

2009 Gifted and Talented Education Survey Summary Report

Introduction

The Piedmont Unified School District strives to cultivate an educational community where students are engaged in their learning, strive for excellence, and are supported to achieve to their fullest potential. The District's Gifted and Talented Education Plan supports this goal.

The current GATE plan was developed with the input of parents, teachers, and District administrator's during the 2007-2008 school year. In September of 2008, the District received a 3 year approval of the GATE Plan based upon it meeting the State's exemplary standards criteria. The District receives approximately \$20,000.00 annually to support the GATE Plan which addresses students in grades k-12. The District's current GATE program can be characterized as emphasizing differentiation in the classroom and opportunities for enrichment in math, language arts, and the visual and performing arts. In addition, accelerated course options are an important program component which benefits GATE students at the secondary level. Individuals interested in learning more about the Districts GATE program may visit the District's GATE web pages at <http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/curriculum/gate>.

Summary

In Spring 2009, members of the District's GATE Advisory Committee, which is comprised of parents, teachers, and administrators, participated in the development of the District's Gifted and Talented Education survey. The survey is prescribed by the current District GATE plan and is intended to serve as a tool by which the District may ascertain the educational community's interests and satisfaction with GATE plan implementation.

This year, in addition to surveying GATE eligible and identified students¹ and their parents, students with a cumulative 4.0 GPA in grades 8, 10, 11, and 12 and their parents were also invited to participate. In addition, teachers and administrators were encouraged to provide feedback about their experience working with the current GATE plan.

The following summary provides results and raises points for reflection that may be considered by the GATE Advisory Council, School Site Councils, teachers, and administrators.

¹ The parents of some students who are eligible to participate in GATE have not returned signed consent forms and thus the student is not formally identified. As a result, the numbers of families and students who were provided the opportunity to participate in this survey is larger than the number of students who are identified (approx. 238).

Participants:

	Number Surveyed	Respondent Count	Participation Rate x Group
Parents of eligible GATE students	271 (Approx.)	130	48%
Households of Parents of 4.0 GPA students	24 (Approx.)	5	21%
Eligible GATE students	271	27	10%
4.0 GPA Students	24	0	0%
Teachers	210	38	16%
Administrators	10	6	85%

RESPONSES FROM PARENTS OF GATE ELIGIBLE STUDENTS**Grade Level of Parent's GATE Student(s):**

	Number Surveyed/Grade	*Percent of Responses	Response Count	Participation Rate x Grade
5th	23	7%	9	39%
6th	21	9%	11	52%
7th	20	9%	11	55%
8th	28	13%	17	61%
9th	33	13%	17	52%
10th	56	15%	19	34%
11th	49	19%	27	55%
12th	41	15%	19	46%
Total	271		130	48%

School of Attendance:

	Number Surveyed	Response Percent	Response Count	Participation Rate
Beach Elementary	5	2%	3	60%
Havens Elementary	12	3%	4	33%
Wildwood Elementary	6	2%	2	33%
Piedmont Middle School	69	30%	39	57%
Piedmont High School	179	63%	82	46%
Total	271		130	48%

When you received the letter indicating that your student was GATE eligible, did you agree to their participation in the GATE program by signing and returning the letter to the school site?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	78.10%	82
No	21.90%	23

Comments if parent answered No above:

GATE is about money for the district's general fund. Nothing is provided specifically for GATE high school students.
There was no such letter included
I didn't receive a letter saying she was eligible.
I am in doubt with my child eligibility
I don't recall being asked to return a signed letter
Letter said to go directly to website
No letter received
Rec'd letter in 3/08, but don't recall being asked to return anything
We weren't aware that school offered any special differential learning programs for GATE eligible students
I want to get more specific information about what is actually done for my student based on their GATE identification.
Spouse wanted to discuss it with school. So far, it had been fake-GATE.
because GATE program at PHS does nothing
why, there is no program

Didn't know who or where to return it to.
out of town
I'm not sure if we did.
? I think we signed it, but to be honest, I can't remember now.
It got lost on a stack of papers.
I have only received this notice about a survey; I don't remember seeing a letter to sign to agree to participate.
I don't recall that it asked us to . . . must have missed that! On the other hand, maybe we did sign and return last years.
I don't remember that there was a yes/no response; just an information letter that he is GATE.
first year ID, no response required, as i recollect
In previous years, I had my son brought to school and nothing happen.
I thought we only had to respond if we did not want our child to participate
Do not remember a form to send back for both students
I believe the letter indicated that we would receive further information on the program. I don't recall that we were asked to return a letter.
Just didn't seem necessary.

The district communicates with parents about GATE in several ways. Which of the following have you received or accessed (you may choose more than one)?:

	Response Percent	Response Count
Received District or Site Communications about GATE (e.g. emails, notices in site newsletters)	85.90%	73
Attended a GATE Advisory Council Meeting	15.30%	13
Attended a GATE Parent Information Night	16.50%	14
Visited the District GATE webpages	14.10%	12
Contacted the District GATE Coordinator	9.40%	8
Contacted your Site GATE Coordinator	12.90%	11

Comments to question above:

We were unaware of the existence of webpages or Parent Information Night.
Why should I care? Students are not not publically recognized for their achievement and nothing is done specifically on their behave. Just another funding source.
I feel that I have gotten no info about GATE in our district
I haven't recieved any notices since the first letter
The letter requesting our participation in this survey is the only contact we have had with the GATE Program.
have not received any communication, except form letter at registration time
I was not notified by the PUSD but by our previous school district.
None
Don't recall any communications since 3/08 except survey letter
Just the letter in the mail saying our son is recognized as GATE eligible
There is a GATE program? Not that I saw.
Unfortunately, none of the above. Meetings conflicted with other activities and have not contacted GATE coord.
my spouse is our 'designated GATE' parent & has done all the above
NONE of these events were announced to us.
I'm not really aware of what the program benefits are. There are a limited number of AP classes.
just by regular mail
none of the above
What the GATE program actually offers a high school student is not profiled well, other than that it generally supports the AP programs.
I have only ever received the initial letter, many times over the years. We have had no other communication from this program.
I don't remember receiving anything other than notification of eligibility.
Letter in mail
only received this survey and the notification of qualification for GATE for my son. Nothing else. I wasn't able to attend the one parent meeting I saw was scheduled.
received letter in the mail
Have regretted being unable to attend parent information night; however, have received zero information about meaningful classroom opportunities for my daughter to benefit from the GATE program

This year, the District is striving to better communicate about GATE through email, site newsletters, the District's webpage, and parent information nights.

	Very Well		Sufficiently		Not Well At All	Rating Average	Response Count
How well do you believe the district is communicating that it has a GATE program?	9.1% (10)	10.0% (11)	25.5% (28)	24.5% (27)	30.9% (34)	3.58	110
How well do you believe the district is communicating about what GATE provides, in general?	1.8% (2)	5.5% (6)	18.2% (20)	25.5% (28)	49.1% (54)	4.15	110
How well do you believe the district is communicating about what GATE provides your child?	2.7% (3)	4.5% (5)	10.9% (12)	20.9% (23)	60.9% (67)	4.33	110

Comments:

I'm not very aware of the Gate program other than it exists
See above - the letter for the survey was the first I'd heard of it
Besides availability of AP courses, etc., no information given pertaining to how my individual student is advised to utilize resources or
I have not been aware of any ongoing programs
Our child has never been contacted to participate in a GATE program. She has had a 4.0 GPA 8th-11th grades.
I have only received notices that they are eligible, not what the school provides to these students.
as far as I know, my child is not receiving anything special from GATE
I don't think the district's GATE approach really calls for direct communication. It is integrated into the schoolday, which is fine with me.
I have received no communication about GATE for my student.
The only letter I received gave no information about what it meant to be GATE identified. I had to go meet with Mr. Bonin to find out what it meant.
I read about an upcoming program in the newspaper
they provide basically nothing so hard to evaluate communicating about nothing. Did meet with principal which told me nothing I didnt already know. I have been telling them for the last six years that they didnt meet the needs of my child, but they always told me not to push him. Basically told me it was all my fault and my issue.

We are on the right track with communications, but we have a distance to travel.
I get letters but I do not have the impression that they are doing anything substantive for the students.
I think that the communication about GATE has improved but other than acceleration I do not see any improvement in how my students are actually being served.
Neither my child no anything about it other than she qualified for it because of her GPA
I was told by school that there was no GATE program. "All children are gifted."
GATE provided additional math challenge in elementary school but has provided NOTHING in PHS (my child did not attend PMS so I have no experience from there)
Unclear what the program is at PMS except extracurriculars such as mathletes. Differentiated instruction has been mentioned, but I don't know how this has been implemented. At PHS, the only GATE program I know of is AP courses which are excellent.
not very well known
I'm not sure what GATE support my child is receiving in school - is it during CORE 6th grade? Do I sign up for special GATE classes? Is GATE like the pull-out math done in elementary grades?
Unsure how to answer this since I was just made aware she is GATE eligible.
I don't know what GATE benefits my child is currently receiving.
I had to contact the science teacher for more challenging work for my child.
I didn't know Piedmont had a GATE program until my son's teacher told his he was GATE identified. Since then I've found out about and attended 2 meetings (parent group + district info night) but I'm still unclear as to whether my child is being sufficiently challenged in school.
Because GATE is rolled into 'differentiated instruction' it's still hard to describe meaningfully. More should be done.
feels like way for District to get tax \$ w/o providing program
Both of my children were GATE identified and received NO services from this District. As a direct result, they were bored in class and not properly challenged. The AP Faculty is WONDERFUL, but cannot provide everything gifted students need. This is a horrid, sad and unnecessary failure of the Piedmont School District.
Part of the problem is that not much is provided or differentiated for GATE students.
I'm not aware there IS a GATE program @ PHS
I'm not aware of GATE activities or what the program does
While there is much talk about the GATE program, I have never once understood what the program actually provides. My daughter doesn't get pulled out of class for special programs, she doesn't take on extra projects; in fact, her work doesn't seem to differ from any other student in her class. GATE may provide enrichment for all students, but this is not clear.
seems like special activities are open to all, and just claim to be GATE to qualify for funding
letter was a form letter, if seperated from envelope you had no idea who the letter was for

Other than receiving the eligibility letter, I have no idea what this program is about.
I don't see any evidence that my child gets anything out of Gate
although we've been told our child is in the GATE program, neither she nor we have received any info about it or understand AT ALL what the benefits/program are about
I have seen absolutely no information on this.
I honestly have no idea what being identified as GATE gives her... or what opportunities are provided for her that are not provided for all students.
this survey is the first communication
I've been meaning to inquire, but haven't had time. I don't know what GATE is providing my child.
My child has been identified as GATE, but I don't know what programs or opportunities she is eligible for
see above
I didn't find the letter all that clear. I called Dan Bonin and now feel that I understand the program.
this may be because I have never signed and returned any of the letters we've received stating that our children qualified
I hve not received anything re my Gate idntified students
Other than the letter, I don't recall seeing anything. Perhaps because we didn't sign up (?)
I keep hearing that GATE exists but have no knowledge of it actually doing anything.
I do not believe she has been informed of activities
I think the communication is sufficient, but I don't think GATE provides enough.
I haven't received any correspondence regarding my younger daughter (in 8th grade) who I am certain is eligible for the program. I haven't pursued because its not clear to me that there are any benefits.
The Gate program in Piedmont is a farce. There is no program as outlined in the district's plan for state funding nor was there one several years ago when the last plan was submitted to the state. Frankly what is on paper does not at all match what is happening in the classrooms. I'm surprised that the State has not caught on yet. I am disappointed in our district that we would put on paper a plan to the state and yet not bother to make sure that plan is implemented in the district. In any other professional field, there would be consequences for misrepresentation of the facts. Besides identification, nothing has been done at the middle school level. Clustering (in the true definition of clustering - see definition on GATE application -is not happening. Kids are not grouped together so that they can be taught at a more in depth or advanced pace.
If one can't attend a meeting, it's nice to have emails about the information.

The District strives to cultivate a learning community where students are engaged in their learning, strive for excellence, and are supported to achieve to their fullest potential.

	More than Sufficiently		Sufficiently		Not Sufficiently	My Student is Overwhelmed	Rating Average	Response Count
How well challenged is your student in math?	19.3% (21)	12.8% (14)	41.3% (45)	11.9% (13)	14.7% (16)	0.0% (0)	2.9	109
How well challenged is your student in reading?	4.6% (5)	9.2% (10)	43.1% (47)	16.5% (18)	26.6% (29)	0.0% (0)	3.51	109
How well challenged is your student in writing?	3.7% (4)	13.0% (14)	33.3% (36)	23.1% (25)	26.9% (29)	0.0% (0)	3.56	108
How well challenged is your student in science?	12.0% (13)	11.1% (12)	51.9% (56)	13.0% (14)	12.0% (13)	0.0% (0)	3.02	108
How well challenged is your student in social studies/history?	7.5% (8)	16.8% (18)	44.9% (48)	17.8% (19)	13.1% (14)	0.0% (0)	3.12	107
How well challenged is your student in their homework?	13.2% (14)	16.0% (17)	34.0% (36)	26.4% (28)	8.5% (9)	1.9% (2)	3.01	106
How well is the District supporting your student to achieve their potential?	6.5% (7)	13.9% (15)	25.0% (27)	28.7% (31)	25.9% (28)	0.0% (0)	3.54	108
Overall, how well is your student being challenged in the classroom?	5.7% (6)	12.3% (13)	32.1% (34)	36.8% (39)	13.2% (14)	0.0% (0)	3.4	106

Comments:

In general, there is a very good curriculum
It all depends on the teacher, especially in English. The overall PHS upper level English instruction is significantly diminished by one really lousy teacher.
Finally, in 11th grade with APs my older child is challenged. Not so with my 7th grader
My child is challenged in those classes that have teachers that have high standards and the ability to teach. Every year my child has a teacher or two that are below standard for the profession. Children have only one chance to learn and I feel that the district owes them the best possible teachers and roll models.
Some teachers are better than others at teaching and challenging students. The science classes seem to be less productive and instructional than what my kids want. More teaching has to happen with specific transfer of information. They should not have to "learn" the material on their own time through the one book resource they are given.
too much "teaching to the AP test", not enough real thinking and problem solving
I think he would benefit from more challenging work but not more work, he seems to have plenty of homework but it is often busy work for him.
Biggest classroom problem is lack of control by teachers
I don't believe my student thinks about GATE much at all.
My daughter's AP English teacher does not return papers
My PHS student is somewhat challenged in Language Arts because of the teacher she has, however, in most other classes she could be moving much more quickly through the material and more in depth.
Varies greatly by teacher. I am very disappointed in the writing program. The high school has been particularly disappointing whereas middle school has been much better.
Both of our kids enjoy school and never complain of being bored.
I had to answer these questions for two students who have somewhat different experiences.
Freshman year very bad. Junior & senior year better.
This varies by year. 9th & 10th grades were the worst. My student needed more challenge in all her classes, and a way to be appropriately placed in science and math. The science program has been improved since she started. The counselor helped her get through 9th & 10th grades. 11th grade was challenging, 12th seems easier with much spare time.
Science is a good class, high standards and good methodology. History is minimal - memorization etc., English doesn't seem to challenge my student. Overall, my child is bored and not engaged in school at all. These comments refer to my middle schooler. At PHS, the AP courses are fabulous but it is unfortunate that students can't take them until their junior year. Freshman year was not challenging, and sophomore year was not much better.
Not being challenged at all. Wants more work, sleeps often in multiple classes, teachers are

poor.
This is hard to answer because my two GATE-identified kids are different. One has rarely been challenged in 13 years in PUSD. The other is challenged 50% of the time. Hard to give a blended answer.
Not challenged in math. Too much rote work.
Too easy of science homework; too many math problems in 7th grade math
I believe my son could perform well beyond the level being taught in his classroom. He does participate in math enrichment at our school, which helps. And there is flexibility in the books he's allowed to read for reports. But he still finishes all work quickly and I think he would benefit from being pushed more.
The focus still seems to be on the bright-but-not-gifted kids; differentiation often consists of one-size-fits all application of different approaches in different assignments -- so each kid has his/her opportunity to shine but they're all required to do some tasks in each of a variety of types (video, art, writing, oral presentation). That's undoubtedly good for rounding-out, but means at least some of the time every kid is forced to play away from his/her strengths.
my child is challenged far less than peers at other schools. Also, very little work requires student initiative.
Gifted students who are bored are not identified and appropriated assisted by the school, especially the High School.
I have been disappointed with the lack of cluster grouping of my child with other GATE students.
It really depends on the class and instructor
Some teachers are difficult to get a hold of outside class
My daughter does well in her work and gets good grades, but I don't think she is fully engaged in the process. I'm not sure she's excited or challenged by the material.
8th graders taking 9th grade math got short shrift with a new teacher who was not experienced to challenge these advanced students; this was not a wise personnel decision
My child is bored in class much of the time
She is a gifted writer who rarely gets to write.
She's bored in many classes
too much homework in general, but not enough writing. The kids don't write enough, and when they do it is a big term paper or something overly significant where they can't be creative. Simpler, shorter, and more frequent creative writing assignments need to be encouraged so they can learn to write without it being an overwhelming burden.
think the headings are somewhat confusing. I assume that if a student is "Overwhelmed", the subject matter is too hard, too challenging. Yet that heading is right next to "Not sufficiently challenged" which I assume means the work is too easy. I'm not sure what "More than sufficiently challenged" means -- does it mean the work is difficult, yet appropriately challenging

or too hard?
My kids haven't been put in any separate track or provided more opportunities or challenges. I was actually provided those in LA city schools, ironically.
Our daughter has to find her own reading and writing challenges, but this has been the case since she was quite young. This does not necessarily mean that PMS is not doing an adequate job, but just that she seeks enrichment elsewhere
Perhaps this is not what GATE is about, but it seems to us that the question should be "How well is your child ENGAGED?" [in each subject area]
in some classes, my child is overworked but not challenged (bored). in at least one class, interest generated in the class has led to self-instigated additional work. it is a real mix, and for my student, is teacher dependent to a large degree.
We have been very pleased with his education in Piedmont.
English classes are not challenging enough; math could be more challenging.
There are no elective literature classes offered at PHS. Science, math and social science (history) offer several choices of classes in both complexity (AP) and subject matter. However, the English classes offer no choices until 12th grade with an AP class. It would be great to offer some elective literature classes.
these answers are for both students
Certain department/instructors definitely superior
I do not know what is going on in the classroom.
In grades 9 and 10, there is no academic challenge offered whatsoever. In grades 11 and 12, there are some honors and advanced classes that do a better job, depending on the teacher, of engaging and challenging the students.
School does not provide science courses(physics & chemistry) which are challenging enough
Poor teaching, especially in the middle school but also in the high school, is a frequent and persuasive complaint from my daughters, as is frustration with the speed (or lack of) at which the material is presented. This is particularly the case in the middle school, though in the high school as well. Lack of advanced curriculum opportunities is a big problem. Lack of counseling during the transition to high school that is focused on GATE students was a problem for us.
There has been a real emphasis in this district to minimize academic stress - and thus, academic excellence has been devalued. Except for certain teachers, the message that the students get from the administration and general teachers is that B+ and above is fine. Don't stress. Don't take language in 7th grade unless you really like it. I've never seen such a de-emphasis on academic excellence - which is why we even bought the \$1million plus dollar house to live there. Instead, my kid is told that B+ is a reasonable goal to shoot for - what about the A? ...and isn't told that taking a language in 7th grade allows you to go farther in HS and possibly take the AP class. There is very little promotion for doing well - for fear of stressing out the kids. Even placement into the advanced math program is not well advertised to the students.

I think challenging a student is different from overtaxing a student.
Wide variation in workload/challenge. AP Biology consumes 40-50% of all homework/study time

How well are teacher's meeting your student(s) needs through differentiation of curriculum and/or instruction in the classroom?

Very Well		Sufficiently		Not Well At All	Rating Average	Response Count
10.0% (10)	8.0% (8)	23.0% (23)	29.0% (29)	30.0% (30)	3.61	100

Comments:

I don't think PHS teachers have time to offer differentiated curriculum or instruction.
I do not understand the question - is it GATE specific? What do you mean by "differentiation?"
There is no differentiation of curriculum/instruction provided specifically for PHS GATE students.
Moved our younger son to private school because his Piedmont public school teachers said he was too smart and they didnt have the resources to challenge him
I have no idea, I don't know if she gets different curriculum or instruction
I have not seen this in action. As a parent, I only know what the projects, tests, and homework that they are given. It does not seem to be differentiated in any way for them...
As I understand it, this is accomplished by offering AP and Honors courses. I am not aware that teachers are differentiating curriculum otherwise, nor that teachers are aware of a student's status as GATE designated.
It really helps to have extremely bright teachers like at PMS. The trouble comes even in elementary school when the teacher is intellectually deficient.
My son tested into harder math which provides him with sufficient challenge. I really don't have a good idea about how differentiated his core class work may be.
See above note. In kindergarten they didnt want to know that he could read, just kept telling him phonics.... absurd waste of time. I said that many parents would be willing to come into the classroom and read with the kids who did know how to read if they needed help, but that was rejected. There are many parents who are available to help. We are mostly well educated and it dosent take a teaching degree to read with a bunch of kindergartners
I am not aware of any differentiation being used in her classes, except, perhaps, the Language Arts teacher has higher expectations for my student.
i have never seen any differentiation. I think it is a smoke screen. The accelarated 6th grade math is excellent and i think the students benefit far more from being put in an accelereated

class than the differentiation that is supposed to happen in the classroom. It is not the teachers' fault though; they are very busy and have a lot of material to cover and lots of kids.
I don't see much, if any differentiation in the instruction provided to my students. Perhaps I am unaware of it but they both continue to make the same comments they have for years; that the work is too easy and the teachers repeat everything many times even though they got it the first time.
I have no idea
PHS was better after there were choices for classes.
Most teachers teach to the middle, and then deal with struggling students. It's a rare teacher that can also provide challenge to the top students.
Again, I am not clear at all how instruction is being differentiated in the classroom. See comments above about specific classes.
teachers teach to the lower end, not the higher end
Again, hard to answer. One student is in many AP classes and thru natural selection of the kids taking the courses he's more fully challenged. Is this differentiation that the teacher is providing? I don't think so. I think it's the benefit of self-selected tracking.
I am not aware of any differentiation in any of the classes.
It depends on the subject and teacher: core is great, science is poor and math is good.
I believe that differentiation is only providing a minor benefit.
Same comment as above - applying varying methods/approaches to all kids is not the same as identifying the best approaches for each kid
child is bumped up a grade, rather than grouped with other high-achievers
The AP teachers are wonderful. The English teachers are great as well, especially the new hires you recently fired.
Have not experienced differentiation of curriculum. High level of disappointment from lack of cluster grouping with other GATE students for group projects within the classroom. Teachers continue to resist the practice of grouping GATE students together for projects some of the time,
Honors Courses in High School are great. Elementary and Middle School curriculum was undifferentiated and there was no communication about her GATE status.
Again, there is nothing going on that I am aware of.
there is no differentiation for my child
classroom differentiated instruction is not a program for gifted students - my suggestion is to stop spending any money managing the GATE program because it just seems you are jumping through some hoops the state or county must require
Except for Math, not at all as he is the 7th grade math
She and we still have NO IDEA what "differentiation" she receives. There are no special seminars for GATE students, no special classwork, absolutely nothing as far as she or we can

tell. An additional note is that none of her teachers seem to know she is a GATE student, so how could they possibly offer her differentiation in the classroom.
I am not aware of any different curriculum at all for my kids as compared to others.
??? I'm not aware of differentiated instruction. This may not mean that it is not happening, but I am completely unaware of it if it is.
teachers do a great job in giving my child more to read / do in things that interest him
more because the teachers, programs, and resources are really good than that there's lots of differentiation per se
It varies, depending on the subject. This year, our student has two or three teachers who are not engaging him in their subject area, perhaps because of a lack of differentiation. Other subject areas are doing well in this.
With 30 students in a class, it takes an exceptional teacher and the efforts of both parents and student to outline specific gifted needs. Perhaps, the school can offer gifted counseling support to review each class and outline personal instructional objectives to support the teacher-parent-student dialogue about this during a time of student individuation.
I'm not sure I can answer. I would need to observe the classroom setting. I know that the teachers my daughter has had seem to have a good handle on her capabilities and hold her to an appropriate standard of work.
Can't comment on curriculum differentiation
I don't think there's any difference in our student's courses
How would I know? I only see her homework, see that she does her homework and see her grades. I do not know if it is "differentiated" from other students or not!
As far as we can tell, there is a lot of talk about differentiation of curriculum, but for the most part the teachers are struggling to cover the basic material and keep the entire class on target. There is no time left to do anything different for the gifted/talented students.
I have no awareness of differentiated curriculum directed at my GATE student. None. zero.
Quite frankly - from what we heard at open house and from our kid, there is no differentiation going on at all.
He has selected coursework on his own

How well does the district serve the social emotional functioning of your student?

Very Well		Sufficiently		Not Well At All	Rating Average	Response Count
21.8% (22)	7.9% (8)	42.6% (43)	22.8% (23)	5.0% (5)	2.81	101

Comments:

The PHS counseling department has offered support when we've asked.
No special needs.
I don't think the district can help here. I think the integrated program by design is far superior than a pull-out design.
Mostly bothered by teachers who cannot control the students in the classroom
'Social emotional' issues are served by the entire community. The district needs to clearly state its limitations in this area and insist that PARENTS do what they signed up to do when they had kids in the first place!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
NA
It would have been helpful, especially in elementary school, if a teacher had made an effort to have my child connect with some of their classmates.
Both of our kids feel comfortable with their teachers.
One of my children does not have any particular social/emotional challenges so the question is not applicable. My other child has had a few issues but seems to have worked through them. I do think that an educational atmosphere that recognizes excellence would better support GATE students. Our student athletes receive many public acknowledgements of their accomplishment but not our scholars.
The counselors and the creation of the wellness center have supported her very well, especially coping with boredom & lack of attention in 9th & 10th grade.
It is hard to know what to do about a student who is not engaged and hasn't found a sense of belonging at school. I think my child would like more positive feedback and recognition. The only subject area in which students are recognized as exceptional is math, and that isn't my child's strength. At PHS, my other child is doing well, though that child is more self motivated and doesn't need outside validation or support.
My student is emotionally fine
this is not an issue for us
N/A
We had to pay for 3 years of private counseling to help him adjust.
My son is emotionally sensitive, but overall well adjusted socially. This is not an issue for us presently.
because my child is low maintenance, he slides into the minimum, rather than being encouraged/pushed to stretch. There is a difference between encouraging a stretch & 'piling on'.
Culture is to hide academic achievement. No recognition for academic achievement. Better to be cool than smart.
Middle School Counseling did a good job, but I haven't really seen that in elementary or high

school. I referred her to the Wellness Center at the high school and they were very helpful.
No problems or concerns in this area.
don't have unique emotional challenges
Luckily, our daughter doesn't seem to have any unique social challenges, but she has never been offered additional support because she is a GATE student. It's a non-issue for her.
Education is very valued in Piedmont. They don't get a lot of pressure here to conform downwards. I think that is more a function of the neighborhood than the school.
I know that my daughter is currently in middle school, but I want to give another shout-out for the Wellness Center at the High School and would like to do everything I can to plead for continued funding of it. It is an invaluable resource for the "emotional functioning" of a variety of kids, including those who are GATE identified
my child loves school (teachers, students, the environment/culture)
Thus far, our student's needs have been served well, though it hasn't been fully tested as our student's social emotional functioning is very stable..
The choice of college was extremely difficult for our son. His main help was through his counselor. Excellent work moving him forward in his decision. Valuable and timely work.
counselors are exceptional at middle school and have been very much help
This depends on whether their particular counselor is attuned to this or not since neither the student nor parent often will bring that up in high school.
I'm very impressed with the teachers and administration. They are open to communication and seem tuned in to my students abilities, needs, etc.
I think the school officials are much too busy trying to keep the "trouble" kids in line to worry about the "social emotional functioning" of my student. Unfortunately this is a fact of life. If I got more information from the school, I could help them in this area, but unfortunately communication seems to be completely absent.
My students function very well emotionally. whether or not the district has anything to do with that is unknown.
No issues

The following is a list of enrichment activities which occur throughout the District. Please rate the effectiveness of each activity at enriching your student's school experience. You can indicate No Experience, if your child has not participated.

	Substantially Enriching	Enriching	Not Enriching	No Experience With This Activity	Response Count
Elementary Math Enrichment	14.3% (14)	45.9% (45)	9.2% (9)	30.6% (30)	98
Elementary Science Enrichment	9.2% (9)	25.5% (25)	11.2% (11)	54.1% (53)	98

Elementary Art Enrichment	11.1% (11)	35.4% (35)	4.0% (4)	49.5% (49)	99
PMS Geography Bee	4.2% (4)	8.3% (8)	1.0% (1)	86.5% (83)	96
PMS Peer Mediators	4.2% (4)	15.8% (15)	6.3% (6)	73.7% (70)	95
PMS Film Club	7.4% (7)	3.2% (3)	0.0% (0)	89.5% (85)	95
PMS Chess Club	1.1% (1)	6.5% (6)	0.0% (0)	92.5% (86)	93
PMS Jazz Band	2.1% (2)	8.5% (8)	0.0% (0)	89.4% (84)	94
PMS Shakespeare Club	5.4% (5)	7.6% (7)	0.0% (0)	87.0% (80)	92
PMS Mathletes	1.1% (1)	19.4% (18)	0.0% (0)	79.6% (74)	93
PMS Associated Student Body Council	0.0% (0)	17.4% (16)	6.5% (6)	76.1% (70)	92
PHS Mock Trial	6.2% (6)	3.1% (3)	1.0% (1)	89.7% (87)	97
PHS Highland Piper Literary Magazine	1.1% (1)	5.3% (5)	0.0% (0)	93.7% (89)	95
PHS Highlander Newspaper	10.2% (10)	2.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	87.8% (86)	98
PHS Mathletes	1.0% (1)	6.1% (6)	0.0% (0)	92.9% (92)	99
PHS Associated Student Body Council	2.1% (2)	6.3% (6)	2.1% (2)	89.6% (86)	96

Please let us know of any academic activities, outside of school, that your student participates in as a way to obtain additional challenge.

He took a class at Laney College. As a sophomore he also taught himself physics and math for computer programming by reading books.
None
UC Berkeley Academic Talent Development Program
During the summer our child has participated in a variety of enrichment programs (language immersion, film studies, creative writing, music camps, and British history studies.
Supplemental art classes
Summer enrichment, such as camps and courses at UC.
weekly private music lessons
Havens Chess Club

latin tutoring, he tutors in oakland (gets him into wider world with more adult responsibility).
My student studies classical and jazz piano privately. She also reads voraciously, and writes frequently. She reads novels, nonfiction about science and culture, and philosophy.
He plays on the tennis team and would like to try the Mock trial next year
My child takes piano lessons and will attend a summer program designed for Gifted participants.
He studies piano
None.
Piano, ceramics, dominoes, chess Cultural experiences, art, travel. Reading. Crafts, cooking. Anything and everything we can think of.
My PHS student has participated in NanoHigh(at UCB), Science Nights at Berkeley Theatre, Julia Robinson Math Festival, and piano lessons.
Given the number of hours they spend in school, along with a few extracurricular activities including sports, we prefer that our children NOT pursue additional academic activities outside of school.
Young Actor's Workshop. English class at Alameda CC. Why is Highlander Newspaper enriching and Clan-o-log not?
Drama. Attended CSSSA after 10th grade.
My middle school child doesn't like to take classes outside of school. It is difficult for me to find enrichment for that child because she feels that she has done enough organized learning during the school day and doesn't want to have to take an additional class to get something she should be getting in school. My high schooler has participated in summer academic programs.
Community service, several sports, working
classes thru Cal online; summer classes in various places
ATDP (via UCB) during summers . . .John Hopkins summer camp . . .
out-of-state gifted camps during summers
French tutor.
Destination Imagination at elementary and middle school level.
My child competes in chess with Berkeley Chess School on weekends; Mathletes is too early so he does not participate; elementary math was only 30 minutes a week-it was his favorite time of the week! My child also sings with a professional choir. He hated vocal at Beach school since he was far beyond his peers. I think there need to be systems in place for a student to not attend in school enrichment activities which are far below their level. My child would have preferred to read, practice writing or get started on homework during vocal time. I do not believe parents should have to "fight" for these allowances or feel like they are asking for "special" treatment.
Mandarin language instruction, music.
He participated in John Hopkins Talented Search Program and their summer enrichment

programs since middle school.
none. my child is an athlete and has very little 'outside of school' time available.
ATDP, Lectures at Community Centers for cultural and social issues of interest, reading.
Cal Shakes Theater programs. Regular book/discussion group.
Piedmont Choirs, Destination Imagination (not through the schools), piano, art, science and drama classes
geography bee was not adequately advertised so students were aware of it.
music lessons
my daughter does additional writing tutoring and piano and choir and chinese lessons
epgy stanford
oakland strokes crew
extensive (every weekend) community service through Build-on and the Environmental Action club, and personal travel experiences.
He has taken a few summer classes.
She writes and writes and writes-- she has taken a number of classes, workshops (Bay Area Writing Project etc..) and has published work in some kids magazines. She also spends HOURS each week writing for on-line audiences, mostly fanfiction.net and fictionpress.com. She gets lots of feedback (and satisfaction) from these writing experiences. She has also taken the Cal Shakespeare's summer camp.
he loves to read books: literature, logic puzzles, games, math challenges, instructional books, biographies, etc. We encourage him to try new things and read more about things he is interested
Summer intensive theater program with playwriting and scrip analysis
Writes a weekly column for a major newspaper. Volunteers at a local university radio station. Has volunteered for a month in Nicaragua building houses.
UC Berkeley ATDP
ATDP during the summers for our 8th grader. College classes for our 11th grader.
Boy Scouts, Mexico Home-Building, piano and guitar instruction, summer weeks in France and Japan, taking in exchange students, high school musicals and bird-calling contest, swim team and waterpolo, Aikido, film-making with friends
Writing class
--
Drasague
Studies Japanese with a tutor once per week. Also ballet and various sports.
No middle school kid wants to do extra academic activities outside of school.
Courses at UC Berkeley Extension, summer enrichment classes, and online college courses.
Piano

none

I believe that the Piedmont school district sufficiently challenges all students through it's academics and extracurricular activities. I think this program is so rigorous that not many extra activities are necessary.

What additional comments or suggestions would you like to make about the District's GATE program or your students educational experience in Piedmont Unified?

Our impression is that the GATE program is largely nonexistent.

Other than the above list of extra-curricular clubs/activities, is the GATE program folded into the general curriculum of academic classes?

Get a real GATE program! Sponsoring extra aP or honors classes for parents who are attempting to overachieve through their children only fosters the sense the education in Piedmont is about competition, not learning. Gifted students OFTEN are too smart for school, and don't perform to potential because their minds are elsewhere. That is certainly true of our elder GATE student. GATE programs are INTENDED BY THE STATE to HELP these kids live up to their full potential, not to help obsessed parents pump up GPAs and college resumes! WHEN I WAS GATE, these programs were largely NON-academic; got us off-site and learning stuff BESIDES math an English. I still got a 4.0 in college ... precisely BECAUSE my GATE activities were non-academic and fostered a love of learning, NOT pursuing the almighty gpa and college app

I think that Piedmont High is challenging, especially in the AP classes and I don't see any need for the GATE program. All children are gifted in some way and I think there are many opportunities at the High School for the kids to shine in their particular area of interest or expertise.

I find GATE totally mystifying. I asked about it last year and was given a very general description. The letters in the mail give very general information. At least at the Middle School level it looks non-existent. Optional, after school activities, seem to me a poor way to provide challenges when the activities during school are not challenging. That is what needs to be bolstered. I have not seen that happen with my daughter. She regularly complains of not being challenged in school.

Particularly in the elementary grades, gifted students still have no programming other than classroom differentiation, which the District has not effectively implemented, plus a half hour per week of math enrichment. This is not sufficient for many students.

My son was interested in Matheletes but could never attend the before-school meeting time. I suggest trying to alternate this activity between before and afterschool times

What is the district's GATE plan??

The GATE program seems skewed toward math and science. The PHS language department seems reluctant to accelerate language studies. Our child participated in a language immersion program over a summer and was denied the opportunity advance a year without being given a test to evaluate her readiness.

Maybe offer a teacher lunchtime roundtable on interesting topics that say 5-7 students at a time would participate in. Students could sign up for topics that interested them. Topics could include interdisciplinary subjects with 2 teachers (like history and English of a particular period) or just other subjects that may relate to studies (Psychology and Art history).

I have not been notified of GATE parent information night(s) or GATE Advisory Council meetings, and such notice would be appreciated. It seems that the same students are chosen for many of the listed enrichment activities (such as ASB and Peer Mediators), and I am not aware that they are students who are GATE designated.

it doesn't feel very visible.

Keep the focus on training teachers. Doing so serves the whole community of students. Keep focus away from isolating the smart kids--they don't need us to do them those kinds of favors!

Why have we not received any information about the District's GATE program?

I think he will find the AP and honors classes more challenging

I look forward to the program being executed in the ways in appears to be executed in other school districts. Please don't let budgetary constraints derail this effort.

I don't understand how the above programs relate to GATE. They seem more specifically focused on any child who has an interest in those areas.

Being gifted and talented is not only about good grades, it's about balance. If the district is truly interested in a successful GATE program, students should be contacted by GATE administrators quarterly for feedback and assessment.

Available services/program elements have not been readily communicated.

-Listen to parents and dont discount and/or blame us -Parents are a huge resource that the schools could use on a volunteer basis. I tried but was only allowed to play games with them and do sewing. I am competent to challenge my child at home with an enriched environment but once in the school boundaries I am considered to be useless. I think my child has learned more at home over the last six years. -Realize that differentiated learning is not happening in most classrooms. I didnt see it at all. The administration dosent seem to realize it dosent happen. -Teach the bright kids at their level rather than using them to teach their peers. They are rarely challenged. Do not believe that having my child teach other kids is to his best advantage. May be good for the other kids but not for him. He learns very little that he dosent already know. He dosent need to learn how to teach. Hmmm... the school wont let adults with multiple college degrees teach elementary school children but they do want elementary school k

My PHS student has not been particularly challenged at schools in Piedmont. My student was (and is, occasionally) frustrated at the amount of repetition used in teaching material, especially

in math and science. This has lessened at PHS. I think that it is a reflection of the academic program that my student averages 1-2 hours of homework PER WEEK except for the Language Arts class (and if my child had a different teacher there would be no additional load even in Language Arts.) This class load includes one AP class and one Honors class. It would have been great for my student to be able to advance through material, especially in elementary school, when they were ready. I understand that this would make scheduling difficult, but even if it were only done in some subjects (such as spelling and math). There is an incredible amount of frustration built up by sitting through hours of presentations for material that you "got" in the first few minutes of the first presentation.

Our kids are challenged and happy. The classroom teachers do an excellent job of providing a rich curriculum and plenty of opportunities for them to shine. The work they do reflects the creativity of the teachers in Piedmont.

The activities listed in question 9 are not GATE-specific. Many of them take place either early in the morning or after school, not during the school day. My children have partaken of some of these activities in which they were interested but others conflict with sports practices. Other than elementary math enrichment, which is specifically for bright math students, we do not consider these as really being the kind of academic enrichment/challenge that would serve our children.

In Q9, why is the newspaper considered GATE while the yearbook is not? Participation in Youth Educators and Every 15 Minutes also could be viewed as enrichment activities. My child was bored in 9th & 10th grades and spent much more time on social activities and being depressed. This was compounded by the depressing reading list in 9th (or 10th) grade English (Romeo & Juliet, The Bell Jar, Catcher in the Rye) and a total waste of a science class (Integrated Science 1). 11th & 12th grades have been much more positive. The Curriculum Council has helped improve the Science and Math curriculums so that future students won't have the same problems my student had. Writing was terrible. My student was a creative writer in middle school, with an 8th grade class where they turned in writings every month. PHS seems to have totally destroyed this part of her, even having taken Creative Writing in 10th grade.

The newspaper is an excellent program and has been one of the highlights of my high schooler's experience. Some sort of acceleration or enrichment for students who's strengths are in language arts or history would be wonderful. I strongly encourage the district to find a way to challenge students in the classroom, communicate better how differentiated instruction might/is doing that, and not expect middle school children to join an after school program for enrichment.

The last 2 years of PHS have offered the most challenges of the entire 13 years in PUSD. I think this is due to AP/honors courses, the quality of teachers who teach these courses, and the ability of these teachers to cover more interesting material because the kids in these classes are good students who want to be in the class. This argues for tracking. I have a strong belief that my able children will be subsidizing other people during their adult life by the taxes

they pay. Public school should give them every opportunity to be successful enough to subsidize others in the populace and still have a decent lifestyle themselves. People don't want to track kids because it removes them from the "regular" classrooms where their presence can help the "other" kids. I find this absolutely wrong headed. Nations that want to overtake us economically are not pursuing this track with their education, and they will surpass us if their brightest are allowed to soar and ours are used as pseudo teachers in less than challenging classrooms.

High school classes are on track for highly academic students as PHS offers a variety of AP classes and honors classes. I would like to see PHS offer robotics, more "fun" science classes like nanotechnology, marine biology. I encourage librarians/teachers to put out a summer reading list for each grade - recommended titles that are fun, age-appropriate and not necessarily the 'classics' or required reading. Looking forward to seeing how GATE will evolve.

Opportunity to select subject pathways at PHS is great. What specifically in the district is GATE-funded or directed?

Assist parents to know at which level their accelerated kids are performing to allow parents to plan appropriately for summer camps, after school or other enrichment activities. Also, communicate to parents which areas may need additional support (for example: in academic or social/emotional arenas.)

I would like to see the elementary school make more effort to support the needs of the advanced students. I hope that this need is met as my son progresses through Middle and High School. I'd also like more suggestions and support on ways to challenge him at home. However, I do feel that academics belong at school -- home time should be down time, for more creative and independent play. We look to the school to provide the academic challenges. From what I've seen, the district is trying to remedy some past problems with GATE. I support you and the teachers thus far, this is a good starting point.

As parent, this is the first year I ever felt Piedmont School District takes effort in GATE. I am happy that finally we are catching up with some other public school district in this regards. I was very disappointed in the elementary school, where there was no differentiation in areas. I think it diminished the challenges my kid could have had. It is encouraging that we are making progress in GATE program.

Better communication as to the programs being included within the classroom.

Make "clustering" work. Re-calibrate "differentiation" so it identifies and applies the most appropriate approach for each child, rather than assuring that all children are exposed to all types.

PUSD does a good job of providing education for 'average' and 'above average' students, but unless a particular teacher is passionate about helping students stretch, the kid beyond 'above average' in academics isn't noticed or nurtured on a consistent basis. There seems a huge bias toward 'artistic enrichment' -- exposure to non-academic variety -- at the expense of academic enrichment. Both are important, but as a district, we are out of balance. It is disheartening to see the number of high-achieving kids who leave the district for better academic challenge (not

<p>MORE, but BETTER). We seem to make no effort to find out what these kids are seeking, and how we might better serve them, rather than ignoring & writing their needs off for others to provide.</p>
<p>Please identify GATE students who are struggling because they are transcendantly bored in class and offer them a more challenging perspective on learning...perhaps in tandem with a college course.</p>
<p>We are not experiencing any differentiating of curriculum. We are not experiencing any meaningful amount of cluster grouping with other GATE students for group activities/projects. There needs to be work on the culture to be more accepting of all types of learners from GATE to learning disabled. Teachers of GATE students should communicate with parents the specific ways programming will be differentiated for their GATE student.</p>
<p>Bright students could be challenged more. Math particularly should be tracked.</p>
<p>We didn't receive any personal communication about GATE until she was a sophomore in high school, though she has been in the 99th percentile on STAR tests and has had a greater than 4.0 GPA since 7th grade. I felt very little recognition or support from the schools and had to seek opportunities for her myself both in school and extracurricularly. In fact, this year I read about Mock Trial and suggested she try it. She did not know anything about it and no one in the school has talked to her about opportunities for GATE students. I am glad she has now been encouraged to take the honors courses. I wonder why there isn't differentiation in Language Arts classes from middle school on. I also wonder why acknowledging GATE status is not a part of teacher conferences and why parents do not meet with counselors to discuss it. I also felt very challenged and alone in dealing with the psychosocial aspects of having a spirited, intense child and I felt this was addressed by only one elementary school teacher. I did request a meeting with the elementary school counselor and that was somewhat helpful, though GATE identification was never a part of our discussion. I do think the middle school counselor was looking out for her, though we never conferenced on it.</p>
<p>many of the activities listed above are BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL, and are open to all students. GATE should be focusing on helping advanced students during their class time.</p>
<p>The best and most highly motivated students need to be in the same classes so the material and methods of teaching are right for them. We do this in sports (not everyone makes the team and if you don't make the team you play at a different level). When I grew up we had the A, B and C sections in every subject from 8th grade on and no one felt bad if they were in the C sections, it was just a fact of life like not making the football team if you were not good enough. The kids in the A sections were happy because they could handle more material and the kids in the C sections, where I was, were happy because they were not being asked to do work they were not capable of doing. My son is the 7th grade math this year and he would have been bored out of his mind in regular math. This will be great for the teachers too as they don't have to teach to an average population with high and low achievers in on class.</p>
<p>need more challenging science curriculum in the elementary level, more challenging writing workshops at school in the elementary level</p>

A one page summary of the differences in activities or classes between Gate and non-Gate students would help.
it's a great school for a public school. I just wish the students were required to write more.
what exactly is the program? Got a letter that we qualify but dont know what it is
I didn't know which programs were GATE. The list you provided in #9 was a good summary. Suggest you publish this list in your information. Sometimes it's not clear what GATE is.
I see that you are working on having such activities. I didn't know there were most of these, or I didn't see them as enriching. Doesn't every school have student government? I wouldn't classify that as GATE. Also, it would seem that my kids haven't been particularly encouraged to join the newspaper, magazines, mock trial, etc., but maybe I'm not aware of it, if they were. I seemed to get a lot of push to do that when I was in Jr High and High School from being in tracked classes with teachers who would encourage such activities, even though I was in a class of over 1000 kids.
None.
At the high school I believe that there are options to enrich or accelerate for those who have math/science tendencies (or "gifts", if you will), but really none whatsoever in reading/writing/humanities before Senior year. This forces kids who feel they need some honors courses for college (and lets be honest, they do) to take some of the math/science options when they may not have the interest, desire or even ability. This just doesn't seem fair. At the high school kids can take Honors Chem instead of chem. but cannot take AP Euro instead of world history... I realize that AP is very political and that everyone in Piedmont thinks that his/her kid is "gifted," but this is an honest, legitimate issue. I don't feel that my daughter will have a chance to truly experience a high level class in the area she's passionate in until Senior year... and no, Mock Trial or Lit. Magazine really isn't the same thing. It just isn't. I really, really, really, also wish that the high school had a speech and debate program, and don't understand why it doesn't when so many other comparable schools do (Miramonte, Monte Vista, Palo Alto.. you name it). This would be an activity that could enrich the humanities-inclined GATE kid... because the events range from regular debate to performance of original writings... Just a thought.
No teacher has ever spoken about our child's inclusion in GATE, not at Havens or PMS. It would seem logical that our child's teacher should be aware of a child's eligiblity and should communicate with parents on what the program is and how (if at all) my child is participating. I've really only heard about GATE through school bulletins, which is a good start, but doesn't make a parent know if it applies to their child. I would not want to attend GATE parent meetings without being approached by a person at the school first about my child's readiness.
I have no problems at all with how things work at the elementary level! Great programs, happy kid!
We would like to see increased alignment in the Social Studies dept. in regards to assignments and projects, so that all students are receiving a stimulating and challenging curriculum. We would also like to see the World Languages dept. require fewer group projects in which an

individual student's project grade is so dependent on the availability and commitment of them other group members. There seem to be multiple group projects per semester that require meeting outside of class.

All these wonderful, enriching classes should continue to be available to all students, gifted students or not. Many of our gifted students are not identified until much later in their academic career, especially when they are able to finally focus on their areas of expertise. All classroom teachers need to be given professional development in how to differentiate instruction for a variety of levels of student ability. That seems to have been the focus this year at PUSD, and I salute you in that effort. Gifted programs should not be a pull-out "my child is better than yours" sort of a program. Thanks for all your efforts for all children of Piedmont.

1. my child is now able to separate her feelings for the teacher from her assessment of the teacher's ability to help her engage with the material. wouldn't it be helpful to teachers / administration to get feedback from students (and even parents) about the degree to which they are able to engage their students in the class materials? 2. I've just realized we have not used any of the enrichment activities provided by the school. i'm wondering -- wouldn't it be a productive use of GATE funds to have someone build a resource list of potential outside-of-school activities which would help GATE students obtain additional challenge?

1. The formal rule of not accepting courses which a gifted student might take outside PHS into their transcript, or for formal recognition, when taken at an accredited university or educational institution is short-sighted, and does not encourage students to seek to be the best they can be academically. Rather, the school should offer college counseling support to gifted students to assist them in the enrollment and schedule integration of college courses, which might not be taken or offered at PHS, like advanced math and science from a strong, local college program, like UC. 2. Provide opportunities for the "gifted" students to receive recognition as a group within the school as something to be proud of, with special outings to local institutions with expert speakers in various fields as a bonus.

We would like to see more advanced classes in subjects other than math.

Enjoyed Book Club at PMS before it transformed into film club (but he did produce films w/help from Mr. Simms)

I have been receiving notice that identify my son is qualify for GATE program since he was in Wildwood School, PMS & PHS. I faithfully signed the letter and turned in to school every year, but nothing happen -- No followup letter or notice. What make it different this year? I decide to ignore it.

I do not know what effect GATE has on the curriculum and am in the dark as to whether there actually are GATE funds, GATE courses, etc.

more frequent contact

I just don't recall that we've had much in the way of communication about the program.

I still don't understand what GATE is or what it does. For example, Shakespear club is listed above - is that open ONLY to GATE kids? Or chess club? I understood it was open to anyone.

If so, then what is the point?

What GATE program? My child goes to PMS and she hardly gets any homework. So far she is just getting the instruction/curriculum as the rest of the class. She is bored, not challenged enough and wasting her brains. No middle school kid wants to do extra homework and being treated differently, socially it would be traumatic for them. We strongly feel that the only way it would work is having advanced/ honors classes where they would move with the rest of the class and the district providing the trained teachers.

Outside of elementary school, there are few GATE activities listed above that are aimed at the gifted and talented children. The rest seem to fall under the category that has been the mantra of PUSD for a long time, that "all of our children are gifted." Aren't there a few more programs that could be made available to high school students? Especially for the 9th and 10th grades, where there are almost no advanced classes available.

Piedmont Unified will have to ramp up its science programme if it wants to keep up with other high performing schools.

Provide guidance to exiting 8th graders and their families to best position GATE students for successful high school program. One specific is that (most) GATE students should progress to biology, not to physical science (no one told us this!). The curriculum information is not presented with enough information about the overall sequencing of classes. Offer honors english classes. Implement the stated policies regarding 8th grade math and re-assign kids who are improperly placed at the beginning of the year. Improve the foreign language program (Spanish especially is dismal). Highlight for families the electives that offer opportunities for GATE students - offer a consistently high quality world cultures class instead of scaring students away with the prospect of a terrible teacher. Highlight public speaking and creative writing classes as places where kids can proceed at their own pace. Match GATE students with teachers who have high standards and appreciate high achievers. Middle school has been a giant eye-roll for my younger straight-A student. High school has been better for my older daughter, largely because of Mock Trial and opportunity to be involved in community service and travel through Build On. The peer advisor program (can't remember the name) of high school students seems to be entirely about social issues and high-risk behaviors. Why can't middle school GATE students be connected with High School GATE students who could talk to them about shaping successful high school programs? If this sounds like a tirade, it is. My daughters have been very frustrated with the lack of curriculum choices, poor teaching, slow presentation of material, and a mix of classmates that doesn't allow them to engage seriously with their academic pursuits. One benefit to honors classes is that they allow kids to "find" their peers academically.

I see the GATE program as a way to challenge academically advanced kids. The label of GATE is less important and may be a sticking point for some parents and lead to overly stringent entrance criteria in terms of teacher recommendation (teachers are looking the extremely advanced kids whereas the point of GATE programming is to provide additional challenge to students who are ready for the next level - much as it is done that way in sports. Unfortunately,

our GATE program does not do that. Criteria for entry (aside from Star test scores) are subjective and again will not pick up the underachieving GATE kid who is underperforming in an environment in which the schools do not place any emphasis on academic rigor and achievement.

My students do well in school, but they do need to spend many hours each night doing homework. They both (and the one who has already graduated) believe that some teachers need to do more direct instruction (high school math, 8th grade science) so that ALL students can understand this curriculum. It would be great to simply have all teachers teaching, not a quick run-through of some of the materials, then the students teaching each other.

Discussing the benefits of a GATE program in terms of what it can mean for the child as they think about college at the high school level. Reaching out to parents early and often about specific enrichment activities that would fit a particular child based on his/her in class performance

Parent’s of Student’s with 4.0 or higher GPA

The District strives to cultivate a learning community where students are engaged in their learning, strive for excellence, and are supported to achieve to their fullest potential.

	More than Sufficiently		Sufficiently		Not Sufficiently	My Student is Overwhelmed	Rating Average	Response Count
How well challenged is your student in math?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.2	5
How well challenged is your student in reading?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	60.0% (3)	40.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.4	5
How well challenged is your student in writing?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	60.0% (3)	20.0% (1)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	3.6	5
How well challenged is your student in science?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3	5
How well challenged is your student in social studies/history?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	40.0% (2)	60.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.6	5
How well challenged is your student in their homework?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.2	5
How well is the District supporting your student to achieve their potential?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	60.0% (3)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	4	5
Overall, how well is your student being challenged in the classroom?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.2	5

Comments:

We have been disappointed with the School's reaction to our child and have had to fight to get her in advance math classes and once we got her in them, she received all A's. Some individual math teachers are excellent but the department heads need to improve and be more responsive to parents and students.

He is earning a's with little effort, I believe he is not challenged.

The following is a list of enrichment activities which occur throughout the District. Please rate the effectiveness of each activity at enriching your student's school experience. You can indicate No Experience, if your child has not participated.

	Substantially Enriching	Enriching	Not Enriching	No Experience With This Activity	Response Count
Elementary Math Enrichment	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
Elementary Science Enrichment	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
Elementary Art Enrichment	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PMS Geography Bee	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PMS Peer Mediators	0.0% (0)	40.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	60.0% (3)	5
PMS Film Club	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PMS Chess Club	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PMS Jazz Band	20.0% (1)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	60.0% (3)	5
PMS Shakespeare Club	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PMS Mathletes	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PMS Associated Student Body Council	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PHS Mock Trial	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PHS Highland Piper Literary Magazine	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PHS Highlander Newspaper	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PHS Mathletes	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	80.0% (4)	5
PHS Associated Student Body Council	0.0% (0)	40.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	60.0% (3)	5

The district communicates with parents about GATE in several ways. Which of the following have you received or accessed (you may choose more than one):

	Response Percent	Response Count
Received District or Site Communications about GATE (e.g. emails, notices in site newsletters)	100.00%	2
Attended a GATE Advisory Council Meeting	0.00%	0
Attended a GATE Parent Information Night	0.00%	0
Visited the District GATE webpages	0.00%	0
Contacted the District GATE Coordinator	0.00%	0
Contacted your Site GATE Coordinator	0.00%	0
I have no interest in GATE	0.00%	0

Comments:

I didn't consider my child "gifted".
We don't recall ever hearing about GATE before this survey
I don't know what the gate program offers.

This year, the District is striving to better communicate about GATE through email, site newsletters, the District's webpage, and parent information nights.

	Very Well		Sufficiently		Not Well At All	No Opinion	Rating Average	Response Count
How well do you believe the district is communicating that it has a GATE program?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	80.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	4.8	5
How well do you believe the district is communicating about what GATE provides, in general?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	80.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	4.8	5
How well do you believe the district is communicating about what GATE provides your child?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	80.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	4.8	5

Comments:

We don't recall ever hearing about GATE before this survey

I occasionally have some emails about (new, only this year) GATE Meetings, but have not been able to attend. However, because I could not attend these meetings, I have received no other info. I feel that there should be information available for parents who cannot attend (and if there is, and I don't know about it, perhaps it should be better advertised?)

The District's GATE plan emphasizes meeting the needs of GATE students through differentiation of curriculum/instruction in the classroom.

	Very Well		Sufficiently		Not Well At All	Rating Average	Response Count
How well are teacher's meeting your student(s) needs through differentiation of curriculum and/or instruction in the classroom?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (2)	50.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.5	4

Comments:

I have no idea what you are asking since we have never heard of GATE.

Some Gifted and Talented students experience unique social emotional challenges.

	Very Well		Sufficiently		Not Well At All	Rating Average	Response Count
How well does the district serve the social emotional functioning of your student?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	66.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (1)	3.67	3

Comments:

Again, we have no idea about the GATE program.

Smart and popular can be a hard combination

Please let us know of any academic activities, outside of school, that your student participates in as a way to obtain additional challenge.

WHY DON'T YOU TELL US WHAT THE GATE PROGRAM IS AND WHY WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT IT? THIS IS RIDICULOUS.
--

Music.

What additional comments or suggestions would you like to make about the District's GATE program or your students educational experience in Piedmont Unified?

It is a bit disappointing that we don't know anything about the GATE program or haven't been advised of it - perhaps that is our overriding issue here. The school seems to me, to pigeon-hole children early without parents' knowledge and then stick with those rash assessments.
--

We moved to Piedmont a few years ago and were very, very disappointed to find that Piedmont really does not have a GATE program (as much as they receive some GATE money and pretend they do). I understand that it is a philosophical issue, but it's one that I completely disagree with. If children who struggle because of learning disabilities get special resources, so should children who are not challenged, but I suppose that I digress...(and I'm sure this argument has been addressed before). In any case, elementary school was disappointing (not enough of a challenge), but middle school has been better. Still, I am disappointed with what is done for children who need more of a challenge (I won't say "gifted" since that seems to be a dirty word around here).
--

I'd like to know more about it.

Responses From GATE Eligible Students

Gender of Respondents:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Female		48.10%	13
Male		51.90%	14
Total			27

Grade Level of Respondents:

		Response Percent	Response Count
4th		0.00%	0
5th		11.10%	3
6th		3.70%	1
7th		14.80%	4
8th		18.50%	5
9th		14.80%	4
10th		18.50%	5
11th		7.40%	2
12th		11.10%	3
Total			27

Respondent's School of Attendance:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Beach Elementary		3.70%	1
Havens Elementary		3.70%	1
Wildwood Elementary		3.70%	1
Piedmont Middle School		37.00%	10
Piedmont High School		51.90%	14
Millenium High School		0.00%	0
Total			27

Your classroom teachers strive to provide you with challenging coursework:

	More than Sufficiently Challenged		Sufficiently Challenged		Not Challenged At All	I am Overwhelmed by Level of Challenge	Rating Average	Response Count
How well challenged are you in math?	3.7% (1)	7.4% (2)	44.4% (12)	37.0% (10)	7.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.37	27
How well challenged are you in reading?	0.0% (0)	3.7% (1)	48.1% (13)	14.8% (4)	33.3% (9)	0.0% (0)	3.78	27
How well challenged are you in writing?	3.7% (1)	14.8% (4)	29.6% (8)	33.3% (9)	18.5% (5)	0.0% (0)	3.48	27
How well challenged are you in science?	7.4% (2)	11.1% (3)	44.4% (12)	22.2% (6)	14.8% (4)	0.0% (0)	3.26	27
How well challenged are you in social studies/history?	3.7% (1)	3.7% (1)	33.3% (9)	33.3% (9)	25.9% (7)	0.0% (0)	3.74	27
How well challenged are you in your homework?	3.7% (1)	18.5% (5)	25.9% (7)	29.6% (8)	18.5% (5)	3.7% (1)	3.42	27
In general, how challenging do you find your classes?	0.0% (0)	3.8% (1)	23.1% (6)	65.4% (17)	7.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.77	26
In general, how challenging do you find special class projects?	7.7% (2)	7.7% (2)	30.8% (8)	38.5% (10)	15.4% (4)	0.0% (0)	3.46	26
Total								

Comments:

way too much math homework
don't take history
My core subjects are really easy.
class projects are pretty good but they could be better and more challenging, I enjoyed writing the essay in 5th grade maybe you should start that kind of work for talented children in third grade.
Most classes are a joke. When classes are "hard", the concepts aren't challenging, the teachers just load on the homework as a substitute for teaching challenging or interesting material during class. A "challenging" class doesn't necessarily have tons of work, nor does a joke class necessarily have no work.
I like collaborating with other people on group projects, but they expect me to do most of the work, because they know I want to get a good grade on the project.
i get wayyy too much busywork that could otherwise be spent doing something productive!
Science and math is hard. Also, I do not enjoy group projects, as they are stressful.
How challenging the classes are depends entirely on the teacher
some classes work at slow rates, math especially
they are all challenging we just don't have much variety in our classes

The following is a list of enrichment activities that students have opportunities to experience. Please rate each that you have experienced. You can indicate No Experience, if you have not participated.

	Excellent Activity	Okay Activity	Disappointing Activity	No Experience	Response
Elementary Math Enrichment	24.0% (6)	36.0% (9)	12.0% (3)	28.0% (7)	25
Elementary Science Enrichment	12.5% (3)	12.5% (3)	4.2% (1)	70.8% (17)	24
Elementary Art Enrichment	28.0% (7)	12.0% (3)	12.0% (3)	48.0% (12)	25
PMS Geography Bee	8.3% (2)	12.5% (3)	4.2% (1)	75.0% (18)	24
PMS Peer Mediators	4.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	8.3% (2)	87.5% (21)	24
PMS Film Club	4.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	95.8% (23)	24
PMS Chess Club	0.0% (0)	12.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	87.5% (21)	24
PMS Jazz Band	8.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	91.7% (22)	24
PMS Shakespeare Club	24.0% (6)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	76.0% (19)	25
PMS Mathletes	8.3% (2)	8.3% (2)	4.2% (1)	79.2% (19)	24
PMS Associated Student Body Council	4.2% (1)	8.3% (2)	12.5% (3)	75.0% (18)	24
PHS Mock Trial	4.2% (1)	4.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	91.7% (22)	24
PHS Highland Piper Literary Magazine	4.2% (1)	4.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	91.7% (22)	24
PHS Highlander Newspaper	4.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	95.8% (23)	24
PHS Mathletes	4.0% (1)	4.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	92.0% (23)	25
PHS Associated Student Body Council	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (24)	24

How often do you have the following experiences:

	Very Frequently		Sometimes		Not Frequently	Rating Average	Response Count
I am asked to complete work that is too easy or I consider busywork.	40.7% (11)	29.6% (8)	25.9% (7)	0.0% (0)	3.7% (1)	1.96	27
I am asked to learn ideas that I have learned in a previous class.	22.2% (6)	22.2% (6)	40.7% (11)	3.7% (1)	11.1% (3)	2.59	27
I feel the pace at which other students learn is holding me back from more interesting activities.	29.6% (8)	22.2% (6)	33.3% (9)	11.1% (3)	3.7% (1)	2.37	27

Comments:

In Science, we review the same info over and over!!
In Spanish class, I am way more advanced than the other students and if anything, my spanish is getting worse! I have a lot of busywork in math and especially in world cultures, we are assigned work that we never end up using.
fifth grade is somewhat more challenging in that we are asked to learn new concepts. In the previous grades we were asked to do more repeatitive work like practicing multiplication or cursive...
Slow/misbehaving students shouldn't hold back more advanced students, yet the schools still let this happen
our teacher makes us do too much "CA Standards" history activities, most of which are a complete waste of time, as most of the people in the groups I end up in don't read the instructions for each station, henceforth only one member of my four-person group and I are actually discussing the material in the end. Also, my teacher has a difficult time maintaining required behavior (i.e, listening to other people, respect, not talking when someone else is, etc.) and sometimes up to half of our class time is spent discussing how you should be behaving in 7th grade.
my homework takes me sooo long and i get the concept by the third problem...yet still have to do twenty more identical ones...my homework is pointless and aggravating
I would like specific art classes (such as painting).
again with some classes working at slow rates
If I'm not in an Honors or AP class, the class as a whole moves very slowly
we need more variety in classes

Students vary in their feelings about achievement or being identified as a Gifted and Talented student.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
I am proud of being a high achieving student.	53.8% (14)	30.8% (8)	11.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.8% (1)	1.69	26
I like other students to know that I am a high achiever.	7.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	42.3% (11)	38.5% (10)	11.5% (3)	3.46	26
I would be proud of being called a Gifted and Talented Student.	24.0% (6)	12.0% (3)	28.0% (7)	28.0% (7)	8.0% (2)	2.84	25
I would like other students to know that I am a Gifted and Talented Student.	3.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	23.1% (6)	53.8% (14)	19.2% (5)	3.85	26

Indicate your level of agreement with the following questions:

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
I find it easy to make friends.	11.5% (3)	38.5% (10)	30.8% (8)	19.2% (5)	0.0% (0)	3.42	26
I have an easy time finding friends with similar interests.	7.7% (2)	30.8% (8)	42.3% (11)	19.2% (5)	0.0% (0)	3.27	26
I worry that other students will make fun of me for being a good student.	3.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	3.8% (1)	34.6% (9)	57.7% (15)	1.58	26

Responses From Teachers and Administrators

What site(s) do you serve?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Beach		20.00%	8
Havens		12.50%	5
Wildwood		7.50%	3
PMS		50.00%	20
PHS		20.00%	8
MHS		0.00%	0
Total			44

What grade level(s) do you serve this year?

		Percent	Count
	K	10.00%	4
	1	12.50%	5
	2	17.50%	7
	3	15.00%	6
	4	25.00%	10
	5	20.00%	8
	6	35.00%	14
	7	22.50%	9
	8	22.50%	9
	9	17.50%	7
	10	20.00%	8
	11	20.00%	8

A goal of the new GATE plan is to increase teacher awareness and training about the needs of GATE students and the District's plan.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
I am aware that the GATE plan is posted on the District website.	52.5% (21)	5.0% (2)	32.5% (13)	10.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	4	40
I have been supported, at my site, to understand the requirements of the new GATE plan.	35.9% (14)	15.4% (6)	30.8% (12)	12.8% (5)	5.1% (2)	3.64	39
I have attended a GATE workshop in the current year.	22.2% (8)	2.8% (1)	2.8% (1)	16.7% (6)	55.6% (20)	2.19	36
Previous to this year, I attended workshops/trainings about Gifted students.	33.3% (13)	5.1% (2)	17.9% (7)	12.8% (5)	30.8% (12)	2.97	39
I would like more support around meeting the needs of Gifted and Talented students.	10.5% (4)	23.7% (9)	31.6% (12)	13.2% (5)	21.1% (8)	2.89	38
If I needed help with meeting the needs of a student whom I believed to be gifted, I would know where to seek assistance.	37.5% (15)	27.5% (11)	25.0% (10)	5.0% (2)	5.0% (2)	3.88	40
I would like to attend a GATE workshop in the future.	17.9% (7)	17.9% (7)	30.8% (12)	7.7% (3)	25.6% (10)	2.95	39
I would like more training in the area of Differentiated Instruction.	27.0% (10)	29.7% (11)	18.9% (7)	13.5% (5)	10.8% (4)	3.49	37

Comments:

Very opposed to GATE
We have had many trainings on Differentiated instruction in one form or another. We have expertise on site, and it would be great to utilize this expertise. We don't need consultants.
Since our program is rich and rigorous, GATE students are served well in our district.
I would like to see differentiated instruction support for teachers as part of districtwide professional development and year-long site goals.

The District would like your comments on how to best support your service to GATE students.

I think that the district is doing a good job supporting GATE students.
Continue with training in the area of differentiated instruction and differentiated curriculum for teachers. Provide parent ed workshops and teacher resources in the areas of affective development, interpersonal skills, self esteem, and sensitivity to moral and ethical issues that are unimportant to their peers.
Howe to differentiate for High School, so often these inservices are more geared to lower grades.
Give us collaboration and USEFUL and MEANINGFUL in-service in October and the beginning of the year.
I'm curious to know whether all that money was spent on training of teachers or did we actually spend it on any students themselves.
As counselor, I am most interested in recommendations for these students when working on Core placement when arranging classes. Also, would like to know all the vocabulary involved to better be able to effectively communicate with parents who come in wanting to know what GATE services we provide.
Continue to offer Professional Development for teachers and administrators.