

Piedmont

GIFTED PARENT SUPPORT

G • P • S

October, 2010

Superintendent Constance Hubbard
Dr. David Roth, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
Members of the GATE Advisory Committee
Piedmont Unified School District
760 Magnolia Ave
Piedmont, CA 94611

Dear Superintendent Hubbard, Dr. Roth, and GATE advisory committee members,

Piedmont GPS was formed 2 years ago for families with gifted children in the Piedmont Unified School District. Among our goals is to help the Piedmont School District support gifted students at every level. We hope to do this through education, advocacy, and fund-raising. Our members are frequent participants at district GATE and site council meetings.

In September, our group sponsored a workshop for the community “Understanding What Giftedness Is...And What It Is Not: Characteristics of Gifted Children”, recently submitted a workshop proposal to the California Association for the Gifted Annual Conference for February 2011 in Palm Springs, CA “Lessons Learned: What has worked and not worked in meeting the needs of gifted in a small public school district.” and raised funds to offer the PUSD grants to help with the implementation of the GATE program.

Like last spring, we are making the following proposals for continued improvement:

1. Our group would like to see consistent implementation and communication of existing GATE policies and programs involving staff, teachers, and student families.
2. Ensure that GATE funds are used to benefit GATE students during the regular school day and not before/after school activities.
3. Increase the number of GATE-certified teachers at every school site. At a minimum, make sure that at least one teacher per grade at each school site is certified. Ask GATE-certified teachers to lead in-house seminars or coach peers on collaboration days.

4. Refine and earlier GATE identification in elementary school. Earlier identification will increase appropriate learning opportunities for the students, and help avoid mislabeling gifted students. It will also improve parent and teacher/PUSD collaboration at the critical early stage of elementary school.

5. Implement Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model: Cluster GATE-identified students together within regular classes at every grade level following best practices to serve the learning needs of gifted students that delivers consistent curriculum compacting and differentiation opportunities without major budget implications.

6. Create a simple, brief written plan for each GATE identified student. The written plan will document agreed-upon educational goals and list principal activities to meet those goals for the school year. It will help with teacher/parent understanding and communication on what is being done for the GATE students.

We've tried to make these recommendations specific, reasonable, and actionable. If you have any questions, please contact Kathleen Crombie, President of Piedmont GPS, at piedmontgps@me.com. We welcome discussion and your feedback on our recommendations. We appreciate all your efforts and look forward to an ongoing, productive relationship.

Regards,

Piedmont GPS (Gifted Parent Support) Board Members:

Kathleen Crombie, Jon Elliott, Catherine Ogle, Virginia O'Rourke, Elizabeth Shook, Alison Feldman, Lisa Joyce, Leshia Manley, Julia Fenske, Eliza and Douglas Chin, and Emily Chen,

cc: PUSD School Board Members