of the (by now) usual tasks - press releases, flyers to key players, email all attendees from previous meetings reminding them and asking them to spread the word. As this is the last meeting of the school year, try to have the first fall date set but don't worry if you can't do it - tell the group you will email them and they can also ask the G&T teachers at school in the fall..

### Other notes:

- Get your meetings on the official school calendar if possible.
- Approach the district about setting up a Parent Advisory Council for G&T issues - where you meet regularly with the coordinator and the G&T teachers (quarterly?) to discuss how things are going and address any problems.
- Make friends with the school board, to determine the knowledge and acceptance level of each member.
- Create a mentoring partnership with an already-established chapter (possibly one that is similar to your district in size and climate) so you have someone to go to with questions.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of what to do or how to do it. *Good luck!*

January 16, 2000

## INVITATION TO ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Dear <Names>,

I am writing to you as a member of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented and a resident of <city>. We do not have a local MCGT chapter here in our school district, and I think we are numerous enough to create one at this time. There used to be an active chapter in <city> years ago, but as children got older, the chapter dwindled and finally disbanded. Now seems to be the right time to restart!

I would like to invite you to an initial meeting where we will discuss what we want to do, where we want to go, and what we hope to accomplish. At this first meeting we will invite only current members of MCGT. I envision having a second meeting soon afterwards where we invite teachers, administrators, and most importantly, parents of all children identified as gifted/talented in <city>, plus those parents we may each know whose children are not in the "system" but are nonetheless gifted and/or talented.

This first meeting will be at my home, <address>. Please come <day>, <date>, at <time>. Our subsequent meetings will be held in school buildings. I have talked with <names and titles of appropriate district people>. Both are pleased to hear of the restarting of a local MCGT chapter.

Please let me know if you can attend by calling me at <phone>, or you can email me at <email address>. If you have an email address I would love to get it as correspondence would be much easier electronically.

I have attached a list of questions I invite you to think about before the meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting but have thoughts on any of these (or other) topics, please share them with me.

I am looking forward to meeting and working with you on behalf of all our children.

Sincerely,

Signature with address



## PRESS RELEASE

February 14, 2000

Kennedy Senior High School  
9701 Nicollet Avenue  
Bloomington, MN 55420

To the Newspaper Staff:

I am pleased to announce that a Bloomington Chapter of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented is forming. Our kickoff meeting is Thursday March 23, and we want to be sure every Bloomington parent is aware of the event. If you could run this announcement in your school newspaper so that it appears before March 23, we would greatly appreciate it.

Thank You,

Karen Peterson  
Chair, Bloomington Council for the Gifted and Talented

<u>Gifted &amp; Talented Support Group Forming</u>
The Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented announces the formation of a Bloomington Chapter. The <b>Bloomington Council for the Gifted and Talented (BCGT)</b> will hold an introductory meeting Thursday March 23, 2000 at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be held at the Bloomington Education Center in room B207. BCGT is a not-for-profit informational and support group for parents, educators, and others with ties to Bloomington who have an interest in gifted and talented children. The group will meet monthly during the school year, and provide information and resources to members. We will also sponsor occasional speakers or seminars on gifted and talented issues. The Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented publishes a bi-monthly newsletter, sponsors a member-only email group, offers seminars and special events and holds an annual conference for adults and students. For further information email <a href="mailto:bloomington@mcgt.net">bloomington@mcgt.net</a> or call Karen Peterson at xxx-xxxx. All are welcome, please join us!

## INVITATION FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

February 15, 2000

School Board Director Chris Scanlon  
8900 Portland Avenue South  
Bloomington, MN 55420

Dear Director Scanlon,

I am pleased to be announcing the formation of a Bloomington Chapter of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented. The Bloomington Chapter will have its first meeting March 23, and I would like to personally invite you to attend. The enclosed brochure gives you a little information on what this group will do.

I have talked with Jim Angermyer, leader of the Gifted/Talented Transition Committee, as well as some of the parent members of that committee, and it pleases me to say that we are in agreement that a support group for parents of Bloomington's gifted and talented children is very much needed. There was a chapter active here many years ago, and it seems that now the time is right to renew the chapter in Bloomington. The parents I have talked to are very excited for this to begin.

Again, I want to encourage you to attend our meeting. We are hoping for a large turnout at this first meeting, and that it will be a mix of parents and school district representatives. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have or give you more information. You may reach me by telephone at 884-3262, or by email at the address listed below.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Karen Peterson  
Chair, Bloomington Council for the Gifted and Talented  
xxxx xxxxxx Drive  
Bloomington, MN 55420-5543  
[bloomington@mcgt.net](mailto:bloomington@mcgt.net)

## REQUEST TO DISPLAY FLYER

March 10, 2000

Atonement Lutheran Church  
601 East 98<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bloomington, MN 55420

Dear Pastor Maxwell,

I am writing asking a favor. I am a volunteer helping to start a Bloomington chapter of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented, a state-wide not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting parents of gifted children and other people interested in issues surrounding gifted and talented children. The organization has been active in Minnesota for more than 40 years, and until about 10 years ago there was a chapter in Bloomington. The chapter lapsed and now a group of parents in the area is working to restart it.

We have sent word to all the schools in Bloomington, and notices have gone home with the parents of children in the GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) Program in the elementary schools, but we want to be sure word of the group's meetings reach all Bloomington people who might be interested in learning more. We know that there are a lot of children in private schools, or who are being homeschooled, or who were not formally identified as gifted by the school district, and we want to invite all their parents to attend our first meeting to see what we can offer them.

To help us reach that end, we are sending a small poster to all churches in Bloomington, asking that it be placed in a position where your members will see it. There are tear off slips on the bottom people are welcome to take as a reminder, as well as directions on how to get more information should they have questions.

If you could display it as soon as you receive this we would greatly appreciate it. As you can see from the flyer, the meeting is March 23, so you would not need to leave it displayed for very long. Feel free to call me if you have any questions at all.

Thank you very much.  
Karen Peterson  
Bloomington Council for the Gifted and Talented  
xxxx xxxxx Drive  
Bloomington, MN 55420-5543  
xxx-xxxx

**INFORMATIONAL SURVEY - SAMPLE #1**  
**Bloomington Council for the Gifted and Talented**  
Please fill this out and return it tonight

<b>Do you wish to be included on our mailing list? If yes, fill out the following. If no, proceed to next section.</b>
Name: _____
Home Phone _____
Address (include city and zip code): _____
email: _____
Children (name, age, what school)
_____
_____
_____
_____

What is your primary concern that you would like to see BCGT address?

To be effective in our community, we need a team of people willing to plan and organize events and meetings. Would you be interested in being part of such a team?     YES     NO

**Check any of the following that are of interest to you for future meetings:**

Asynchronous development (being at different)

Acceleration, grade skipping, ability grouping, levels in different

areas of development, clustering, pull-out programs - Pros & Cons
___ Parenting: Encouraging or pushing?
___ Learning styles of the G&T
___ Gifted vs Highly Gifted vs Profoundly Gifted
___ Public vs Private vs Homeschooling
___ Underachievement
___ Recommended books & resources
___ Testing & Counseling
___ ISD 271: What we have, what we need
___ Perfectionism
___ Learning Styles & the gifted child
___ Emotional needs of gifted kids
___ Graduation Standards
___ Intuition & Creativity
___ Art and the gifted child
___ Athletics and the gifted child
___ International Baccalaureate Program
___ Gifted girls: obstacles, strengths, strategies

___ Challenging & nurturing the mathematically gifted child
___ Other: Continue on back if necessary

**To become a member of BCGT return this form with a \$xx check (payable to BCGT) tonight. If you are willing to make a larger donation, extra funds will help us attract quality speakers, offer seminars to parents and/or teachers, start a lending library of resources for members, and plan other special projects and events. All donations are tax-deductible.**

**Thank you very much for coming tonight!**



## Volunteer Participation Information

1. Previous or current experience with this chapter is:

2. I would be willing to serve this organization on the following committees:

Information                       Current Events                       Membership  
 Volunteers                       Publicity                       Hospitality  
 Newsletter                       School Board Observer  
 Program                       Finance                       Fundraising  
 School representative for \_\_\_\_\_ school.

3. I would like to be involved in our chapter.

I would be available to serve as an officer.

I have an interest in: \_\_\_\_\_ and would be willing to share it with the Board and/or the membership.

My company would be willing to make resources available to this chapter in the form of: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like more information about ways that I could assist this chapter.

4. Other areas in which I would be willing to assist this chapter:

Note: If these two pages of the survey are used separately, include on this page (at the end) places for name, address, zip code, home phone and date.

(This informational survey is adapted from one used by the Edina Chapter of MCGT. Change and tailor it to meet the needs of your chapter.)

**Bloomington  
Council  
for the  
Gifted and Talented**

*A city-wide, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting better understanding of, and educational services for, gifted and talented children.*

**2000 - 2001 School Year Information**

A local chapter of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented, Bloomington Council for the Gifted and Talented (BCGT) is a newly-formed local chapter of the state-wide organization, Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented (MCGT). Although we are primarily made up of parents, all people with ties to Bloomington and an interest in gifted and talented issues are welcome at all of our meetings.

We meet the second Thursday of each month during the school year. Meetings start at 7:00, and are held in room B207 at BEC (8900 Portland Ave S) unless otherwise noted.

Meetings are scheduled for the 2000-2001 school year on these dates:

September 14	October 12
November 9	December 14
January 11	February 8
March 8	April 12
May 10	

Each meeting will feature a relevant topic, and also include announcements, and a time to share information, concerns and questions with the group about issues pertaining to gifted and talented children.

For more information, or if you have comments, questions or concerns, contact us by calling Karen Peterson at 884-3262, the MCGT office at 927-9546, or by email at:

[bloomington@mcgt.net](mailto:bloomington@mcgt.net)

All of our meetings are free and open to the public. Formal membership to BCGT is encouraged to help make quality speakers and activities available. A one-year family membership in BCGT is \$xx. (Additional contributions are welcome!) When you join BCGT, you automatically become a member of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented.

Membership benefits include:

Monthly local meetings during the school year that include speakers, activities and open discussions

Access to printed materials, organizations and other resources

Notification of special events in Bloomington

Bi-monthly newsletter from MCGT

Invitations to seminars, workshops, and special events on Gifted/Talented issues

The opportunity to attend at a reduced member rate the annual state conference held each fall at the University of St. Thomas. In 2000, the conference will be held Saturday, October 14.

To join BCGT, fill out the form on the back of this brochure and mail it, along with a check payable to BCGT, to:

BCGT Treasurer  
Kirsten xxxxxx  
xxxx xxxxx Dr.  
Bloomington, MN 55438