

## Recommended Standards for Programs for Gifted and Talented Students

***For one-year approval, standards in the first column should be in place. For a two-year approval, standards in both column one and column two should be in place. When standards in all three columns are in place, districts may expect a three-year approval. Each level should show increasing quality.***

Section 1: Program Design Districts provide a comprehensive continuum of services and program options responsive to the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students and based on philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support. (EC 52205d and 52206a)

<p>1:1 The plan for the district program has a written statement of philosophy, goals, and standards appropriate to the needs and abilities of gifted learners.</p> <p>The Palo Alto Unified School District's mission is to "enable all students to strive for academic excellence, acquire the knowledge and skills that support learning, value creativity and life-long learning, demonstrate respect for self and others and participate meaningfully in our democratic society and interdependent global community." The goals for the Gifted and Talented program are to recognize the performance capabilities of gifted students, as well as to provide educational opportunities which respond to the uniqueness of these individual talents, engender an enthusiasm for learning and encourage students to develop and use their gifts and talents. Classroom instruction for GATE students differs in pace, depth, and complexity of study and considers individual learning styles and social-emotional concerns, as well as exceptional abilities and special needs.</p>		
<p><b>Minimum Standards: One year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The plan includes an intellectual component with objectives that meet or exceed state academic content standards.</p> <p>a. PAUSD adopted a new Strategic plan in June 2008, which states that the district will "create an exceptional learning environment that engages, challenges, and supports all students so that they thrive and achieve their academic potential every year, while preparing them to pursue college and other post-secondary opportunities to be global citizens." (Goal A). This goal is to "ensure high expectations and support for all students." (A3). We hold gifted students to even higher expectations. The District is committed to providing each GATE student with a plan based on methodology and research and differentiated learning experiences within the regular classroom that are challenging, enriching and emphasize higher level thinking skills.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The plan incorporates expert knowledge, is approved by the local Board of Education.</p> <p>b. Consultants, such as Jill Carroll, Susan Winebrenner, and Frank Worrell, working with District administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents have guided the</p>	<p><b>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The district plan is disseminated and easily accessible to parents and the community in pamphlet, website, or other forms.</p> <p>a. The District GATE plan is accessible at the District office, on the District Web site, through the GATE District Advisory Committee, a District GATE brochure, and site newsletters.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Participation in the program is not limited by other problems of logistics.</p> <p>b. The GATE program, delivered through differentiation of the curriculum during the regular school day, is available for participation of all identified GATE students.</p> <p><b>c.</b> A district GATE advisory committee representing all constituents meets on a regular basis to assist in program planning and assessment.</p> <p>c. The elementary and secondary GATE Advisory Committees meet a minimum of</p>	<p><b>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The district plan includes identification and program options in one or more of the categories of creative ability, leadership, and visual and performing arts.</p> <p>a. The District currently identifies students on the basis of intellectual ability, high achievement, and specific talents. At the elementary level all schools provide general and instrumental music programs and a visual arts program that allow students gifted in the arts to grow in creative expressions. At the secondary level elective programs and opportunities are offered in technology, drama, music, visual arts, and world languages. Participation in student government and service learning opportunities also provides for the development of leadership potential.</p>

<p>development of the GATE plan. The Board reviews and approves the GATE plan prior to submission. The 2008 plan will be posted on the District Web site and available from the office of Curriculum and Instruction.</p> <p><b>c.</b> The plan aligns with the available resources of the schools, staff, parents and community.</p> <p><b>c.</b> The District provides support for the GATE program from the GATE funds and the general fund budget for staff development. GATE site budgets provide funds for identification, resources and curriculum materials, and a stipend for the secondary GATE Coordinators. At the elementary level, a District office administrator serves as the GATE Coordinator working with the twelve elementary schools. The middle schools have two District office administrators overseeing the program and in addition, each individual school has their own site GATE Coordinator who manages the daily requirements of the program. The high schools have a site administrator who is responsible for overseeing the GATE program.</p> <p><b>d.</b> A GATE advisory committee representing educators, community members and parents is formed to support the needs of the program.</p> <p><b>d.</b> The elementary and secondary GATE Advisory Committees' membership includes the District GATE coordinators, site GATE coordinators, principals, teachers, and parents from each school site.</p>	<p>three-four times per year to assist in planning education forums for parents of GATE students, in developing program assessment criteria, and in providing feedback about GATE services at their sites.</p>	
<b>1:2 The program provides administrative groupings and structures appropriate for gifted education and available to all gifted learners.</b>		
<p><b>Minimum Standards: One year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> Administrative groupings and structures appropriate for gifted education may include cluster grouping, part-time grouping, special day classes, and special schools.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Our grouping strategies are designed to provide effective differentiation of curriculum and instruction, interaction with intellectual peers, and continuity of learning within and across grade levels. Strategies within</p>	<p><b>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> A range of appropriate administrative grouping options and structure is available. At the secondary level such groupings and structures are not limited to a single type at any grade level.</p> <p><b>a.</b> At the secondary level, the groupings and programs are not limited to a single type at any grade level. Students are clustered in</p>	<p><b>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The program structure and delivery of services provide a balance between cognitive and affective learning.</p> <p><b>a.</b> One of the initiatives of our new Strategic plan is to "continue and enhance efforts to address social, emotional, physical, and character education needs of students" (A3.1). We have counselors at our secondary schools providing social and emotional support, and</p>

<p>the differentiated instruction include curriculum compacting and cluster grouping. Based upon assessments, accelerated instruction may be provided.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The program provides services that are an integral part of the school day.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The District is committed to providing differentiated instruction for all students in the regular classroom. The program for gifted students is a regular, integral part of the student's entire school experience. Curriculum and instruction are modified to enrich and extend the core curriculum enabling gifted students to understand it in greater depth and complexity and to meet the student's academic and intellectual potential.</p> <p><b>c.</b> The program provides for continuous progress and intellectual peer interaction.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Identified gifted students are clustered together to work with their intellectual peers on numerous in-depth projects. Fluid grouping involves pre-assessment, compacting, post-testing, and frequent regrouping.</p> <p><b>d.</b> The program provides for flexible grouping in the classroom to meet student needs and abilities.</p> <p><b>d.</b> Students, clustered in flexible groups based upon frequent assessments, are provided the core curriculum in greater depth and complexity. Schedules at the elementary schools for reading and math create a structure that allows for fluid grouping of students within and between classrooms at all grade levels.</p> <p><b>e.</b> Children in grades K-2 are served even if not formally identified.</p> <p><b>e.</b> Students can be informally identified in grades K-2 and then clustered and flexibly grouped to provide needed curriculum challenge.</p>	<p>flexible groups, and provided accelerated instruction, curriculum and materials. Acceleration in math is frequent. Many students in grade 8 and some students in grade 7 take Algebra 1. Geometry is offered to seventh and eighth grade students who can meet the criteria through the scheduling of a "zero" period. Four foreign languages are available at the middle schools, allowing students to pursue the study of another language in depth prior to entering high school. At the high school level students are able to individualize their education plan based on their interests and creative abilities. There are numerous honors and advanced placement classes available to any qualified student, and those who do not take Honors and AP classes still receive the challenge that they need.</p>	<p>creating a safe and empowering environment for our students. All of our elementary schools have character education, such as the "Steps to Respect" program where they focus on various themes including responsibility, compassion and empathy, and diversity. Our elementary and middle schools also have conflict resolution programs and our high schools Peer Counseling, where students receive training in social and affective skills and have an opportunity to apply these skills with their peers at their school.</p>
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<b>1:3 The program is articulated with the general education programs.</b>		
<p><b>Minimum Standards: One year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The program provides continuity within the gifted program and with the general education program.</p> <p>a. State/District standards and the District student assessment system provide the common basis for consistency in instruction with the general education program. Common core curriculum and materials support this articulation. While all students address the same standards, differentiation allows GATE students to explore advanced content through a variety of learning experiences complementing their individual styles, interests, and pacing needs. These learning experiences help develop critical thinking and problem solving skills as they relate to the core curriculum.</p> <p><b>b.</b> A coordinator is designated and responsible for all aspects of the program.</p> <p>b. In our District, the GATE program is administered by three District administrators, one for the elementary and two for the secondary GATE programs. These District administrators have experience in and knowledge of gifted education and oversee the entire GATE program. This model has been effective because it allows for a wider range of resources and greater flexibility in developing gifted services. In addition, each middle school has a site GATE Coordinator to facilitate identification, implementation and communication within that particular site. These Coordinators also participate on our GATE Advisory Committee and thus serve as liaisons between the sites and the District.</p> <p><b>c.</b> The program involves the home and community.</p> <p>c. Parents are an important source of experience, knowledge and support in our classrooms, and for our GATE students. Parents serve on the District GATE</p>	<p><b>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The program is planned and organized to provide articulated learning experiences across subjects and grade levels.</p> <p>a. Teachers meet as grade level teams and across grade levels to review student achievement and assessment, ensure continuity, and promote flexible groups and tiered learning. Common core curriculum supports this articulation. Articulation between elementary and middle schools and middle and high schools is accomplished through teacher meetings at each site.</p>	<p><b>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The program is comprehensive, structured, and sequenced between, within, and across grade levels, K-12.</p> <p>a. The GATE program is based on the District's K-12 standards in all content areas. At scheduled meetings, teachers collaborate and share ideas and resources with other teachers at and between school sites. Our uniform assessment system and standards-based report cards provide teachers across grade levels with detailed information about each student's strengths and areas for improvement. We also keep a folder on each GATE student that is passed on to the student's future teachers and contains information about assessments and areas of acceleration.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The program provides support services including counselors and consultants.</p> <p>b. At all grade levels, counselors and psychologists are a part of the educational plan for each student. Counselors are trained in the social and emotional needs of the gifted child. Our middle schools also have a conflict resolution program and our high schools a peer-counseling program where students serve as mentors for other students. In addition, the high schools provide career counseling to students which matches each student with appropriate career and post secondary choices and opportunities.</p>

Advisory Committees, are involved in the identification process, and participate as partners at all levels. Elementary and Secondary parents also are involved in focus groups to provide the district with information about our GATE program. Staff also access community agencies as resources for student projects and programs.		
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Section 2: Identification The district's identification procedures are equitable, comprehensive, and ongoing. They reflect the district's definition of giftedness and its relationship to current state criteria. (EC 52202: Title 5 Regulations, Section 3822)

2:1 The nomination/referral process is ongoing and includes students K-12.		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> All children are eligible for the nomination process regardless of socioeconomic, linguistic or cultural background, and/or disabilities.</p> <p><b>a.</b> The referral process for GATE identification is on an annual basis. All students are eligible for nomination and teachers, administrators, counselors, and parents can submit referrals. By using a range of criteria for identification, students from diverse populations can be nominated for GATE. At the elementary level, the identification team consists of the site principal, and the classroom teacher. At the secondary level, the identification team consists of the site principal, the site GATE Coordinator, the referring staff, and sometimes a psychologist. This staff is trained in the identification process as well as the characteristics of the gifted child.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The district establishes and implements both traditional and nontraditional instruments and procedures for searching for gifted students. All data is used to ensure equal access to program services.</p> <p><b>b.</b> This year the thrust of our GATE identification process is to focus on the qualification criteria. These criteria include nonverbal assessments, such as the Raven's Progressive Matrices Test, that are less likely to create cultural bias and provide equal access for English language learners and students with special needs.</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p><b>a</b> Training in the identification process is provided that is specifically appropriate for administrators, teachers and support personnel.</p> <p><b>a.</b> GATE site specialists or District administrators provide training in the identification process to administrators and staff during grade level and staff meetings as well as in professional development sessions. Staff also receive written information concerning the nomination forms, checklists, and timelines for the identification process. GATE specialists send out letters and hold meetings for parents explaining the GATE screening process, placement and program.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The district maintains data on nominees and includes these data in reassessing students who are referred more than once.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Students may be nominated on an annual basis. The District maintains data on students who were referred but not initially included in the GATE program to be used in consideration of a student's subsequent referrals.</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p>

<p>c. Referrals are sought from classroom teachers and parents. District actively searches for referrals among underrepresented populations</p> <p>c. Referrals are sought from all staff and parents. Staff members are encouraged to identify gifted students among underrepresented minorities. Closing the achievement gap has been identified as one of the District's strategic plan goals. An Equity Team of teachers and administrators was formed to focus on this issue and to provide training and information to staff. We are also developing staff training that includes understanding behaviors associated with giftedness. This will include our ELL and special education staff.</p> <p>d. Students may be nominated for participation more than once.</p> <p>e. All staff receive training and information about the nomination process, including the characteristics of gifted learners and have access to nomination forms.</p> <p>d. e. Students may be nominated for participation in the GATE program more than once and may be referred on an annual basis. The District maintains data on nominees to be used in consideration of a student's subsequent referrals. Annually, all teachers of grades 4 through 8 receive a nomination packet that includes explicit directions for the nomination process. Training in the characteristics of gifted learners is provided to all staff to ensure that all potential GATE students are nominated.</p>		
<p>2:2 An assessment/identification process is in place to ensure that all potentially gifted students are appropriately assessed for identification as gifted students.</p>		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p>a. A committee including the GATE coordinator and certificated personnel, make final determinations on individual student eligibility for the program.</p> <p>a. Each elementary school has its own GATE identification team consisting of the site principal and the nominee's teacher. It may also include a former teacher and psychologist. The middle school GATE</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p>a. The identification tools used are reflective of the district's population.</p> <p>a. Using multiple qualifying criteria for identification fits the unique needs of our high performing District and is based on the current research and practice. We continue to evaluate</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p> <p>a. Personnel trained in gifted education meet at regular intervals to determine eligibility of individual candidates.</p> <p>a. The GATE teams at each site have been trained in our identification and eligibility process. Through a process called "kid-by-kid," the elementary school site teams, led by the principal, meet throughout</p>

<p>identification team consists of the site principal, the site GATE Coordinator, the referring staff, counselor and sometimes a psychologist. These teams have been highly trained in characteristics of GATE students and make the final decisions on student eligibility.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Evidence from multiple sources is used to determine eligibility and a data record or file is established for each nominee.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The District uses multiple traditional and nontraditional criteria for identifying GATE students. These measurements include standardized test scores; STAR (California Standards Tests, CAT6), ERB/WRAP (Educational Records Bureau Writing Assessment Program), MARS math test; the Ravens Progressive Matrices, a non-verbal test of cognitive processing skills; a checklist of indicators of giftedness; a multiple intelligences checklist; parent referrals; classroom observations and performance; and teacher judgment. A GATE folder is made for each identified student. The folder contains copies of all the criteria and forms used for identification, the GATE Plan describing the accommodations for that student, and the signed parent notification letter. Identified students are also “tagged” in the District’s data system (SASI). Teachers are given this data on identified students in their classes each fall.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Parents and teachers are notified of a student’s eligibility for program placement and are informed of the appeal process.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Within two weeks of final determination, parents are notified by letter of their child’s eligibility for the GATE program and of the District’s appeal process. Parents return a signed form acknowledging receipt of the notification. Teachers are informed of students’ eligibility for placement in the program by the school principal, or the site GATE Coordinator. When a student is identified for GATE, the program will be discussed at</p>	<p>our process for identification to make it even more open and inclusive. In the fall, teachers meet to discuss the characteristics and needs of gifted students and review achievement data such as scores from STAR, MARS and ERB/WRAP testing. Particular thought is given to students who are members of underrepresented minority groups and ELL students, considering whether background factors suggest that alternative methods of identification should be employed. The Raven’s Progressive Matrices Test is often administered as an additional source of identification for students who are members of underrepresented minority groups.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The district makes timely changes in identification tools and procedures based on the most current research.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The District keeps apprised of current research to improve identification in a concerted effort to increase referrals of underrepresented populations. Teachers are trained to look for strengths in academic areas as well as in the visual and creative arts and are encouraged to seek out and identify students from every linguistic and socioeconomic background.</p>	<p>the year to review students’ eligibility and their GATE folders. At the middle school, a District administrator, trained in gifted education, meets regularly with the teachers to support the identification process, notifies parents and updates the GATE folders. The folders contain the student’s assessments and his/her individual GATE plan including any accommodations for that student. This review process may also take place during a Student Study Team meeting. The GATE team leaders also discuss the eligibility process at the GATE Advisory Committee meetings and at district principal meetings.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The diversity of the district’s student population is increasingly reflected in the district GATE population.</p> <p><b>b.</b> One of the areas targeted for improvement by our District is our GATE identification and programs for the underserved population. One of the initiatives of the new Strategic plan is to “examine structures, policies, and attitudes that serve as barriers to the achievement of underrepresented minority students to improve climate and foster respect, inclusion, and high expectations for diverse student groups.” (A3.3) The District is committed to identifying gifted students from disadvantaged and varying linguistic, economic and cultural backgrounds, as well as those students with special needs. To facilitate this identification, we have now included non-verbal assessments as part of our identification process. In addition, to promote equitable policies for underserved populations, staff and parents are highly encouraged to refer any student who shows evidence of or potential for high-level logical or creative thinking regardless of their achievement level in the classroom.</p>
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<p>a parent-teacher conference. Parents also receive information regarding the District's appeal process through the District office.</p> <p><b>d.</b> Transfer students are considered for identification and placement in a timely manner.</p> <p>d. Transfer students are considered for identification and placement in a timely manner. The District accepts identification from another district and these students are placed in the GATE program shortly following enrollment. At the secondary level, counselors review cumulative folders of all students new to the District and notify the site GATE Coordinator if a student qualified for the GATE program in another district.</p>		
<p>2:3 Multiple service options are available within the gifted education program and between other educational programs. Placement is based on the assessed needs of the student and is periodically reviewed.</p>		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Students and parents are provided information and orientation regarding student placement and participation options. Signed parent permission for participation is on file.</p> <p>a Parents receive a packet describing the District's strategies for meeting the needs of GATE students, along with the notification of GATE identification of their child. At our fall Back-To-School Night and at our GATE Advisory Committee meetings, parents are provided information about the GATE placement and participation options, curriculum, and learning methodologies. We also have a District GATE brochure that is available to all parents as well as information about GATE on our District Web site as well as the individual school websites. We keep all signed parent permission forms on file in the district office.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Upon parent request the district provides identification information the parent may take to a new school or district.</p> <p>b. Parents may request the student's GATE folder to take</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Before any student is considered for withdrawal from the program, interventions are implemented and a meeting is held with the parents and student.</p> <p>a. Only parents may formally withdraw a student from GATE. The District works hard to customize the program and meet individual student needs so that parents don't feel a need to withdraw their student. A plan will be developed to address these specific needs, taking into consideration the context of the child's giftedness. Parents are involved in all aspects of this process. If specific problems arise with a GATE student, several intervention strategies are available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Modification of curriculum, style of instruction, program, or classes</li> <li>◆ A referral to the Student Study Team</li> <li>◆ A referral to a school counselor, psychologist, or to Adolescent Counseling Services</li> </ul>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p>



<p>to another school or district.</p> <p>c. Participation in the program is based on the criteria of identification and is not dependent on the perception of a single individual. Once identified, a student remains identified as a gifted student in the district, though services to individuals may vary from year to year.</p> <p>c. The District uses multiple criteria to identify students to participate in the program. (See section 2.2 b.) Identification is determined by a team of professionals who review the assessment data and after considering the student's areas of giftedness, develops an individual plan. Once identified, a student continues to participate in the GATE program while in the District. There is continuous evaluation to ensure that we are providing the appropriate curriculum and strategies for this student.</p>	<p>◆ A referral for a 504 assessment</p> <p>◆ A referral for a special education assessment</p>	
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Section 3: Curriculum and Instruction Districts develop differentiated curriculum, instructional models and strategies that are aligned with and extend the state academic content standards and curriculum frameworks. The differentiated curriculum is related to theories, models, and practices from the recognized literature in the field. (EC 52206a and 52206b)

3:1 A differentiated curriculum is in place, responsive to the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students.		
Minimum Standards: One year approval	Commendable Standards: Two year approval	Exemplary Standards: Three year approval
<p>a. The differentiated curriculum facilitates gifted students in their ability to meet or exceed state core curriculum and standards.</p> <p>a. The goal of the GATE program is to provide students with opportunities commensurate with their capabilities, special talents and creative abilities. The differentiated instruction facilitates students' ability to meet or exceed state academic content standards through a curriculum that focuses on using teaching strategies that include curriculum compacting, open-ended questions, tiered learning, and acceleration. Under the District's newly adopted Strategic Plan, there will be a "focus on developing supplementary resources for students above grade level" (A1.2). Students' progress and mastery of content is measured through multiple assessments</p>	<p>a. The core curriculum is compacted for gifted students so that learning experiences are developmentally appropriate (not redundant) to their needs, interests, and abilities.</p> <p>a. Differentiation of content involves the compacting of the core curriculum through the elimination of unnecessary repetition and the use of advanced materials, which are more multifaceted, abstract, or complex. Students are pre-tested prior to the introduction of a new unit. These pre-tests may be formal assessments or informal observations. If the teacher determines that the student has already mastered the material, the student is "tested out" of this</p>	<p>a. A scope and sequence for the gifted program articulates the significant learning in content, skills, and products within and among grade levels K-12.</p> <p>a. In the District's newly adopted Strategic plan, one of the initiatives is to "improve K-12 curriculum articulation, coordination, and alignment to meet needs of the full range of students" (A1.1). For each grade level there are District frameworks that articulate the scope and sequence for each subject, grades K-12. At the elementary and middle school levels, teachers discuss an individual student's abilities with the child's future teacher. Teachers also fill out student cards with pertinent information about</p>

<p>including STAR, ERB/WrAP, Mars, DRA reading inventory, running records, and the K-5 literacy portfolio. Report cards are also standards based. These tools are used to provide information with respect to students meeting and/or exceeding state core curriculum and standards. Under the new Strategic Plan, the district “will review additional metrics for progress of our students above grade level” (Goal A).</p> <p><b>b.</b> The differentiated curriculum provides for the balanced development of critical, creative, problem solving and research skills, advanced content, and authentic and appropriate products.</p> <p>b. The District’s philosophy is to maintain a well-balanced, heterogeneous, differentiated instructional program for gifted and talented students. Through this differentiated curriculum, GATE students are provided with learning experiences that allow them to acquire the ability to think and reason creatively and critically, to question basic premises, and to synthesize, analyze, and evaluate information. Students are encouraged to grow and develop as individuals, to set realistic and challenging goals and to develop skills necessary for their accomplishment. Differentiation of product allows students multiple modes of expression in the determination of their learning. Open-ended products can be used to demonstrate abstract thought and complexity, and for the application and generalization of key skills of the discipline. Also, as part of our curriculum, students who excel in the visual and performing arts are identified and provided with a wide variety of opportunities. At the secondary level these include Honor Band, Choir and Orchestra; performing as soloists or in small ensembles at concerts; performing in jazz groups; auditions for drama performances; Stanford Lively Arts; and studio art classes and exhibitions for the visual arts. We also have several lunch clubs that foster the creative arts, including drama and photography.</p>	<p>unit and works on accelerated and /or enrichment activities and projects. Capable students are encouraged to take advanced content. In our middle schools students are given a math placement test in the Spring, and in grades 6 and 7 may be placed in pre-algebra, algebra or geometry. Some qualified middle school students may take advanced Math at the high school and advanced math students at the high school may take honors and AP courses and classes at our local community colleges.</p> <p><b>b.</b> There is alignment of the differentiated curriculum with instructional strategies that promote inquiry, self-directed learning, discussion, debate, metacognition, and other appropriate modes of learning.</p> <p>b. Recognizing that children have different learning styles, our District has always promoted multi-modal learning to address state academic content standards. Within the differentiated curriculum, some of the instructional strategies such as compacting, cluster grouping, learning centers, and flexible grouping promote a methodology that includes accelerated concepts, higher expectations, self-directed learning, and inquiry to challenge the individual or collective abilities of the gifted. For example, one of the math units of study in grade 6 is data and statistics. Students could learn these skills in a more traditional manner (lecture, drill, and practice) to meet the California grade 6 standards in math. In one of our middle</p>	<p>academic achievements as well as social/emotional information that are given to the child’s future teacher. Additional information that promotes the continuity of sequence and instruction is available for teachers on the detailed standards-based report card, which includes information about a student’s ability level with respect to meeting or exceeding standards and contains extensive teacher commentary. To further enhance articulation, the district provides each secondary counselor, and each Math and English teacher with a list of students that include all student achievement data for the past three years. This list is used to inform program placement and enrichment activities.</p>
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<p>c. The differentiated curriculum focuses primarily on depth and complexity of content, advanced or accelerated pacing of content and novelty (unique and original expressions of student understanding).</p> <p>c. The District recognizes that students not only differ in their readiness to learn, but also in their interests and preferred learning style. We enable gifted students to achieve <i>novelty</i> by connecting individual learning experiences that are specifically matched to their needs, yet related to the core curriculum. At the elementary level gifted students are reading and analyzing above grade level novels. Novelty is encouraged when these students are then asked to write a sequel to the novel, make a Web site, or create an animated film. Students are often asked to develop an independent research assignment on an idea that captures their interest and curiosity and then organize their thoughts using the elements of depth and complexity. Some of these research projects may be written, others could be presented as a Web page or a video. Similarly, math extensions that are provided by the District for our math units, grades 1-6, provide opportunity for creativity and problem solving. Teachers use questioning strategies incorporating the elements of Bloom's taxonomy to encourage high-level thinking. Instructional strategies are used to promote inquiry, debate, and in depth discussions. At each grade level teachers develop concepts that allow students to see how the content in one area connects with broader societal issues. For example, in a grade 6 social studies class, students may prepare two sides of a debate to contrast the impact of inventions on China's history.</p>	<p>schools, students using six different brands of paper towels tested these towels for durability and strength and then developed graphs and charts using the data and statistics from their findings. While this assignment addresses a number of content standards, it also allows for the development of analytical/critical thinking, problem solving, and research skills.</p> <p>c. The differentiated curriculum includes learning theories that reinforce the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students including abstract thinking and big ideas of the content area.</p> <p>c. A variety of learning theories on GATE education are brought to life in our classrooms. Greater depth and complexity is built into our lesson plans through differentiation of content, process, and product. Through compacting, students need not re-learn material they have already mastered and the extensions, tiered assignments, contracts, and independent study further teachers' ability to meet student's individual needs, interests, and talents. Our theory-based curriculum allows students to become analytical and divergent thinkers as well as creative and practical problem solvers. For example, when studying the grade 8 unit on American history, gifted learners were given "big ideas" to work with that allowed them to collaborate, discuss, debate, research, write a script, and then put on a three day "First Constitutional Convention Simulation."</p>	
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<p><b>d.</b> The differentiated curriculum facilitates development of ethical standards, positive self-concepts, sensitivity and responsibility to others, and contributions to society.</p> <p>d. The District's curriculum is dedicated to the development of productive, contributing citizens. Lifelong learning, sense of responsibility, self-esteem, valuing of diversity, and positive social interactions are characteristics of such a citizen and are emphasized within the context of high academic standards throughout our program. By providing true peers through cluster grouping in middle school, children also experience less isolation during this sensitive growth period and feel validation of their self-worth. As Carol Tomlinson said at the CAG conference, when speaking of the gifted child, "Each is on their own journey seeking their own personal balance and excellence; me becoming me, is not a competition."</p>		
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3:2 The differentiated curriculum for gifted students is supported by appropriate structures and resources		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> The differentiated curriculum is scheduled on a regular basis and is integral to the school day.</p> <p><b>a.</b> The program for gifted students is a regular, integral part of the student's entire school experience. Curriculum and instruction are modified to enrich and extend the core curriculum and differentiated learning is the daily experience for our gifted learners to meet their academic and intellectual potential. At the secondary level and at some of the elementary schools there are also lunch and after-school enrichment opportunities such as a virtual school for the gifted club, Math Counts, yearbook, trivia club, electronics club, and chess club.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The differentiated curriculum is taught with appropriate instructional models.</p> <p><b>b.</b> To enhance the learning experience, the teacher may employ different instructional models such as interest grouping, flexible grouping, or grouping by learning style preference. Math extensions are provided for units of study and as part of the clustering model, students take pre-tests to monitor initial ability. Cluster grouping of advanced learners in classrooms creates a supportive environment and facilitates appropriate differentiation strategies. Under the new Strategic Plan, the district will "improve our instructional practices to challenge every student by defining our common vision and philosophy by curriculum area" (A1.3).</p> <p><b>c.</b> The differentiated curriculum is supported by appropriate materials and technology.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Learning is encouraged and enhanced through student access to instructional materials, resources, and tools necessary for successful intellectual pursuit. Technology is readily available for research and other</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> The structured differentiated curriculum allows for the continuity and comprehensiveness of learning experiences in units and courses of study.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Frameworks based on the content standards have been developed to ensure continuity of the course of study. Teachers design units of study and extension activities that not only fulfill the requirements of these standards but also address the individual abilities and interests of the students. Flexible grouping in math by instructional level begins at the elementary level with expanded opportunities at grades 6-8 for all students to take algebra and for advanced learners to take geometry. For students of exceptional ability, cross-grade and other accelerated options are available to provide the rigor needed to keep these students engaged in the learning process. Curriculum content for these advanced classes is significantly differentiated for greater challenge, faster pace, and quantifiable higher expectations for student performance and work.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The differentiated curriculum utilizes a variety of teaching and learning patterns: large and small group instruction, homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping, teacher and student directed learning, and opportunities for independent study.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Differentiation is not just about <i>more</i> but is about <i>different</i>. It is not really a differentiated curriculum if it is interpreted to</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> The differentiated curriculum is planned both for groups of gifted learners within a grade level or class and for individual gifted learners.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Through a process called "kid-by-kid" administrators, teachers, and psychologists meet during the year to look at the whole child and discuss each student's individual talents, abilities and needs, and plan learning objectives for that student. Some schools use a Student Study Team process and parent/teacher conferences for teachers and parents to formulate both academic and personal goals for an individual GATE student. In our elementary schools, teachers also meet individually with parents for goal conferencing. At these conferences progress towards achieving and or exceeding grade level standards are discussed, as well as extensions and possible independent study projects. School Site Improvement Plans also address GATE and how instruction is to be differentiated for groups of gifted learners as well as the individual student.</p>

<p>extensions and is seen as a method of enhancing and expanding lessons. Students learn to integrate information from different sources while they are refining their technology skills. The differentiated curriculum is supported by the use of technology, including the Internet, Smart Boards, Hyper studio, Power Point, digital cameras, and videotaping. The District has provided professional development to staff in using technology to differentiate curriculum and assignments. Included in the new Strategic Plan, is a "focus on teacher and staff training on instructional practices (incorporating technology) to increase the breadth and depth of learning for all students" (A1.2).</p>	<p>mean gifted students are just given more assignments, after completing the required ones. The content, process, and product need to be distinctive. We consider that students have different learning styles, abilities, and interests and therefore utilize a variety of teaching patterns to provide the appropriate style of learning experience to meet the assessed needs of these students. As part of this differentiated curriculum, a teacher may incorporate a multitude of strategies such as homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping, student directed learning, different questioning techniques, cooperative groups, hands-on activities for exploration, and discussions that extract critical thinking. The District also offers several "choice" learning environments that may serve as an alternative for elementary gifted students. These include a Spanish Immersion program for grades K-5 and a Mandarin Immersion program for grades K-5 beginning in Sept., 2008; an alternative elementary school with multi-graded classes and a developmental approach that allows students to progress at their own rate; and an alternative structured elementary school that emphasizes acquisition of academic skills through direct instruction. Many of these programs are also available for gifted students at the middle school level. In addition, at the secondary level, gifted students are provided opportunities to work in small homogenous groups with intellectual peers, and for some gifted learners, opportunities to accelerate through advanced classes, honors classes, Advanced Placement classes and post-secondary education and</p>	
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	<p>independent study.</p> <p>c. An extensive range of resources ( including out of grade level print and non print materials) is available to augment differentiated curriculum and to supplement independent study opportunities for individual students.</p> <p>c. At all grade levels, teachers have been provided with resources, curriculum materials and tools to enable them to differentiate, enrich, and supplement the curriculum as well as provide for independent study. Extensions have been developed for the math units in grades K-6, and these materials are available to all teachers providing suggestions for compacting and enrichment. To provide additional independent study, the district has purchased the Renzulli Learning System which uses thousands of resources on the web and within their own database, allow gifted students to find enriching, and challenging opportunities in their specific areas of interest and choice. The District GATE office also circulates a collection of enrichment readers, fiction, and non-fiction titles selected on the basis of interest, complexity of content, and literary quality for use with highly able readers in grades 1-5. Instructional aides and an active community of volunteers share special knowledge or expertise as well as facilitate the ability of teachers to differentiate through small group work. Students also have access to an advanced library system at each school, including a site-certificated librarian, to provide them with a variety of research tools and technology.</p>	
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Section 4: Social and Emotional Development Districts establish and implement plans to support the social and emotional development of gifted learners to increase responsibility, self-awareness, and other issues of affective development. (EC 52212a1)

4:1 Actions to meet the affective needs of gifted students are ongoing.		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Teachers, parents, administrators, and counselors are provided with information and training regarding the characteristics of gifted learners and their related social and emotional development.</p> <p>a. The District's teaching and performance standards, which are part of the teacher evaluation process, require that teachers "address in a balanced program all areas of student development, including cognitive, social, personal and ethical development." The District endeavors to increase awareness of all school professionals and parents of the characteristics of gifted learners and their social-emotional development. At our October middle school GATE Advisory meeting, parents and members of the community were invited to hear Dr. Deborah Ruf discuss the social and emotional development of the gifted learner and at our March meeting, Jill Carroll discussed "Parenting the Gifted Teen." The California Association for the Gifted is also a continuing source of information and resources through its publications and training opportunities. Several staff members attended the CAG conference in February. As funds permit, staff will attend conferences about the characteristics and needs of the gifted. The District also informs teachers and parents through our Web site, newsletters, and other announcements about District meetings where pertinent topics are discussed.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Gifted students are provided awareness opportunities of career and college options and guidance consistent with their unique strengths. At the secondary level this includes mentoring and pre college opportunities.</p> <p>b. As part of our Strategic plan, one of the initiatives is to "improve guidance and counseling services that</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Teachers are trained and knowledgeable regarding social and emotional development of gifted students, and incorporate techniques to support affective learning in their classrooms.</p> <p>a. The training of teachers in the social and emotional development of gifted learners is incorporated into the District's professional development plan. The staff will continue to be provided with information to become more knowledgeable about the affective functioning of the gifted learner and strategies to support these needs in their classrooms.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Guidance and counseling services appropriate to the social and emotional needs of gifted students are provided by trained personnel. Referral services to community resources are made when appropriate.</p> <p>b. District psychologists and interns are assigned to each elementary school to support affective development at all levels. Each secondary school has a psychologist and a counselor for every 300 students. Psychologists and counseling staff also work closely with teaches to recognize symptoms of at-risk behavior and to implement intervention strategies. Counselors and psychologists are trained and skilled in referring students to outside community agencies when necessary.</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Ongoing counseling services by teachers, principals, and counselors are provided and documented as appropriate.</p> <p>a. Teachers and administrators provide counseling services and opportunities for students to enhance their self-awareness and other areas of affective development. Students at all levels participate in activities that explain and discourage sexual harassment and each school has a conflict resolution program, such as "Second Step", that provides diversity awareness and encourages respect for people with disabilities. Service learning opportunities are also available at all grade levels. These experiences develop students' ethical awareness, leadership skills, and sense of responsibility. Counselors are available at all levels to support the emotional needs of our students and document this support when appropriate.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Teachers and guidance personnel are trained to collaborate in implementing intervention strategies for at-risk gifted students. Intervention options can take place in school, at home or in the community.</p> <p>b. Teachers, counselors, and parents collaborate to plan and implement interventions for at-risk gifted students. The Student Study Team process that includes an administrator, teachers, psychologists, and counselors is designed to develop</p>



<p>prepare students for college and other post-secondary opportunities.” (A2.3). Gifted students are provided career and college information and support as they develop their unique strengths and interests. At the high school level, each student has the opportunity to develop a four-year plan leading to appropriate post-high school options. Students and families are given thorough information about preparation for college, including information about scholarships and financial aid. Knowledgeable staff in the school's College/Career center provides additional information and resources. Parental and community resources as well as student mentors are also used to enhance students’ knowledge of career opportunities.</p>		<p>intervention strategies for individual students that may include the home and /or an outside community resource.</p> <p>At our elementary schools, psychologists meet with individual and small groups of students to assist them with conflict resolution, social skills, and other adjustment problems. A community agency, Adolescent Counseling Services, in collaboration with the District, places interns at all the secondary sites to provide ongoing, supervised, individual, group, and family counseling as needed. These counselors also collaborate with the teachers to develop classroom intervention strategies to support these at-risk students.</p>
<p>4:2 At risk gifted students are monitored and provided support (e.g. underachievement, symptoms of depression, suicide, substance abuse).</p>		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Teachers are trained to recognize symptoms of at-risk behavior in gifted and talented students and to refer them to appropriate school personnel.</p> <p><b>a.</b> As part of the District's on-going professional development program, teachers receive training regarding appropriate responses to and interventions for at-risk behavior. Teachers can refer students to on-site psychologists and counselors who are knowledgeable about handling the social-emotional needs of students. Referral procedures are in place at all sites and easy for teachers to access.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Counselors and administrators are trained to make appropriate referrals to internal and external agencies when needed.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Psychologists, counselors, and administrators are trained to make referrals to internal or community-based organizations when needed. Counselors and psychologists make referrals to agencies such as Adolescent Counseling Service and Child Protective Services when required.</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> The district develops a plan for teachers to work in collaboration with guidance personnel regarding at-risk intervention strategies.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Gifted students experience problems, as do other students. When teachers, administrators and parents identify a student who they believe is experiencing social and/or emotional problems, they may refer the student to a Student Study Team. Teachers, administrators, guidance personnel, and parents attend these meetings. The purpose of the Student Study Team is to allow these professionals and parents to review information and concerns and then develop intervention strategies or accommodations for this at-risk student. Referrals to community resources are made when appropriate. The plan includes timelines for reporting progress and for revision. A case manager is assigned to ensure that the plan is being implemented</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> At risk gifted students are provided with specific guidance and counseling services that address the related issues and problems, and include development of an intervention plan.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Counselors, administrators, teachers, and parents collaborate to design intervention plans for at-risk gifted students. These procedures can include behavior contracts, additional assessments, the use of a peer or teacher mentor, and flexible scheduling. Built in to this procedure is a monitoring system to ensure its effectiveness. In addition, at-risk gifted students and families may be referred for outside counseling. Adolescent Counseling Services are available at no cost at the secondary level, and if warranted, the District can provide three free visits to an outside therapeutic provider for the student and family.</p>

<p>c. Gifted students considered at-risk receive counseling and support services and are not dropped from gifted programs because of related problems.</p> <p>c. Gifted students considered at-risk and/or under-achieving are not dropped from the GATE program because of related problems. They receive the same counseling and support services as any other at-risk student. Counselors and teachers work together to create individual intervention plans.</p> <p>d. Information and support are made available to parents regarding at-risk gifted students.</p> <p>d. Information to parents regarding at-risk gifted students is disseminated through GATE Advisory meetings, teacher-parent conferences, School Study Teams, and school newsletters. Parents are made aware of available counseling and other support services at each school. At a widely attended Gate Advisory Meeting in January, 2008, Dr. Frank Worrell Faculty Director of the Academic Talent Development Program at U.C. Berkeley, discussed the at-risk, unmotivated gifted learner.</p>	as written.	
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Section 5: Professional Development Districts provide professional development opportunities related to gifted education to administrators, teachers, and staff to support and improve educational opportunities for gifted students. (EC 52212a1)

5:1 The district provides professional development opportunities related to gifted learners on a regular basis.		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p>a. The professional development opportunities are correlated with defined competencies for teachers of the gifted and the standards for GATE programs. The focus each year is based on a yearly assessment of the needs of teachers and of the GATE program.</p> <p>a. The District's professional development plan, presented to the Board yearly as part of the District Strategic Work Plan, addresses the goals of the newly adopted Strategic plan. In this plan, the District has determined to "develop coherent professional</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p>a. The district encourages teachers to focus on gifted education as one of the areas of professional growth hours for credential renewal.</p> <p>a. Teachers are encouraged by the District to include differentiated instruction and GATE as part of their professional development plan. Teachers develop these plans in conjunction with and under the guidance and approval of their administrators. Over the last two years,</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p> <p>a. A district professional development plan to accommodate different levels of teacher competency is in place.</p> <p>a. Included in the Strategic plan, is an initiative that states that the district will "expand curricular, instructional, and assessment support, and staff training to increase the breadth and depth of learning for all students." (A1.2). Opportunities for</p>

<p>development content that supports the strategic initiatives" (B3.3). Based on the assessed needs of administrators, teachers and parents, some of the professional development will focus on differentiating instruction, particularly in the area of math. Professional development on differentiation includes helping teachers use math extensions linked to the standards and math units, and to better understand advanced math content in order to respond to the questions and inquiry of the gifted student. These ideas and techniques for differentiation are incorporated into the Elements of Instruction workshops that are provided for all teachers and administrators. Our professional development opportunities meet the needs of teachers at various levels by giving them choices to select the trainings that correlate with their specific level of expertise.</p> <p><b>b.</b> An evaluation of outcomes obtained from professional development is conducted to determine effectiveness. Results are used to make improvements and for future planning.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The District provides professional development opportunities related to gifted learners based on a needs assessment survey. This survey asks teachers and administrators to respond to questions regarding differentiating instruction, characteristics of gifted learners, and meeting the social/emotional needs of gifted students. After each District workshop, participants rate its effectiveness and offer suggestions to make improvements for future workshops. Decisions about future in-services are based on this information.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Individuals selected to conduct in-service for teachers of gifted learners have knowledge and expertise in the area of gifted education.</p> <p><b>c.</b> The District elementary GATE coordinator and the middle School GATE coordinator review the background and training of outside consultants to monitor the</p>	<p>there has begun a series of instructional workshops and lesson studies required for every District teacher focusing on differentiation in the context of reading, writing, math and science.</p> <p><b>b.</b> A district process to qualify teachers to teach gifted students is in place.</p> <p><b>b.</b> To qualify teachers to teach gifted students, the District provides professional development in differentiation, social/emotional needs, identification, and curriculum and instruction. Beginning and veteran teachers new to our District receive an orientation on GATE education. In addition, beginning teachers are coached specifically in how to work with GATE students through the use of specific tools designed for that purpose. One of these tools, the <i>Analysis of Student Work</i>, requests that teachers bring a set of student papers from a specific lesson. The GATE students are identified and their work is analyzed and then teachers go through a process of determining effective strategies and activities to challenge these students. The District is also exploring programs available from outside colleges and County agencies to certify staff in GATE education.</p>	<p>staff development related to gifted learners are based upon the varying needs and levels of competencies of the teachers. Our professional development includes training appropriate for novice teaches as well as the more experienced. Teachers who have not had training in GATE will attend introductory workshops where they will learn the basic concepts in gifted education, including differentiating for depth and complexity, and curriculum compacting. One of the formative assessment tools used with beginning teachers to prepare them to work with GATE students is a process entitled <i>Learning from Two Students</i>. As part of this process the beginning teacher identifies a GATE student and monitors his progress over the year. The BTSA Coach supports this teacher in identifying strategies and monitoring their effectiveness. More experienced teachers attend advanced workshops that take them to the next level in curriculum and instruction for the gifted learner. In October, the district brought in Susan Winebrenner, author of many books on the gifted, to provide professional development to our more experienced staff in differentiating curriculum in the classroom. Also, this fall, we piloted the Renzulli Learning System in one of our middle school and provided training for all of our staff. Next Fall, staff from all three middle schools will Receive professional development in the Renzulli Learning System.</p>
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<p>quality and value of our in-services. Within our District, some of our own personnel who are highly trained in the strategies of differentiation conduct workshops with our staff. The elementary math resource teachers have provided training to our elementary teachers on differentiation and the use of developed math extensions for GATE students. The District technology specialist has also provided professional development to support teachers in the use of technology to extend learning through enrichment activities and online resources.</p>		
<b>5:2 District personnel with direct decision-making and/or instructional responsibilities for gifted students are provided with role specific training.</b>		
<p><b>Minimum Standards: One year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> Teachers in the program have education and/or experience in teaching gifted students or are insured opportunities to gain or continue such knowledge and experience.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Staff has many opportunities to receive specialized training to teach advanced learners, including district workshops in differentiation, flexible grouping and pacing, curriculum compacting, and tiered instruction. Teachers are also kept informed of upcoming opportunities for staff development and conferences and are provided with current literature about relevant topics. In October, the district brought in Susan Winebrenner, author of many books on the gifted, to provide professional development to our staff in differentiating curriculum in the classroom. Under the new Strategic Plan, the district will “enhance professional development by focusing on skills for differentiated instruction and training on methods for teaching students with identified needs” (B3.3).</p> <p><b>b.</b> A coordinator is in place with experience and knowledge of gifted education or is ensured the opportunity to gain such knowledge.</p> <p><b>b.</b> There are three District level coordinators, one for</p>	<p><b>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The district promotes the concept of teacher-to-teacher professional development in addition to contracting experts to conduct an in-service.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Staff development through teacher-to-teacher coaching is a key component to every exemplary gifted program. By collaborating with peers, teachers have focused on best instructional practices for teaching advanced learners, the characteristics and needs of the gifted, and the GATE identification process, including multiple measures of assessment. As part of the BTSA program, new teachers are paired with more experienced teachers who serve as their coaches throughout their first two years. Some teachers have release time to make in-class observations of these mentor teachers who have been trained in gifted methodology as well as opportunities to observe exemplary gifted programs in other districts. The new Strategic Plan, states that the district “will create incentives and systems to promote coaching and mentoring among</p>	<p><b>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> All teachers assigned to teach gifted students are certified through a variety of formal and informal certificate programs.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Many of our professional development sessions reflect training in gifted education. Several of our staff attended the CAG conference and a continuous effort is made to make teachers and administrators aware of professional development opportunities offered by outside organizations that are concerned with GATE. Teachers are also encouraged to participate in CAG certification programs for gifted instructors, and as noted previously, we are currently looking into other outside programs for teacher GATE certification.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The coordinator of the program is a specialist in gifted education with demonstrated experience and knowledge in the field.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The District administrators who serve as the GATE elementary and middle School coordinators have expertise in gifted education, and take advantage of</p>

<p>the elementary and two for the middle school level. There are also site-based coordinators at each of the three middle schools and the high schools each have a site administrator who coordinates the GATE program. These individuals all have previous experience with GATE and are provided with extended opportunities for professional development in the field. The three District coordinators oversee the District's GATE program, including identification procedures, promoting staff development, assessing evaluation in-services, and working with the Board as representatives and advocates for the GATE program.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Administrators, counselors, and support staff participate in professional development offerings related specifically to their roles and responsibilities in the GATE program.</p> <p><b>d.</b> Administrators, counselors, and support staff are encouraged to participate with teachers in the ongoing professional development program related to gifted students.</p> <p><b>c.d.</b> Administrators, counselors, and support staff each have their own individual roles and responsibilities in our GATE program. Although each staff member needs to have a working knowledge of all areas of gifted education, our professional development is often delineated to focus on each staff's particular needs and job duties. Principals and teachers receive training on differentiation and other strategies related to gifted education, and counselors attend workshops designed specifically to provide them with information about the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Susan Winebreener has presented a session on Planning Differentiated Instruction, for all administrators, counselors, and secondary Instructional Supervisors. Principals, teachers, parents, and counselors also attend conferences and workshops together, which provide opportunities for collaboration across the levels of support.</p>	<p>teachers and we will consider building a system that involves staff more in designing and presenting professional development programs" (B3.4).</p>	<p>opportunities to further update and extend their knowledge and skills in order to offer effective leadership for the program. These coordinators have been trained in identification, curriculum and assessment. The Elementary GATE coordinator is also a certified Differentiation Trainer who has completed the training with Carolyn Chapman.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Follow-up classroom support for application of activities and strategies presented during in-service or professional development are planned.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Through our teacher coaching model and our BTSA program, strategies and skills learned at in-services and other professional development presentations are nurtured, applied, and further developed in the classroom.</p> <p><b>d.</b> The district identifies support personnel both inside and outside the district with expertise in meeting the needs of gifted learners.</p> <p><b>d.</b> Individuals selected to conduct training for teachers, such as Susan Winebrenner and Jill Carroll, have recognized knowledge and expertise in the area of gifted education. Local staff that provide workshops have all been previously trained through professional development opportunities. If teachers find that they need additional resources for meeting the needs of their gifted students they can work with their principal, math and literacy resource teachers, and the Director of Elementary Education (who is also the elementary GATE coordinator), to supply these needed resources.</p>
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Section 6: Parent & Community Involvement Districts provide procedures to ensure consistent participation of parents and community members in the planning and evaluation of programs for gifted students. (EC 52205 2f)

6:1 Open communication with parents and the community is maintained.		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Parents are informed of the district's criteria and procedures for identifying gifted and talented students as well as the program options and learning opportunities available. Translations are provided.</p> <p>a. Communication with parents is an essential component of our GATE program. Beginning with the screening process, letters are sent to parents explaining the District's criteria and procedures for identifying gifted and talented students and the learning opportunities available. This identification process as well as program options are also presented at our Gate Advisory meetings. Translations are provided in a continuing effort to further communication and qualify underrepresented populations. Parents are also invited to seek additional information, if needed, from the classroom teacher, school principal, and the district GATE coordinators</p> <p><b>b.</b> The district's state application is available to parents and the community.</p> <p>b. The District's GATE Plan (state application) and listings of the GATE staff and Advisory Committee members are made available to parents and the community on the District Web site. Parents will also be informed of the posting of the plan through school newsletters.</p> <p><b>c.</b> GATE parents are involved in the ongoing planning and evaluation of the GATE program.</p> <p>c. Parents, teachers, and administrators are all equal stakeholders in the success and advocacy of advanced learners. Through the District GATE Advisory Committees, parents are an integral part of the planning and evaluation of the GATE program. The</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> The district and/or school provide parents of students identified as gifted and talented with orientation and regular updates regarding the program and its implementation.</p> <p>a. An introductory letter is sent to all parents of newly identified GATE students. This letter fully explains how the District supports the gifted student and encourages parents to be involved. At our GATE Advisory meetings, parents are provided with information on the GATE program, the characteristics and social and emotional needs of the gifted, and updates on curriculum and resources. In addition, teachers are available at individual conferences and Back-to-School Night to answer questions and describe how they differentiate instruction for GATE students. GATE information is also available for parents through the District GATE brochure, and on the District Web site, including links to current research.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The products and achievements of gifted students are shared with parents in a variety of ways.</p> <p>b. All students need an opportunity to share their accomplishments with authentic audiences. Parents are informed of their individual student's rate of learning commensurate with the student's needs and assessed level. At the elementary level, students' literacy progress is assessed three times per year using a variety of reading assessments. Parents also receive standards-</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Parents are involved in the development of the application and/or school site plans related to GATE programs.</p> <p>a. Parents on the District GATE Advisory Committees are involved in the development of this State application. The GATE plan is also part of the District's LEAP (Local Education Agency Plan) and the Site Plans for each school. Parents on the GATE Advisory Committee review the GATE application, give input and serve as liaisons with the schools, communicating about the GATE plan and site programs with the PTA and the school community.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The talents of GATE parents and other community resources supplement the core and the differentiated curriculum.</p> <p>b. Parents are greatly involved in the instructional program in our schools. Parents help teachers to differentiate the curriculum by bringing in their special expertise, running book clubs, serving as art docents, working with small groups, and developing enrichment opportunities such a school gardens, Tech Challenge, Le Club Francais, Sign Language club, Stock Market Game Club, Hair on Fire Math Club, The National Geography Bee, and science fairs. At several elementary schools parent volunteers also coordinate the Junior Great Books program, which helps promotes critical thinking and problem solving skills.</p>

<p>district also holds focus groups to gather parents' input on the GATE program. GATE is also a component of each school's site plan and parents of GATE students are encouraged to serve on School Site Councils. Parents of GATE students are involved in textbook selection.</p>	<p>based report cards and attend parent-teacher conferences, all of which are excellent vehicles to share the products and achievement of the gifted student. The accomplishments of our gifted students are also shared by displaying student work throughout our schools, publishing it in school newspapers, sharing student portfolios with parents, and having students participate in science fairs, spelling, and geography bees.</p>	<p>c. Partnerships between the GATE program and business and community organizations are established. c. One of our new District goals is to "support the efforts of Partners in education, PTA, other community groups, and individual donors to augment existing district resources" (goal C1.3). Our District and schools have partnerships with community organizations and businesses that benefit all of our students. School personnel and parents have provided links to businesses and agencies in the community that have led to internships and mentorships for our gifted students with organizations such as Stanford Hospital and NASA. Several community organizations provide assistance to students as they pursue extended opportunities. Representatives from Stanford University and local businesses support out-of-school experiences such as industrial technology, robotics, and EPGY (Stanford University math program),</p>
<p>6:2 An active GATE advisory committee with parent involvement is supported by the district.</p>		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p>a. Parents participate in the district/site advisory committees. It is recommended that the committee meet at least three times a year. a. The GATE Advisory Committees are an active and involved organization in our school district. The elementary and middle school GATE Advisory Committees meet at least three – four times a year and include school administrators, principals, teachers, GATE coordinators and parent representatives. The meeting is chaired by the District GATE coordinators. The GATE Advisory information meetings are open to all members of the community. The GATE Advisory Committee's responsibilities includes reviewing the GATE application, encouraging dialogue</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p>a. A parent member of the GATE advisory committee cosigns the district's state application. a. The District GATE administrators met with the elementary and middle school GATE Advisory Committees and with the school Site Councils to review the proposed GATE plan and solicit parent input on the plan regarding any recommended suggestions and/or changes. A parent member of the GATE Advisory committee has co-signed this application, demonstrating the approval of the committee.</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p> <p>a. The parents of special needs students, such as gifted English language learners and gifted disabled students, participate in the district's GATE advisory committee. This may include special provisions such as changing meeting sites and times and providing transportation. a. Parents of special needs students participate on the GATE Advisory Committee. The District's elementary GATE coordinator is also the chair of the DELAC (District English Learners Advisory Committee). When accommodations are needed for testing or GATE evaluation, the appropriate translators are provided. Teachers are trained to look for gifted learners in all student</p>

<p>between staff and parents to improve current GATE programs, suggesting topics for presentations at upcoming meetings, sharing resources with parents, teachers, counselors and administrators, and disseminating information about the GATE program.</p> <p>b. The district GATE coordinator collaborates with the GATE advisory committee to provide parent education opportunities related to gifted education.</p> <p>b. The District administrators who coordinate the elementary and middle school GATE programs meet with the members of the GATE Advisory Committees to provide opportunities for parent education that includes workshops, conferences, and speakers as well as information about a variety of resources and programs for gifted students. This year, GATE parent meetings have included a prepared talk by Dr. Deborah Ruf on "Parenting the Gifted Child", a workshop given by Dr. Frank Worrell on "Motivating the Gifted Learner," and a presentation on "the Underachieving Gifted Child" by Jill Carroll. We have also presented enrichment opportunities, such as Odyssey of the Mind, technical and scientific opportunities, study abroad, Johns Hopkins summer camps, writing contests, and math competitions.</p> <p>c. Efforts are made to insure that representation of GATE parents on the GATE advisory committee reflect the demographics of the student population.</p> <p>c. The parents on the GATE Advisory Committees are representative of the diversity of our District's student population. The GATE Advisory Committees make every effort to communicate the goals and purposes of the committees through a variety of means that includes mailings, newsletters, Web site, and personal contacts.</p>	<p>b. Parents participate in the GATE advisory committee that meets on a regular basis.</p> <p>b. The elementary and middle school GATE Advisory Committees meet regularly and include parent participation. The role of this committee is to encourage dialogue between staff and parents on how to improve current GATE programs, and to make recommendations to program administrators about applications, identification criteria, plans, and budgets on an annual basis. The Committees also support and contribute to the GATE section of the District's Web site to continue to update community resources. In the Fall, at one of our middle school GATE Advisory Committee meetings, some classroom teachers made a multi-media presentation on differentiating the curriculum, so that parents could better understand how teachers are meeting the needs of their gifted students.</p> <p>c. GATE advisory committees and/or School Site Councils are regularly informed of current research and literature in gifted education.</p> <p>c. Some of the GATE Advisory Committee meetings are devoted to a prepared talk and/or discussion of current research and issues such as the emotional and social development of the gifted, differentiating instruction, and motivating the underachieving gifted learner. Parents are apprised of current literature in the field, encouraged to pursue research, and offered handouts on topics of interest. The GATE Advisory Committees and School Site Councils are also informed about conferences and programs offered by the California Association for the Gifted and other organizations associated with GATE education.</p>	<p>populations.</p> <p>To increase representation and participation of underrepresented populations at our GATE advisory committee meetings, transportation, translators and babysitting services are provided.</p>
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	<p><b>d.</b> The district GATE coordinator collaborates with the district GATE advisory committee to offer professional development opportunities to staff, parents, and community members related to gifted education.</p> <p><b>d.</b> The Director of Elementary Professional Development and Curriculum Support also serves as the Elementary GATE Coordinator. In collaboration with the District GATE Advisory Committees, she provides professional development opportunities about the gifted to staff, parents, and community members. This includes guest speakers, and local and regional workshops. The GATE Coordinators also make presentations to parents at School Site Council meetings, PTA meetings, and parent education nights.</p> <p><b>e.</b> The district GATE coordinator and the district</p> <p><b>e.</b> <i>See 6.1 b-Exemplary</i></p>	
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Section 7: Program Assessment Districts establish formal and informal evaluation methods and instruments that assess the gifted program and the performance of gifted students (which meets or exceeds state content standards). Results of data collected, including state standardized tests, are used to study the value and impact of the services provided and to improve gifted programs and gifted student performance. (EC 52212a1)

7:1 The district provides ongoing student and GATE program assessment that is consistent with the program's philosophy, goals, and standards.		
<p>Minimum Standards: One year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> All components of the program are periodically reviewed by individuals knowledgeable about gifted learners and who have competence in the evaluation process. The results are used for continuing program development.</p> <p><b>a.</b> The District GATE Coordinators who administer the review of the program are knowledgeable of current GATE philosophy, practice and evaluation. The Advisory Committees will review the GATE Plan annually to assess progress and outline future goals and tasks. Teachers,</p>	<p>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</p> <p><b>a.</b> Individuals planning and conducting the assessment activities have expertise in gifted education program evaluation.</p> <p><b>a.</b> The GATE Coordinators and District GATE personnel who all have expertise in gifted education have been trained to administer and monitor the different components of the assessment criteria. These professionals conduct individual assessments of gifted</p>	<p>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</p> <p>Criteria for levels of performance or rubrics are used for each assessment product, course, and/or grade level.</p> <p><b>a.</b> Teachers use a variety of assessments, including rubrics, performance-based tasks, and criterion-referenced tests at all grade levels. The math curriculum includes built-in performance assessments and all math extensions being written for each unit of study include pre-assessment materials. The</p>

<p>administrators and parents are given the opportunity through focus groups and surveys to review and provide input about GATE that is then used to evaluate and augment the program. This year at a series of meetings, all elementary principals discussed and reviewed the District's GATE plan in depth. Through surveys, students in grades 6-12 are also encouraged to provide feedback about their courses. This information is discussed and shaped into formal recommendations for program improvement and will be shared with the Superintendent and Board of Education.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The program assessment process is structured to measure the goals and standards of the program; instruments used are valid and reliable for their intended purpose.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The District carefully monitors the program's standards and the progress of GATE students. Each year, the District provides administrators and teachers with data identifying high performing students on state standardized tests in grades 2-11. They then use this information as well as information from other achievement tests, informal observations, and performance-based measures to assess the program's goals and identify students who may need accelerated content. In addition, disaggregated reports of STAR, ERB/WrAP and MARS results are sent to principals each year with an eye to students at risk for underachievement and to help identify under-achieving GATE students. At the middle school, students are given a math placement test at the end of each grade and may be placed in advanced math classes based upon this assessment and teacher and parent recommendation. The high school annually reviews the honors and advanced placement courses and exams to ensure that all students' needs are being met. High school students have opportunities to take the SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement exams. All of these allow students to compare their achievement with other high performing students in the State and nation.</p>	<p>students on a referral basis.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The program contains a clear description of performance expectations of gifted students defined at each grade level.</p> <p><b>b.</b> For each grade level we have a clear delineation of the goals and standards students are expected to meet. Many of our GATE students perform at the ceiling level on some of our assessments; therefore we look at additional measures of student performance at each grade level. Classroom performance, student products, and ongoing formal and informal oral and written assessments are used as evidence of how well the program is meeting the needs of the students. Portfolios are also used to compile evidence of student achievement over time that can be shared with parents and reviewers of the program.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Criteria for levels of performance or rubrics are used as part of the assessment process.</p> <p><b>c.</b> The District administers the ERB/WrAP in grades 4-8 and grade 10. The results of this writing sample are provided on a rubric scale of 1-6. Assessments such as these rubric results provide excellent feedback on specific skills, which helps teachers develop appropriate targeted instruction. Most secondary teachers evaluate student work using rubrics that measure the District Expected Student Learning Results (ESLRs). Eighth grade portfolios and senior projects are also evaluated using these rubrics.</p>	<p>writing rubric to assess elementary students in writing has six different levels of competency, the highest of which is labeled "Wow," describing writing far beyond grade level expectations.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The assessment report for all educational services involving gifted students includes both strengths and weaknesses of the program and is accompanied by a plan with implications for improvement and renewal over time.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The school's Single Plan for Student Achievement contains the assessment data and the process for evaluating and identifying both strengths and weaknesses of programs, along with plans for improvement. Also, as part of the Needs Assessment section of the District's LEAP, when areas of program weaknesses are identified, the District is required to redesign components of the program to improve student outcomes. The District and sites are responsive to parent satisfaction indicators in making decisions about programs and program revisions. Informal and formal feedback through surveys and parent conferences are important links to families who want to keep the schools informed of their expectations and their child's needs. One example of how we have strengthened our program from information we gathered from parents and the community can be seen at the secondary level. Based on numerous parent requests, we have upgraded our math program to better serve our highly gifted students at all elementary and middle schools.</p>
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<p>c. The district uses multiple, traditional and nontraditional strategies to assess student performance. These include standardized and criterion referenced achievement tests, questionnaires, and performance-based measures.</p> <p>c. Student progress and mastery of content is measured through multiple assessments including CAT6, CST, ERB/WRAP, MARS, and the k-5 early assessment portfolio. In addition we review classroom work, portfolios, and math and writing samples. Report cards are also standards based. These traditional and nontraditional tools are used to provide information with respect to students meeting and/or exceeding state core curriculum and standards.</p>	<p>d. The assessment process includes strategies that parallel the instruction as a means to collect information about student knowledge and capability. Strategies include student inquiry, collaboration, and reflection</p> <p>d. The structure of the learning environment, although somewhat varied from site to site, is designed to meet the needs of gifted students. These needs are met through an emphasis on differentiation of the curriculum as the delivery model, including strategies such as inquiry and reflection. Many of the assessments are performance-based in that they require students to write, reflect, present, or explain authentic products. To foster this model, our District's teacher evaluation process includes the observation and discussion of lessons specifically focused on the differentiation of instruction. Teachers also have access to pre-assessment tools for the purpose of compacting the curriculum as appropriate.</p> <p>e. The results of the program assessment are presented to the local Board of Education and accessible to all constituencies of the program.</p> <p>e. Each year, the District disaggregates achievement data for all students, including GATE students, to the Superintendent and Board of Education, as well as to our professional staff and community. This data and the plans for assessment and improvement are also part of the Needs Assessment section of the District's LEAP as required by No Child Left Behind.</p>	<p>c. Districts allocate time, financial support, and personnel to conduct regular and systematic formative and summative program assessment.</p> <p>c. District personnel time and financial support is allocated to conducting and overseeing GATE program assessments, developing and writing the GATE plan, creating resources and curriculum materials for gifted students, and working with the staff on identifying GATE students.</p>
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	<p>f.. Districts provide sufficient resources to fund program assessment.</p> <p>f. The assessment program outlined above is part of the regular District assessment program and is fully funded at the District level. The District has a Director of Assessment to ensure that our data is collated, analyzed, and disseminated to our staff, parents, and community.</p>	
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Section 8: Budgets District budgets for gifted programs support and provide for all the components of the district's GATE program and meet the related standards. (EC 52209, 52212a1,2,3)

8:1 The district GATE budget is directly related to the GATE program objectives with appropriate allocations.		
<p><b>Minimum Standards: One year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> GATE funds and/or funding sources are used to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• professional development</li> <li>• direct student services</li> <li>• district level coordination</li> <li>• GATE student identification process</li> </ul> <p>a. The current District GATE allocation from the State is \$92,000. GATE funds are used for direct support for teachers and students. The elementary funds provide for professional development, including workshops, conferences, summer institutes, consultants, and new curriculum development. GATE funds are also used to provide direct student services including materials, supplies, equipment, and resources to support the differentiated curriculum for gifted students. The middle school allocation also provides stipends for the site GATE Coordinators. The high school allocation is used to purchase supplemental instructional materials for Advanced Placement courses. The District does not use GATE funds to subsidize the Office of Curriculum and Instruction or the District Coordinators that oversee the</p>	<p><b>Commendable Standards: Two year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> Allocation for the GATE coordinator, regardless of funding source, reflects the scope and complexities of the district's size and GATE plan.</p> <p>a. At the elementary level, our GATE Coordinator is the Director of Elementary Education. By having this person serve as the GATE Coordinator it helps to create a comprehensive vision and facilitates the implementation of a differentiated instructional plan for all students.</p> <p>At the middle school level, there are two District Coordinators, including the Director of Secondary Education as well as a GATE Coordinator at each site who supports the needed functions of the GATE plan. The two high schools each have an administrator who monitors the GATE program and represents GATE at School Site Council meetings.</p>	<p><b>Exemplary Standards: Three year approval</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> The district encourages fiscal collaboration between categorical programs in order to make it possible for gifted students to benefit from more than one categorical program.</p> <p>a. The District supports fiscal collaboration of funds in all categorical programs towards meeting the goals of the GATE plan. Through this collaboration we provide the best possible services for our students. For example, some No Child Left Behind Title II Part `A funds are used to support staff development related to differentiation of curriculum and instruction.</p>

<p>GATE program.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Expenditures of state GATE funds supplement, not supplant, district funds spent on gifted learners.</p> <p><b>c.</b> There is a budget allocation for district GATE coordination by a single individual on a full or part time basis. When appropriate site coordinators should be included in the budget.</p> <p>b. c. GATE funds are not used to subsidize the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, which oversees the GATE program, but are used only for direct support for teachers and students. These funds are used to support the GATE program in a variety of ways, including stipends for site GATE coordinators, identification, materials, supplies, after school programs, conferences, and release time and personnel for training in gifted education. School Site Councils and the PTAs also help fund opportunities for gifted and talented students, by purchasing books for special programs or by providing funds for a lunchtime or an after school enrichment programs. Teachers have also received grants from the Palo Alto Foundation for Education to purchase materials for advanced students</p> <p><b>d.</b> Carry-over monies are minimal and maintained within the district GATE accounts.</p> <p><b>e.</b> Indirect costs do not exceed state limitations.</p> <p>d. e. District carryover monies are minimal and are maintained within the central office accounts. Each site also has a discretionary GATE budget. At the end of the year any carryover funds from these budgets revert to the District GATE budget for reallocation. The indirect costs do not exceed the state limitations of 3%.</p>		
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## APPENDIX I

# 2008-09 GATE PROGRAM EVALUATION

### 1. REVIEW OF STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS:

Planning and Use of Test Results In the spring of each school year all PAUSD students in grades 2-11 take the STAR battery of tests. PAUSD also administers a writing test (the Education Records Bureau's Writing Assessment Program, ERB WrAP) districtwide to all students in grades 4-8 and 10. Summaries of these test results by year, school, and grade level for all students and for various groups of students including GATE identified students, are distributed and discussed with each school's principal and staff in August in preparation of the school's Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA, formerly the School Site Plan). The SPSA includes the District Strategic Goals under the categories of Reading, Writing, Math, School Climate and Meeting the Needs of All Students. Within that last category, site strategies and school improvement activities are evaluated from the prior year's SPSA and specified for the current school year for Title I students, Special Needs students, English Learners and GATE students.

In addition, assessment results are produced, distributed and discussed: (1) as class lists and ranked lists, which include multiple years of individual student test scores, as well as program participation and demographics; (2) as matching scores by student year-over-year, individually and in summary form by school, grade level and for various groups of students; and (3) within PAUSD's Kid-by-kid process where teachers are released from the classroom to individually discuss the progress of each student with their principal.

Summary of Test Results In 2005-06, PAUSD had 1,061 Gate identified students; in 2006-07, 1,042; and in 2007-08, 1,084. Because the STAR tests are not administered until spring, there are no STAR results for the current program year, 2007-08. In addition, since grade 12 does not participate in STAR testing, the results from 2005-06 and 2006-07 total 818 students and 881 students who were STAR tested, respectively, from grades 4-11.

GATE students substantially out score the overall District population of students. The 2006-07 STAR results for GATE students and for all students districtwide are not substantially different from 2005-06, and the considerably higher achievement of GATE students does not substantially vary from grade level to grade level. The 2006-07 STAR test results are summarized in the following bullets:

- On the English Language Arts California Standards Test (CST), GATE students in grades 4-11 (totaling 881 students) averaged 94% Advanced and 6% Proficient; all students districtwide, grades 4-11 (totaling 6,474 students), averaged 60% Advanced and 25% Proficient.
- On the Mathematics CST, GATE students in grades 4-7 (totaling 253 students) averaged 94% Advanced and 6% Proficient; all students districtwide, grades 4-7 (totaling 3,216 students), averaged 57% Advanced and 30% Proficient.
- For grade 8, 90% of the GATE students (119 students) took Algebra I, with 80% scoring Advanced and 19% Proficient ; 53% of grade 8 students districtwide (425 students) took Algebra I, averaging 57% Advanced and 30% Proficient.

Additionally 8 GATE students took Geometry; and 8 GATE students took Intro to Algebra- nearly all the GATE students in both of these subjects scored Advanced, specific breakdowns are not appropriate when there are fewer than 10 students.

- On the Science CSTs, which all students take at grades 5, 8 and 10, 340 GATE students averaged 80% Advanced and 20% Proficient; 2,387 students districtwide averaged 50% Advanced and 31% Proficient.
- The Biology CST is another STAR test that nearly all students take (99% of the GATE students and 89% of all students districtwide in grade 10) with GATE students averaging 85% Advanced and 14% proficient; all students averaging 50% Advanced and 30% Proficient.

The ERB WrAP is nationally recognized writing test, which provides standards-based and norm-referenced assessment results (NRARs). Norm-referenced assessment results are summarized by stanines showing the percentages of students above, at and below grade level. The ERB WrAP is primarily used by independent and suburban schools (similar to PAUSD), so the “norm” is essentially a “college prep” level.

- The 2006-07 results, for GATE students in grades 4-8 and 10 (583 students), showed 69% above, 29% at and 2% below grade level. For students districtwide, grades 4-8 and 10 (4,040 students), the results showed 32% above, 53% at and 15% below grade level.
- The ERB WrAP results are used along side the CST results as part of the multiple measures for school site planning and individual Kid-by-kid analyses. In addition, the ERB WrAP tests are returned to the classroom teacher and shared (with the scoring rubric) with students for instructional purposes.

## **2. REVIEW OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE GATE PROGRAM:**

### **ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER, PARENT AND STUDENT SURVEYS AND /OR INTERVIEWS**

Teacher and student survey information is gathered annually at the end of the school year. The most recent surveys, completed in April 2008, were given to 300 of our GATE students and 100 of our teachers. Survey return rates were approximately 45% for students and teachers. This year the District ran focus groups for elementary and middle school parents to provide a forum for them to provide feedback and identify specific needs of the GATE program. Survey results and focus group discussions are used to guide the district in determining the GATE program strengths, as well as to inform improvements and future goals of the program. Parent feedback indicated that parents generally agreed that teachers are working hard to differentiate instruction and assignments and that “some really amazing things are happening in the classroom”, but that it is still very teacher specific, with some teacher’s more skillful at differentiating than others. They felt that differentiation was more “visible” in the elementary classrooms than at the middle school and that there was definitely some flexible grouping occurring, particularly in the area of math. Parents stated that their students had assignments which allowed for creativity and choice in the finished product, but less than half of the parents agreed that their student was sufficiently challenged by the differentiated curriculum and had frequent opportunities to work with other students of similar abilities in the classroom. Parents wanted to see their students spending more

time working with other high achieving students on challenging projects and were most concerned that we deliver appropriate challenge to engage all of our gifted students.

Elementary parents expressed

concern that not all teachers were consistently using pre-assessment information to compact units. Both elementary and middle school parents strongly agreed that their child's social-emotional needs were supported in the classroom.

When we reviewed the student surveys, 63% found the classroom challenging and stated that they were given "different assignments" and 38% agreed that they did some work in small groups with other high achieving students. Student satisfaction with the GATE Program rose as students moved from elementary to middle school, and on to high school.

Among teachers, the professional development topic of the most interest was furthering their skills and strategies in differentiation, particularly in math, and the motivation of the underperforming GATE student. The teachers who participated in the survey expressed strong interest in learning about how to better serve GATE students, but also indicated a concern regarding the amount of time it takes to differentiate the curriculum and homework assignments.

With the information from the surveys and focus groups, program offerings are developed, adjusted and refined as needed to be responsible to the needs of the GATE population.

#### **ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DISTRICT'S REFERRAL AND IDENTIFICATION METHODS**

##### **➤ ANALYSIS OF GATE STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS DATA COMPARED TO DISTRICT STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

An analysis of the demographics of the students identified for GATE compared to the district's total population demonstrated the district's need to increase the representation of Hispanic and African American students in the program. The Palo-Alto Unified School District will continue to seek ways to expand representation and participation in the GATE program of students from economically disadvantaged and varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In order to increase the number of underrepresented minorities in the GATE program, the district uses multiple assessments to identify students, and if a student does not qualify through any of the assessments, avenues exist through teacher recommendation and/or parent recommendation to identify a student as GATE. The district is also tracking the percentage of English Learners identified as GATE. Currently 11% of our total student population are English Learners, and the district has made steady progress in including out English Learners in the GATE program. This year, 28% of our identified GATE students are English Learners.

##### **➤ ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA FOR GATE STUDENTS COMPARED TO DATA FOR DISTRICT STUDENTS**

There are 6 GATE students receiving free or reduced-priced meals in the district which is a total of less than 1% of our GATE population. In the district as a whole 7% of our total enrollment receive free or reduced-priced meals.



### **3. PROCEDURES FOR MODIFYING THE DISTRICT GATE PROGRAM BASED ON THE ANNUAL REVIEW(S):**

#### **SECTION 1: PROGRAM DESIGN**

##### **GATE Program Strengths**

- Long history of knowledgeable teachers and administrators who have participated in professional development workshops and classes to learn strategies for differentiating curriculum for GATE students.
- Administrators, teachers, and parents collaborate in developing, implementing, and monitoring the GATE program and ensure that students participating in PAUSD's GATE program have access to opportunities that will lead to acquiring new skills and understandings at the level of their abilities and potential.
- Our classroom grouping strategies for GATE students are designed to provide effective differentiation of curriculum and instruction, interaction with intellectual peers, and continuity of learning within and across grade levels. Strategies within the differentiated instruction include curriculum compacting, cluster grouping and when appropriate, acceleration.
- Program currently has three District GATE Coordinators, as well as a site GATE Coordinator for each middle school who facilitate program activities, student identification, and parent/staff communication.

##### **Gate Program Needs**

- A mid-year review of each site's GATE program by the GATE Advisory Committees.
- To further implement programs that support the challenge of GATE students during the regular school day, increase GATE students' opportunities to work with other students of similar abilities in the classroom, as well as provide enrichment that supports the social-emotional development of GATE students.

##### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Increase communication with parents regarding the GATE identification process.
- Support teacher collaboration time to analyze data, modify instruction, and plan for differentiation and/or appropriate interventions and enrichment for gifted students.
- Beginning in 2008-09, a District office administrator will have greater responsibility for directing the district's GATE program, including greater management of the yearly eligibility testing and parent notification process, and providing staff and parent support.

#### **SECTION 2: IDENTIFICATION**

##### **GATE Program Strengths**

- There is an ongoing focus on increasing identification of under-represented minority students through professional development for teachers and administrators.
- The GATE Advisory committee continues to update the GATE identification criteria to include recent research on successful strategies for identifying culturally and linguistically diverse students.

- Each year, a GATE testing coordinator assesses all 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6th grade students for GATE eligibility using multiple assessment measures.
- Opportunities are available for students to self-refer and be evaluated for GATE multiple times in their school career.
- Referrals are encouraged from teachers and parents, as well as the presentation of a portfolio of a student's work, when appropriate.
- During the school year, there are multiple opportunities for parents interested in learning more about the GATE program and its identification process.

#### **GATE Program Needs**

- A continuing effort to ensure that students in the GATE program reflect the diversity of the district.
- Continue to increase the number of students of color in the GATE program to more closely align to district demographics.

#### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Work with teachers to identify students from underrepresented minorities with potential for qualifying as gifted.
- Increase the use of the Student Study Team to support students in the GATE program who are struggling academically or socially.

### **SECTION 3: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

#### **GATE Program Strengths**

- Highly qualified, experienced teachers, knowledgeable about differentiation, depth, complexity, novelty, acceleration, and compacting.
- The focused application of differentiated teaching strategies to better extend curricular content and understanding for all GATE students.
- Extending the depth and complexity of a lesson through critical thinking, creativity, research techniques, and problem-solving.
- GATE curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for each grade level. All sites have funds to purchase GATE materials to supplement the core curriculum.

#### **GATE Program Needs**

- Increased opportunities for grade level teachers to collaborate on "best practices" related to the teaching and support of GATE students.
- More staff development is needed to assist all teachers in further differentiating the curriculum for GATE students.

#### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Create a district wide bank of teacher-developed exemplary lessons and differentiated strategies for access by all district teachers.
- Increase the availability of resources and lesson models to GATE teachers.
- Implement the Renzulli Learning Systems at the three Middle schools to provide activities and projects for extending and expanding the curriculum for GATE students.

## **SECTION 4: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- Multiple funding sources contribute to provide services to GATE students dealing with social, health, and character awareness.
- The site counselors, and as appropriate, the district psychologist and Adolescent Counseling Services, support GATE students.
- At-risk GATE students are referred to Student Success Teams to discuss and identify needs and services.
- Workshops have been given for teachers and parents in dealing with the social and emotional development and needs of the gifted child.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- Provide counselors, administrators, teachers, and parents further time to collaborate to design intervention plans for at-risk gifted students.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Provide additional in-service and training opportunities and printed resources for parents regarding appropriate responses to and interventions for, at-risk behavior.
- Provide speakers and resources for staff, parents and community members regarding how to address the needs of the underachieving GATE student.

## **SECTION 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- The District has determined to focus the professional development on differentiating instruction, particularly in the area of math. Professional development on differentiation includes helping teachers use math extensions linked to the standards and math units, and to better understand advanced math content in order to respond to the questions and inquiry of the gifted student.
- Teachers and GATE coordinators have access to staff development within and beyond the district as well as national conferences focused on GATE students and differentiated learning.
- GATE Coordinators maintain involvement and contact with CAG and its resources. Coordinators also provide information regarding upcoming conferences, workshops, and trainings on GATE students and instruction.
- Some teachers attend the annual CAG (California Association for the Gifted) and are updated on current best practices in Gifted Education.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- Solicit from GATE staff and parents topics of interest for future staff development and training and GATE parent Advisory Committee meetings.
- Provide a yearly calendar of all GATE staff development and training opportunities.
- Continue to build differentiation skills among teachers through training, workshops, dialogue and observation opportunities.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Include information and training on GATE strategies in staff meetings and teacher team meetings
- Continue to offer attendance at the CAG Conference each year. Participate in

trainings offered by the County Office of Education in gifted education.

- Provide information to teachers at staff meetings and in newsletters on best practices in gifted education.
- Provide a variety of teacher trainings to enhance the implementation of differentiation within the classroom.
- Increase the number of certified GATE teachers working in the district.

## **SECTION 6: PARENT AND COMMUNITY**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- Timely, widely distributed information about the GATE program and identification process throughout the district.
- Use of district Website, ENEWS, school newsletters and parent meetings to inform all members of the community of options for involvement in GATE program throughout the year, opportunities to further their understand of the GATE student, and scheduled GATE Advisory Committee meetings.
- Active elementary and middle school GATE Advisory Committee that meets quarterly.
- GATE website that provides current research updates.
- Yearly student and teacher surveys and parent focus groups, to provide feedback and evaluative information to help in the planning of the GATE program.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- Teachers who have the skills and experience teaching GATE students to mentor less experienced teachers.
- Expand local and community speakers as guest presenters and program participants at Advisory meetings.
- Regularly update the GATE section of the district website to provide more comprehensive information for parents on the GATE website, including translations.
- Recruit additional parents for the GATE Advisory Committee, particularly those who speak English as a second language and those who have dual-identified students (gifted and special needs).

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Increase the number of parents involved in the development and revision of the GATE Plan.
- Increase attendance at Advisory Committee meetings and build participation that reflects the diverse cultural and linguistic demographics of the district.
- The GATE Coordinators will encourage additional attendance at the GATE Advisory Committee meetings by recruiting parents who have students with needs such as English as a Second Language or special needs.
- Arrange for translation of GATE web page materials into Spanish.

## **Section 7: Program Assessment**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- Formative and summative assessment result information shapes the evaluation of the GATE program. Formal and informal feedback is sought from teachers and site administrators, students, the parents of students in the GATE program, members of the District GATE Advisory Committee and central office administrators responsible for monitoring and support the GATE program.
- Instruments used to assess our program effectiveness are valid and reliable. The district uses multiple, traditional and nontraditional strategies to assess student performance.
- Program assessment results are available at the district office for parents and staff.
- Student progress is assessed by ongoing benchmark assessment, multiple measures assessment, student progress reports, grade reports, Standards master assessment, STAR test results, and by meetings throughout the school year with classroom teachers and parents. State STAR results are also disaggregated by group to evaluate our GATE program.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- Provide site-specific feedback and updates on GATE program to all district sites.
- District will gather more data from parents, teachers and students about student academic progress.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Design a user-friendly feedback form for parents and students for each GATE activity participated in with the goal to use such feedback to review and revise those activities.
- Increase parent involvement in the evaluation of the GATE program throughout the district.
- Implement a formal evaluation process for administrators
- Expand collection of data on GATE student academic progress and make it more available to teachers

## **SECTION 8: BUDGET**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- District budget for gifted program supports and provides for all the components of the district's GATE program and meets the related standards.
- Input is sought from GATE Coordinators, administrators, teachers and parents during the development of the GATE budget.
- GATE instruction and activities are also supported through other resources such as Title II (staff development), Title V (Innovative Programs) and the Director of Special Programs' budget, including special education where appropriate. GATE funds and/ or funding sources are used for: professional development; direct student services; instructional materials; GATE student identification process; and a stipend for middle school GATE site coordinators.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- Increase time of district GATE Coordinator to better address and monitor GATE programs at each school.

- Use GATE funds to best meet the needs of GATE students including teacher release days, conferences, workshops, summer institutes, collaboration time, materials related to professional development, and consultants.

**GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Coordinate GATE funding support with other district funding resources
- Continue to work with sites to increase their knowledge of the district GATE plan and the funding needed to support its implementation.