

Batavia Unit District 101 Challenge Program Evaluation

A Report to the District 101 Board of Education

Submitted by Dr. Jan Wright and the Challenge Program Evaluation Committee

January 2008

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Part One: Introduction

The Federal Definition of Gifted and Talented in NCLB (US) The term “gifted and talented”, when used with respect to students, children, or youth, means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.(Title IX, Part A, Section 9101(22), p. 544)

The purpose of this report is to communicate the results of an 18-month program evaluation of the district Challenge program conducted by a committee of administrators, teachers, and parents. This program evaluation consisted of analyzing student demographic data, student achievement data, program process data, and perception data solicited from parents, teachers, students, and administrators. This introductory section will provide background information about admission into the Challenge program and the curriculum, instruction, and assessment utilized in the program. Subsequent sections will provide information on existing research regarding gifted programs, the evaluation process used by the committee, the results of the data analysis, and conclusions and recommendations developed by the committee.

The Challenge program has existed in Batavia for at least twenty years. Until 2001 it was a pull out program for children in grades three through eight, identified for general giftedness in all areas. These students were pulled from their classrooms one hour per week and given higher level instruction in the form of problem solving, critical or creative thinking, and logical reasoning. The instruction was not connected to their curriculum and children had to make up the work they missed while they attended Challenge classes.

In 2001, it was decided that the Challenge program needed revision. Identifying students specifically for giftedness in math or verbal/ language arts skills was a more productive approach to meeting students’ needs. Additional teachers would be hired to increase services to these students to two hours per week. The curriculum needed to connect to the content of the instruction being provided by the classroom teacher. Teachers were surveyed and it was determined that there was a need to increase rigor in mathematics, and language arts skills would be developed by differentiating instruction in the classroom.

In 2001, a five-year plan was approved by administration to continue to increase services to gifted students. By 2007 a full time gifted specialist would be in each of the elementary schools, two teachers would be at the middle school, and one teacher would work at the high school. These teachers would be responsible for a replacement program in both mathematics and language arts/interdisciplinary for gifted children.

The state partially funded gifted programs in Illinois through the 2002-2003. Beginning in the 2003-2004 school year, funding for school districts no longer earmarked money for gifted programs. This lack of funding and the economic effects of 9/11 resulted in the postponing of the five year gifted plan in Batavia. As a result, since 2002, there has been a half-time gifted teacher in each elementary building.

Program Purpose

The Federal definition of a gifted student informs Batavia School District that there should be a special program designed to develop those capacities. Gifted students are ones who will excel when their learning environment is modified to meet those learning needs. The purpose of the Challenge program is to provide an academic environment, specifically in mathematics and literacy to give these students opportunities that stimulate and challenge their natural abilities.

Program Components

The Challenge program consists of four teachers who teach at the elementary level and one teacher who is both the teacher at the middle school and the director of the program. At present there are two components to the academic program. The first, mathematics, is a replacement program. That is, children identified with learning needs in math are placed in a separate classroom with a Challenge teacher and taught a curriculum designed to meet their needs. The second, Interdisciplinary, is based on high literacy ability, in which children are offered services through an enrichment program. That is, their classroom teachers are responsible for instruction but there are some opportunities for students to work with the gifted teachers in reading, writing, social studies or science.

Admission Process

An extensive identification process begins in the spring of a child's second grade year to determine students who are academically talented in math. The students' Cognitive Abilities Test scores are collected from district records and students who show high quantitative scores of 125 or above are placed in a pool for consideration for admittance to the program in math. These students are additionally given two other tests to gather data to support initial screening, the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test and the Test of Mathematical Ability and Giftedness. Teacher recommendation based on completion of a student profile checklist is also part of this process. Each student's scores are recorded on a matrix and students with highest scores above the cut score are identified for Challenge math.

The identification process for Interdisciplinary students requires students to score 125 on the verbal portion of the Cognitive Abilities Test. This process is less complex because the Challenge teachers provide enrichment, not replacement instruction. This year, children in second grade were not identified into the Challenge program as interdisciplinary students as we do not have enough teachers to work with them on a regular basis.

Parents receive letters in the spring of their children's second grade year as to whether their child qualifies or does not qualify for Challenge services. Parents of children who need Challenge services are invited to attend a meeting in the spring in which the programs goals, curriculum and guidelines are outlined. At this time they meet the Challenge teachers their students will have going into third grade math.

Students are admitted initially on a nine-week trial basis. If the student is not successful in these nine weeks, there is an exit procedure that is followed, which includes a conference with the child's teacher, parents, and building administrator. If this group determines that the student

should not remain in the program, the student returns to the regular classroom to continue math instruction with the classroom teacher.

Testing of students in grades three through five occurs in the spring of each year. Children who have not qualified in second grade may be reconsidered with further testing completed in the spring of their third, fourth or fifth grade school year. If they qualify, they receive notice by mail and begin the Challenge program the following fall. New students to the district are screened when they enroll in Batavia schools to determine if they need placement in the Challenge program. Testing of these students occurs in the fall.

Scheduling

The students in the elementary math program follow the schedule of their classroom teacher and when math is instructed in their classroom, they leave their classroom to receive instruction by the Challenge teacher. Due to the tight scheduling of the Challenge teachers, these students may receive 45 minutes to an hour less direct math instruction per week as compared to their peers in the regular classroom.

Interdisciplinary students are scheduled based on a flexible schedule. They may not receive specific weekly instruction due to the overcrowded schedule of the Challenge teachers, but teachers attempt to instruct them an average of 30 to 45 minutes per week over a year's time.

Challenge students in the middle school continue the progress began in elementary grades. Math students are placed in advanced math classes with teachers qualified to instruct them at a higher level and at a more rigorous pace than the regular classroom students. Interdisciplinary students are randomly placed on teams in 6th through 8th grade. The Challenge teacher at the middle school meets with teams of teachers and plans lessons with teachers in each grade or pulls students from their regular classrooms for instruction in language arts or social studies. She meets with fourteen teams of teachers two to three times a year to plan lessons. If students are pulled to work together with the Challenge teacher, they may be scheduled for one day to perhaps three week lessons.

At this time the Challenge teacher at the middle school is also responsible three periods a day for teaching regular math students, not identified for Challenge services. These students are placed with the Challenge teacher when there are more than thirty students identified Challenge students. If the Challenge math group exceeds thirty, two sections of students are created, one with only Challenge students and one with a mixture of Challenge and non-Challenge students. Both classes have an enrollment of about 30 students, similar to any middle school class size. The class with the mixture of students is separated into two groups with the Non-Challenge students being taught by the Challenge teacher.

Curriculum and Instruction

The *Everyday Mathematics* series is used at the elementary level for math instruction. Students are placed in the series, one year above grade level beginning in 3rd grade. Additional rigor is provided by extension lessons that broaden the concepts taught. The program allows for accelerated pace and lateral deepening of skills and concepts. Application of skills in the form of problem solving and real life math scenarios are embedded into the curriculum.

Interdisciplinary curriculum has not been standardized in the district. Students may read Great Books, complete critical thinking activities, do research projects, or read and analyze higher level novels. Instruction design is based on classroom teacher requests at the different buildings.

At the middle school level, math students are one year above grade level and take pre-algebra in 6th grade, algebra in 7th, and intermediate algebra in 8th. There are two series used at this level, McDougall Littell in 6th and Glencoe in 7th and 8th.

Interdisciplinary students in the middle school are given instruction based on classroom teacher request. Students may be grouped to read a higher level novel than their classmates or complete the novel at a faster pace, incorporating complex analysis or higher level thinking skills. Highly gifted students in writing may work with the Challenge teacher to improve and enhance their writing talent. Students who have a strong background in a particular historic time period have an opportunity to research the topic in depth by being pulled from their classrooms for a period of time. Students who comprehend concepts at a faster pace with less repetition may be grouped to extend their knowledge by being intellectually stimulated by others with the same needs.

Various supplemental learning situations are scheduled for the higher ability students. Students may participate in the Continental Math Competition, Word Masters Challenge, District 101 5th Grade Math Competition, IMSA Junior High Math Competition, and various writing contests sponsored by local organizations.

Identified Challenge students in high school have opportunities to take higher level honors classes and advanced placement courses that are designed with added rigor. Students are encouraged by their counselors and teachers in middle school to register for more difficult coursework in high school, but the choice of classes is dependent on the students' interest and motivation.

Teacher Qualifications

Besides having a strong background in mathematics instruction, teachers in the Challenge program must be verified in gifted education. They must have taken the Gifted Level I and II course, an additional course in gifted education, and have previous experience in teaching gifted students. It is expected that Challenge teachers continue to expand their knowledge of gifted children with ongoing coursework and participation in professional conferences.

Part Two: Current Research

The Challenge Committee read the book *Best Practices in Gifted Education* (2006, Robinson, Shore, and Enerson). This text discusses 29 practices which parents and schools can implement in the raising and schooling of gifted children. These recommended practices are verified by extensive educational research and systematic inquiry. Several copies of this book are available for review within our school district.

The following “Best Practices” from the text are recommended for use in Batavia homes, classrooms, and schools and should be an important component of gifted programming.

Home

1. Parent Involvement

There is strong evidence in the research to suggest that parental involvement in their child’s education leads to positive results. To use this evidence, there must be strong team-like relationships between parents and teachers. Parents need to be informed and educated about the services available to their students, how to access them, and how to support these services at home. (p. 10)

2. Social Emotional Adjustment and Peer Relations

There are unique stresses and dynamic issues associated with being gifted. It is important to consider all dimensions of a gifted child’s life to determine the best way to nurture and educate the child. It is important to provide appropriate challenge, skills to deal with stress management, skills in basic social interaction, and preventive and crisis counseling. (p. 21)

3. Students Who Are Twice Exceptional

Students with special talents, as well as specific disabilities, are referred to as twice exceptional. Many times students with disabilities are not appropriately identified as being gifted as well. Identification procedures need to include assessments that have been adapted for specific impairments. When these assessments are used, a student’s performance needs to be compared against other students with similar disabilities. (p. 30)

4. Gender Differences

Gender differences among gifted students are less pronounced than in the general population. However, it is important that educators remain sensitive to these issues to maintain equity for all children. Ensuring that equally high expectations are provided for both boys and girls can make a difference. (p. 42)

5. Developing Specific Talents

Parents should be attuned to the interests of their children and allow these interests to be explored. As talents develop, children “need outlets to try out or display those talents through performance, exhibition, or publication.” (p. 48) These outlets may be provided both in and outside of the school setting.

6. Early Literacy Experiences for Precocious Readers

“Parents and teachers should support literacy development in talented children who are emerging readers through environments and interactions that motivate, stimulate, and instruct at an appropriate level and pace.” (p. 56)

7. Mentors and Mentorships

Evidence is emerging that long-term informal mentorships are more effective than formal, short-term programs. Students can benefit from the social interaction as well as

the intellectual interaction. Because school-based mentorships are almost always formal, it is important that parents provide opportunities for their child to network with adults in and outside the family unit to provide social and intellectual experiences that perhaps the parent cannot provide. (p. 63)

8. University-Based Programs

Many times parents turn to university programs to provide challenge, cultivate interests, and develop friendships for their children. Colleges and universities provide an array of options for students who are not yet of college age. It is important for school personnel to communicate these opportunities to parents. (p. 73)

Classroom:

1. Encouraging Creativity

There is agreement in the field of gifted education that creativity should be developed in children. Unfortunately, creativity can also be repressed and eventually lost without purposeful encouragement.(p. 79)

2. Multiple Intelligences

Many Batavia teachers have been trained in the implementation of Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences. This theory has a strong place in gifted education in considering children’s abilities and diversity, implementing curriculum innovations, enhancing learning opportunities in the inclusive classroom, and in identifying and defining giftedness. (p. 96)

3. Higher Level Thinking

Gifted programming must be based upon curricula that provides opportunities and instruction in complex and deep-thinking, specifically: “critical thinking, creative thinking, problem finding and solving, metacognition, domain-specific patterns and forward reasoning, correlational reasoning, reflective inquiry, inquiry and investigation, dialectical thinking skills,... and Socratic discussion.” “Questioning should be created for memory, divergence, convergence, aesthetics, and ethics.” (p. 104)

4. Inquiry-Based Learning and Teaching

“Research on inquiry-based learning so far points to its being effective in classrooms across ability levels to varying degrees, and that it can be taught by teachers experienced in teaching students to ask inquiry-related questions and facilitating small group interaction.” “...inquiry can be given special expression in differentiated programming for highly-able pupils.” (p. 113-114)

5. Compacting the Curriculum

“As much as 50% of the general curriculum can be eliminated for high-ability elementary students in the regular classroom with no differences in achievement test scores in reading, mathematics concepts, and social studies, even when students are tested at one grade level above class placement.” (p. 117) “Especially for high-ability students in heterogeneous classrooms, compacting alters the curricula to avoid rehashing already mastered material.” (p. 188)

6. Flexible Grouping

Research indicates that incorporating various types of grouping in the elementary classroom promotes achievement, especially in mathematics and reading. These benefits were positive for both the gifted as well as the average and low ability child. Types of flexible groupings include: "...pull-out programs, cooperative learning in the heterogeneous classroom, and cluster grouping of talented students in a grade-level classroom..." (p. 123)

7. Instructional Technology

"There is increasing evidence that (technology) can play a role in enhancing inquiry-driven learning, especially since the advent of the Internet. It is not proven, however, that such technology is necessary for intellectual skills to flourish..." (p. 133) It seems that technology is currently not being used to its full potential in developing thinking abilities. "We do not yet know how and to what extent its use should be differentiated for use with gifted students...It is a rich field for research in the years ahead." (p. 134)

8. Using Primary Sources in History

Gifted students thrive and complex learning occurs when students are given the opportunity to analyze primary sources. They benefit from thinking and writing as historians. "Talented students must be taught explicitly about the use of evidence and how to corroborate, source, and contextualize documents." (p. 139)

9. Language Arts Instruction

Gifted students benefit from inquiry-based, interdisciplinary units which integrate the language arts. They need complex topics, problems and issues for reading, writing, speaking, and listening opportunities. Classic and contemporary literature should be used as reading and discussion materials. (p. 150-151) For consideration, a newer area of language arts gifted instruction is the identification of gifted children who do not speak English as their primary language.

10. Reading Instruction

"To support and broaden their reading, talented readers need early individualized assessment, skill instruction based on that assessment, and many opportunities to read a variety of literary genres." (p. 155)

11. Science in the Classroom

"Research in science education suggests that a curriculum based on in-depth understanding of science concepts and 'new science' standards that focus on an investigatory rather than a more traditional approach best develops the talents, interests, and motivation to do science in the real world for talented learners." (p. 163)

School:

1. Mathematics Curriculum

Gifted math students are defined as more than children who can quickly and accurately compute. Other areas include problem solving, inventing representations for

mathematical ideas, and using technology to induce and prove conjectures. (p. 173)
Math for gifted students must be broad in scope. It must connect math to students' life experiences and empower students to use math in a variety of settings. (p. 174)

2. Arts in the Curriculum

“Education in the arts has the potential for developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills, self-confidence in one’s expressive abilities, communication, work ethic, and appreciation for cultural uniqueness and contributions to society, a specific literacy, and perhaps a lifelong vocation or avocation.” (p. 191) “Despite the inclusion of the arts in the U.S. Department of Education’s definition of gifted and talented and a core subject in the No Child Left Behind Act...few schools....require artistic abilities to be assessed...” (p. 191)

3. Learning Multiple Languages

“For the verbally talented student, an in-depth, coordinated language curriculum should introduce the study of a second language early. Facility in more than one language enriches leadership opportunities in careers that rely on cross-cultural understanding and communication.” (p. 201)

4. Career Education

Career education is of strong interest to gifted teenage students. It assists them in making difficult academic, extracurricular, and social-emotional choices. (p. 207)

5. School Programs

Schools can implement a number of programs to meet the needs of the gifted or talented student. These options include: enrichment, differentiated curriculum, individualization, special classes, academic competitions, extra school experiences, special schools, and programs that target specific populations. (pp. 217-220)

6. Acceleration

“Talented students who are accelerated achieve more than their equally talented age-mates who are not.” (p. 223) Acceleration does not necessarily mean skipping grades. Forms of acceleration can include: early admissions, grade advancement, fast-paced classes, early college entrance, and advanced placement as acceleration. “Despite the research evidence supporting the practice of acceleration, it is used very conservatively in schools.” (p. 229) Reasons for this may include concerns regarding the child’s social-emotional needs and discomfort of school personnel with the idea of grade skipping.

7. Multiple Criteria for Identification

“The literature strongly advocates that using multiple criteria for identification is a desirable practice in general and is especially useful to overcome the underrepresentation of minority students in gifted and talented programs.” (p. 235)

8. Developing Talents in Culturally Diverse Learners

Our schools are becoming more culturally diverse. We must identify alternative ways to discover the “...various cultural perspectives and practices that affect students’ and families’ approach to learning, school, and giftedness.” (p. 247)

9. Promising Learning From Low-Income Backgrounds

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2004, one out of every five children in the U.S. are born into poverty. Unfortunately, the methods used to assess giftedness do not usually work in favor of these children. Schools and policy makers often make inaccurate assumptions about these students' potential for academic success. However, "...evidence suggests that low-income promising learners have resiliency and the ability to succeed under the stressful conditions of poverty and low expectations. Furthermore, programs and services that are of sufficient intensity and duration and that take into account family circumstances can increase achievement and ultimately leverage these learners into a successful learning trajectory." (pp. 255-256)

10. Professional Development for Teachers

"Perhaps there is no intervention more completely researched and confirmed in the field of education than the efficacy of teacher preparation and professional development." (p. 263). When teachers have professional preparation, "...they are more sensitive to the needs of gifted children, have more strategies to use to meet these needs, and provide more avenues to success for the students." (p. 263)

In their 2004 report, *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students*, Templeton University researchers reviewed research developed over the last 50 years on the impacts of acceleration for academically talented students. According to the report, research continually demonstrates the positive impacts of acceleration. However, "the educational establishment, especially at the elementary and middle school levels, remains skeptical based on the implications of ruined scope and sequence charts and ungrounded fears of hampering healthy social-emotional adjustment." (p. ix) The Templeton report addresses this current situation by tackling misconceptions about acceleration and dispelling their impact through research and examples of effective practice.

Results from meta-analytic research¹ on the effects of acceleration on academic achievement shows that bright students almost always benefit from accelerated instruction. These students usually score at least one grade level higher than their same-age peers who were not accelerated, and they score as well as older non-accelerated classmates. The results also show that other methods of instruction for gifted students are less effective than acceleration.

The effects of acceleration on social-emotional aspects are less consistent. However, it is clear that accelerated students are more likely to aspire to advanced degrees and that acceleration does not deprive students the ability to participate in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. The results also show that acceleration may cause a slight readjustment in a student's assessment of self. Bright students may have a lower level of self-esteem when taught more challenging material with their intellectual peers. This drop in self-acceptance may be short-lived, but teachers should be prepared to support students when moved to accelerated classes.

In 1998, the National Association for Gifted Children developed and released the *Pre-K – 12 Gifted Program Standards* to assist schools districts in examining the quality of their

¹ A research method in which data is collected from all previous research on a particular topic to analyze the combined results.

programming for gifted learners. The standards detail a framework that includes both minimum and exemplary standards divided into seven criterion areas: program design, program administration and management, student identification, curriculum and instruction, social-emotional guidance and counseling, professional development, and program evaluation. The guiding principles for these standards are located in Appendix A of this report. The program evaluation committee conducted a self-assessment of our Challenge program using these standards. The results of that self-assessment are discussed in section four of this report.

Part Three: Evaluation Process

In September of 2006, Dr. Jan Wright, the Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, solicited teachers and administrators to be members of the Challenge Program Evaluation Committee. In the fall of 2007, three parents, who have children in the program, joined the committee. The committee met approximately once per month with tasks delegated to various members between meetings. The goal of the committee in the first year of its function was to collect four types of data – demographic, achievement, program process, and perceptions – to answer questions about the district Challenge program.

Questions to be answered were solicited from various stakeholders in the district and community – teachers, principals, parents, Board members, and community members. These stakeholders were asked to answer the question: What questions they would like to have answered by the district Challenge program evaluation? Hundreds of questions were obtained from these various stakeholders with a high participation rate from all groups. The committee sifted through these questions eliminating duplicates and questions that were beyond the scope of the evaluation. The questions were then categorized into the four types: demographic, achievement, program process, and perceptions.

It was determined that student demographic and achievement questions could be answered by integrating information from our district student database (SASI) and available assessment data. The following student demographic data were collected:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- School
- Free/Reduced Lunch
- Special Education
- Limited English Proficient

The following assessment data were collected and analyzed for the mathematics program:

- Measures of Academic Progress – all tests administered in the spring in grades two, three, five and eight.
 - Overall Mathematics RIT Score
 - Mathematics Goal RIT Scores (Computation, Number Sense, Geometry, Measurement, Probability/Statistics, Algebra, and Problem Solving)
- Illinois Standards Achievement Test – administered in the spring for grades three, five, and eight.
 - Mathematics Standard Score
 - Mathematics Strand Scores (Computation and Number Sense, Algebraic Patterns, Algebraic Relationships, Geometric Concepts, Geometric Relationships, Measurement, Data Analysis, and Probability)

The following assessment data were collected and analyzed for the interdisciplinary program:

- Measures of Academic Progress – all tests administered in the spring in grades two, three, five and eight.

- Overall Reading RIT Score
- Reading Goal RIT Scores (Word Analysis, Literal Comprehension, Interpretive Comprehension, Evaluative Comprehension, and Literary Analysis)
- Illinois Standards Achievement Test – administered in the spring for grades three, five, and eight.
 - Reading Standard Score
 - Reading Strand Scores (Comprehension Literary Works, Comprehension, Information Sources, Strategies Explicit Ideas, Strategies Inferences from Text, Vocabulary, and Word Analysis)

The data were entered into statistical analysis software to determine if any relationships existed among the student demographics and the achievement data.

In addition to comparisons among demographic groups, comparisons were made between students in the Challenge program and those not in the program. To create a comparable non-Challenge group, students were selected based on the grade two MAP scores. Grade two math scores were ranked in descending order. The lowest score obtained by a Challenge math student was identified. Any student who did not qualify for the Challenge math program but scored at that level or higher was placed in the non-Challenge math group to make achievement comparisons with those students who did qualify for the program. The same procedure was used with the grade two MAP reading scores to create a non-Challenge interdisciplinary group.

Questions categorized as program process questions were generally those inquiring about the identification of students for the program, how the program is administered, curriculum and instruction, and how the program is funded. These questions required no additional research and are answered primarily in section one.

To answer questions pertaining to the opinions of parents, teachers, and administrators, the committee developed a parent survey (see Appendix B), a classroom teacher survey (see Appendix C) and an administrator survey (see Appendix D). The data from these surveys were entered into statistical analysis software to determine perceptions of the Challenge program. Additionally, the open-ended questions on the surveys were analyzed to identify any themes.

Upon completion of the statistical analysis of the data, the committee interpreted the results and developed conclusions and recommendations for program improvement. The next section outlines the results of all statistical analysis.

Part Four: Evaluation Results

This section of the report will outline the results of the Challenge program evaluation. The results are categorized by demographic data, cost analysis, achievement data, staff perception data, and parent perception data. In this section, the facts of the data will be presented without conclusions unless a programmatic explanation exists. Conclusions drawn from the data will be presented in Part Five.

Demographic Data

Demographic data was collected to determine the characteristics of the typical Challenge student. Table 1 displays gender and ethnic characteristics of these students, as well as the general population that was present in District 101 schools from 2002 to 2006. There have been a disproportionate number of males than females in the math program, but an appropriate proportion in the interdisciplinary program. In addition, there have been a disproportionate number of white students in both programs than the other ethnicities.

	Gender		Ethnicity					
	Female	Male	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Multi-racial
Math (n= 274)	37.6%	62.4%	96.4%	0	0.7%	2.2%	0	0.7%
Interdisciplinary (n=153)	42.5%	57.5%	93.5%	0	2.6%	2.6%	0	1.3%
General Population (n=1972)	49.8%	50.2%	85.3%	2.5%	8.2%	2.5%	0.2%	1.4%

Table 1. Gender and ethnicity of Challenge students.

Table 2 shows that there have been very few special education, limited English proficient, and low income students in both programs.

	Special Education	Limited English Proficient	Low Income
Math (n= 274)	1.1%	0	0.4%
Interdisciplinary (n= 153)	2.0%	0	0.7%
General Population (n= 1972)	12.6%	4.8%	5.9%

Table 2. Percent of Challenge students in special programs.

The percent of students in both programs enrolled in each elementary school is displayed in Table 3. The largest percent of students are enrolled at Alice Gustafson School.

	Alice Gustafson	Grace McWayne	H.C. Storm	Hoover-Wood	J.B. Nelson	Louise White
Math (n= 274)	24.9%	19.8%	16.1%	11.4%	13.9%	13.9%
Interdisciplinary (n= 153)	22.9%	17.0%	17.0%	19.7%	15.9%	13.3%
General Population (n= 1972)	15.7%	18.2%	14.4%	19.0%	15.2%	17.4%

Table 3. Percent of Challenge students in each elementary school.

Table 4 shows the number of students enrolled in both Challenge programs for each cohort of students. The 2010-2012 cohorts were the first group of students accelerated in mathematics in the 2002-2003 school year. Therefore, the 2012 cohort was the first group to be accelerated throughout their entire elementary and middle school experience.

Cohort (graduation year)	Current Grade	Number of Mathematics Students	Number of Interdisciplinary Students
2010	10	44	22
2011	9	31	17
2012	8	32	14
2013	7	37	12
2014	6	45	33
2015	5	51	29
2016	4	34	26

Table 4. Number of Challenge students in each cohort.

Cost Analysis

Over the last five years, the Challenge program has cost the district about 1.4 million dollars. Figure 1 shows the total cost for each fiscal year from 2003 to 2007. These costs include salaries and benefits, supplies, and purchased services. Figure 2 shows the percent spent in each of these budget categories. The largest proportion of expenses for the program is salaries and benefits with 98.1% of the budget spent in this category.

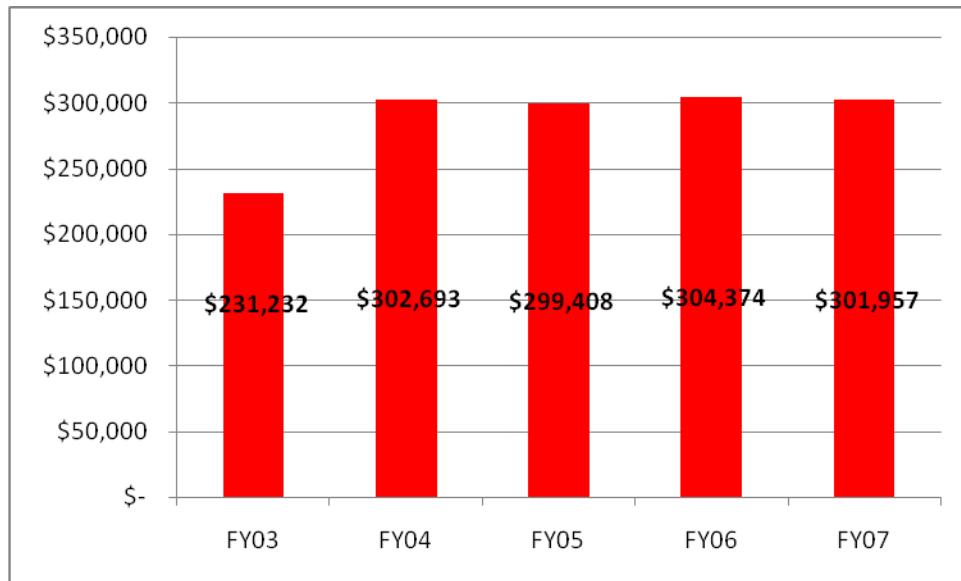


Figure 1. Total cost of the Challenge program for the last five fiscal years.

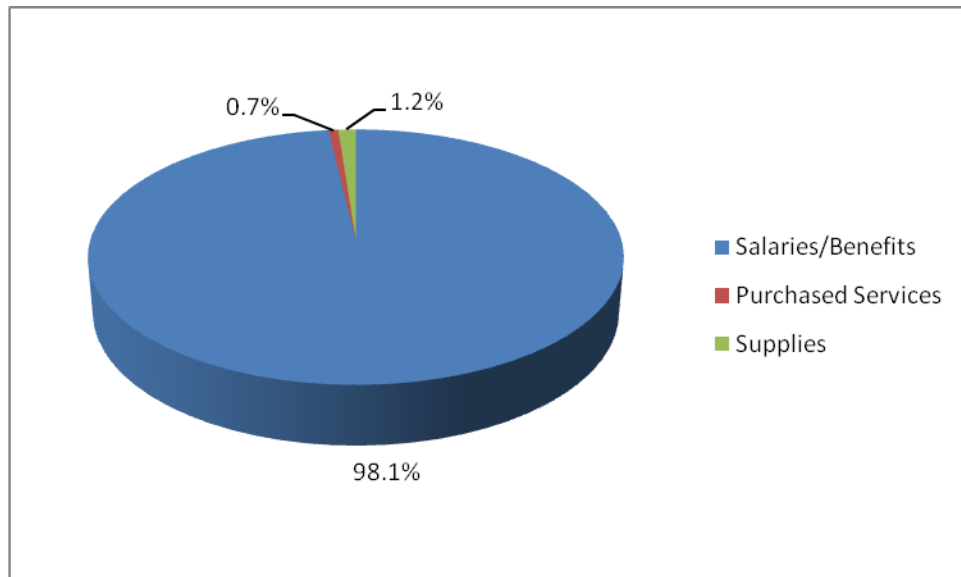


Figure 2. Percent of the total cost of the program dedicated to each type of expense.

In the last fiscal year of state funding for gifted education, FY03, the district received about \$58,000 which was used to offset teacher salaries. Since then, there has been no funding for gifted education from federal or state revenue sources.

Achievement Data

The committee was able to gather achievement data from two sources: Measures of Academic Progress and Illinois Standards Achievement Test. Due to the nature of these assessments and the grade levels in which they are administered, data was not available for all students each year. Table 5 outlines the available data for each cohort at the time of the evaluation. As the results of these measures are reported in the remainder of this section, the grade two MAP results include an aggregation of Cohorts 2013 to 2016. The grade 3 MAP results represent an aggregation of Cohorts 2012 to 2016. The grade 5 MAP results represent all students in cohorts 2011 to 2014 and grade 8 MAP results represent only Cohorts 2010 and 2011. A similar process was used with ISAT as outlines in the table.

Cohort	MAP					ISAT						
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
2010				8				5			8	
2011		5			8				5			8
2012	3		5					3		5		
2013	2	3		5					3		5	
2014		2	3		5					3		5
2015			2	3							3	
2016				2	3							3

Table 5. Available assessment data for each cohort. Numbers represent the grade level the assessment was administered.

Mathematics Program Achievement Results

Figures 3 and 4 display the achievement results of students in the math Challenge program on ISAT and MAP. One hundred percent of the Challenge students met or exceeded state standards on the ISAT and 100% met or exceeded district standards on the MAP. The expectation would be that all students would exceed standards on these two assessments. Results from both assessments show that there is a decrease in the percent of students exceeding from grade 3 to grade 5. However, there is an increase, to almost the same level as grade 3, between grade 5 and 8. According to Sandra Watkins, associate professor at Western Illinois University, this is the same pattern that emerged from her study of ISAT scores from across the state for testing years 2000 to 2006.

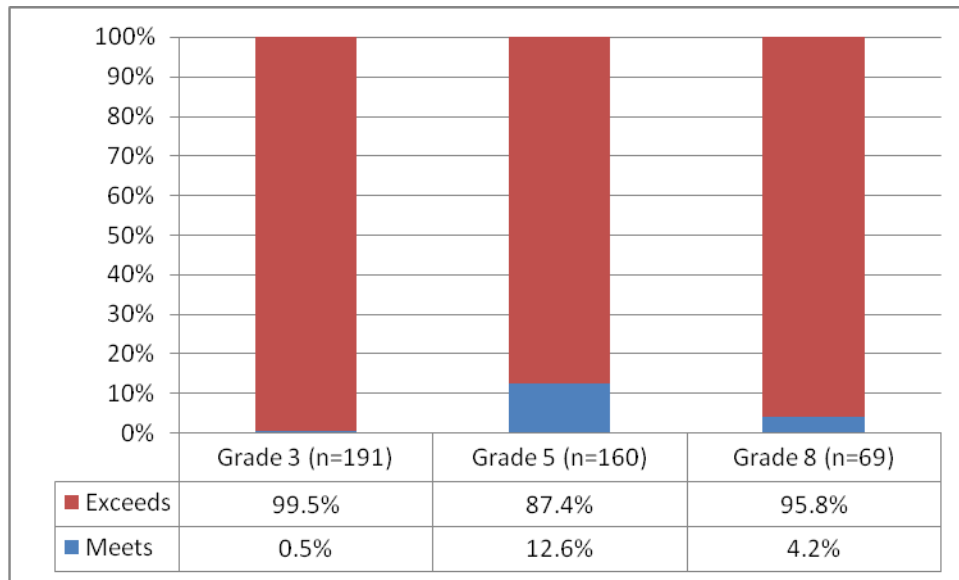


Figure 3. Percent of Challenge students meeting and exceeding state standards in math on the ISAT.

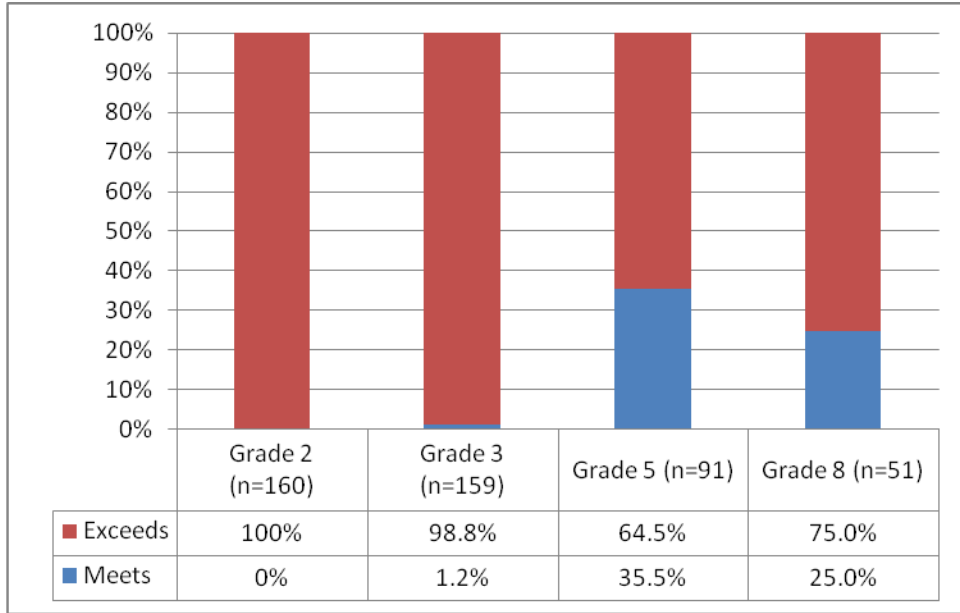


Figure 4. Percent of students meeting and exceeding district standards in math on the MAP.

Demographic Comparisons

Figures 5 and 6 display the percent of males and females exceeding state standards in math on the ISAT and the percent exceeding district standards on the MAP. There is no statistically significant difference between the academic achievement of males and females on these two assessments.

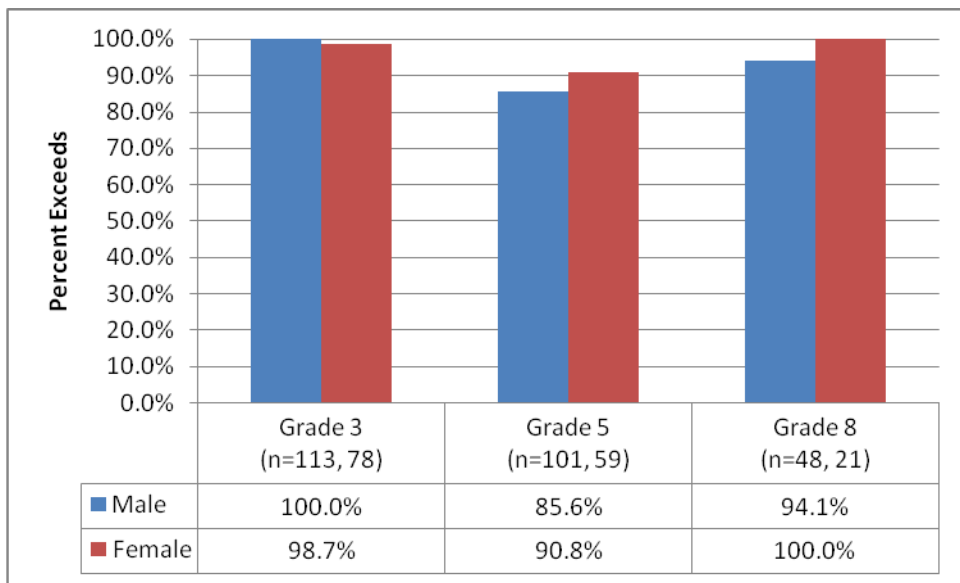


Figure 5. Percent of male and female Challenge students exceeding state standards in math on the ISAT. No differences are statistically significant.

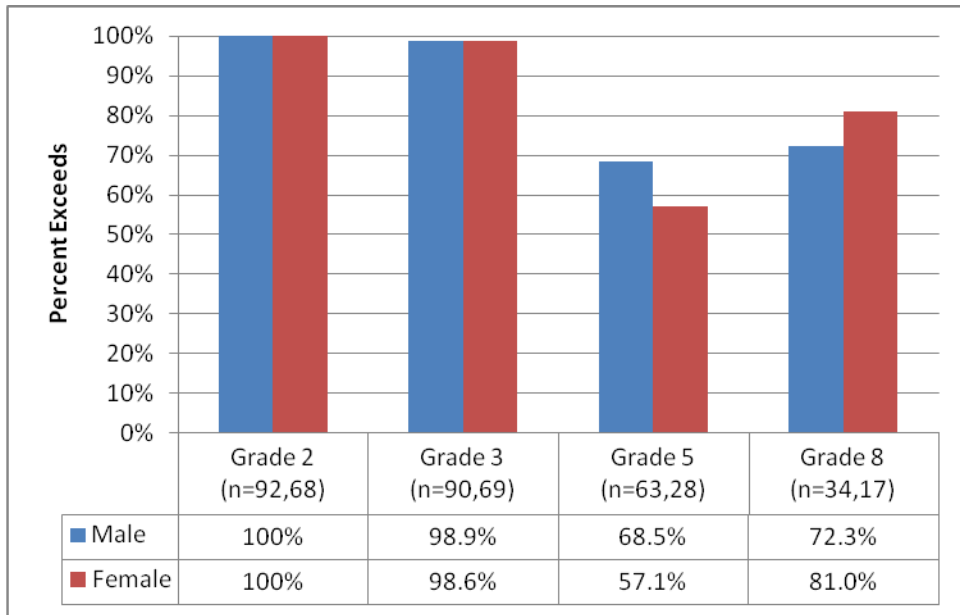


Figure 6. Percent of male and female Challenge students exceeding district standards in math on the MAP. No differences are statistically significant.

Figures 7 and 8 display the percent of students exceeding state standards on the ISAT and district standards on the MAP in each ethnic group. There are no statistically significant differences in academic achievement between ethnic groups.

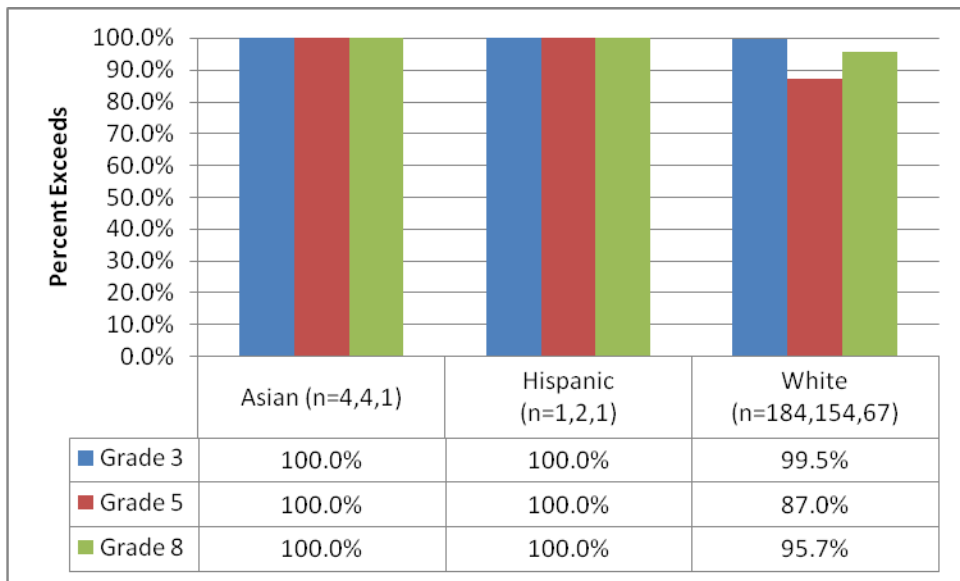


Figure 7. Percent of Challenge students exceeding state standards in math on the ISAT by ethnic group. No differences are statistically significant.

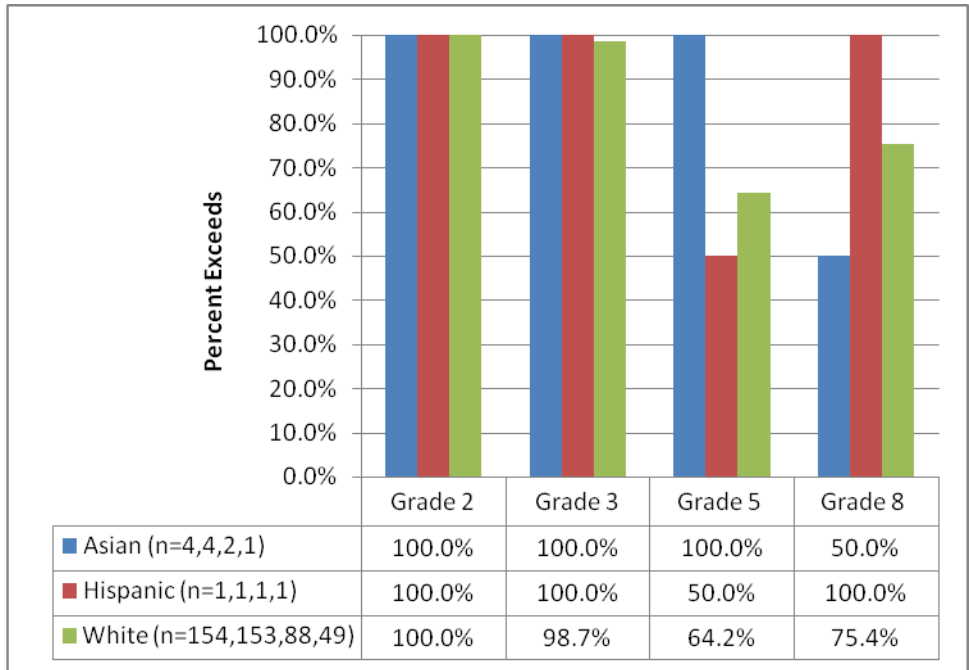


Figure 8. Percent of Challenge students exceeding district standards in math on the MAP by ethnic group. No differences are statistically significant.

Figures 9 and 10 display the percent of challenge students exceeding state and district standards by cohort. Although previous figures have shown a decrease in scores between grades 3 and 5, this figure shows that scores in grade 5 have increasingly approved. Performance in grade 3 and 8 has remained consistent over the years.

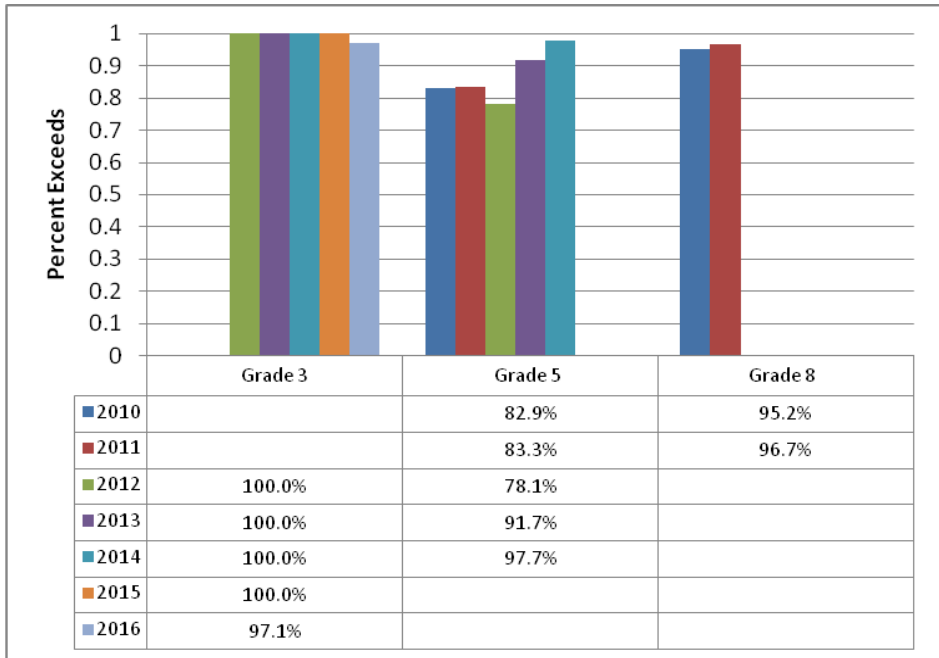


Figure 9. Percent of students exceeding state standards in math on the ISAT in each cohort.

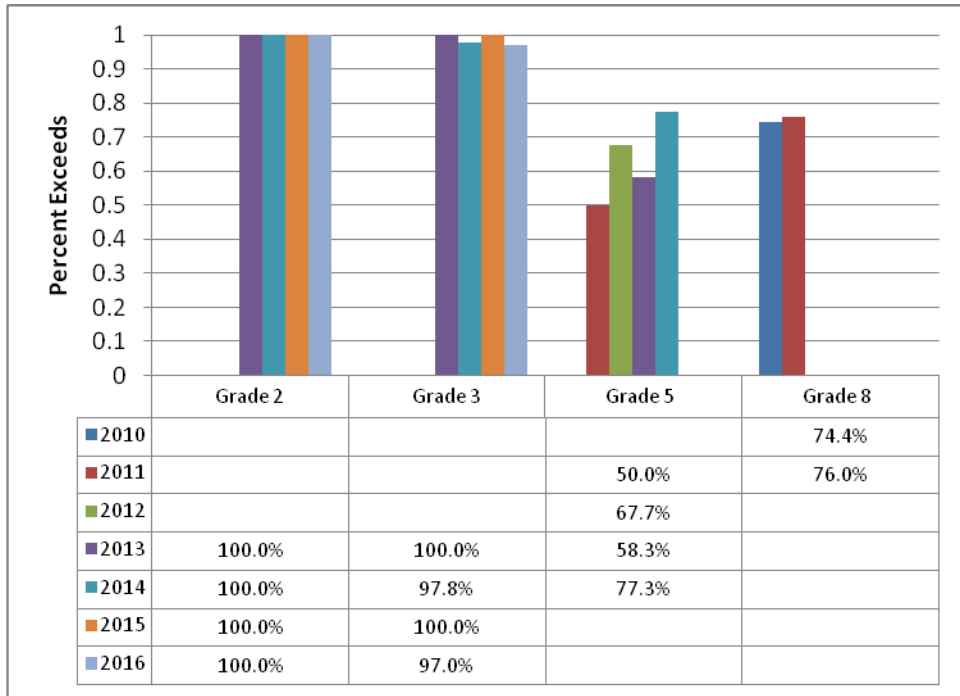


Figure 10. Percent of students exceeding district standards in math on the MAP in each cohort.

Challenge and Non-Challenge Comparisons

As outlined on page 13, a Non-Challenge comparison group was created to make comparisons of later achievement between students who scored similarly to Challenge students on the MAP in grade two but did not participate in the program. The expectation would be that we would not see significant differences in their achievement in grade 2, but would in later years. Figure 11 displays the percent of Challenge and Non-Challenge students exceeding state standards on the ISAT. As expected, a statistically significantly greater percent of the Challenge students exceeded state standards of the ISAT. When comparing the mean score of the two groups on the ISAT, there is a statistically significant difference in grade 5 (Figure 12). However, the Non-Challenge students have a higher mean than the Challenge students. So, although there is a greater percent of Challenge students exceeding standards, they have a lower mean score than Non-Challenge students.

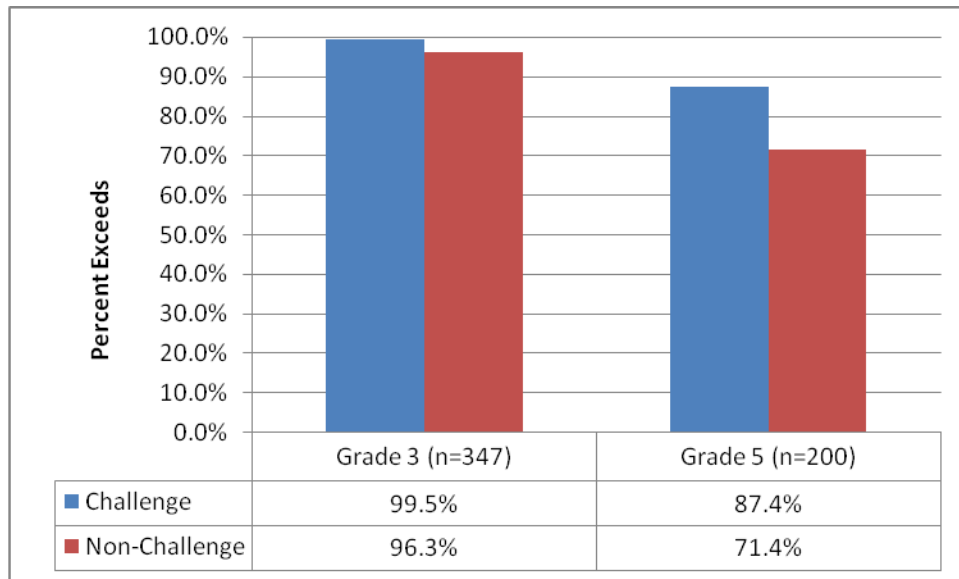


Figure 11. Percent of Challenge and non-Challenge students exceeding state standards in math on the ISAT. Statistically significant difference in both grades.

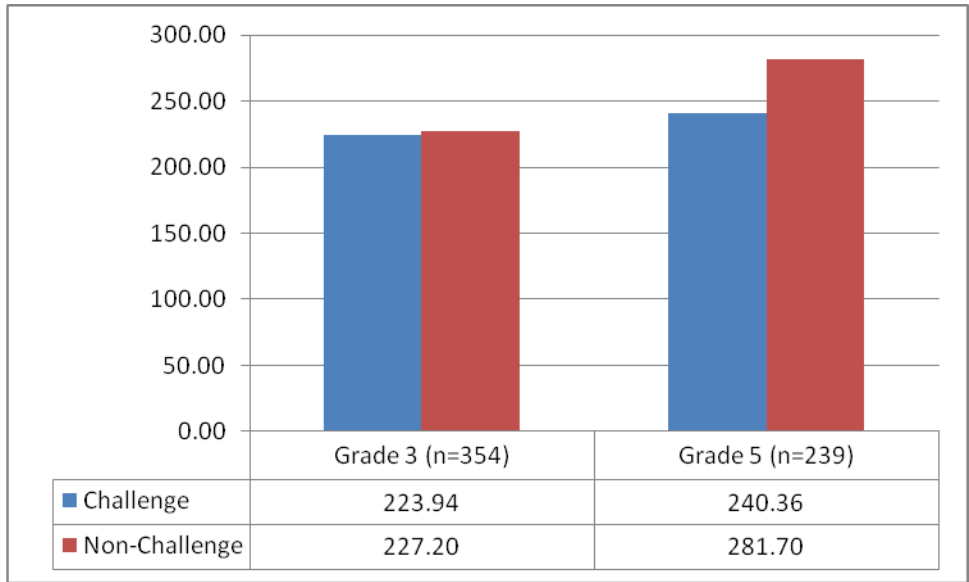


Figure 12. Mean standard scores in math obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students on the ISAT. Statistically significant difference in Grade 5.

Identical comparisons were made for the MAP. Figure 13 displays the percent exceeding district standards for the two groups and Figure 14 displays their mean RIT scores. As for the ISAT, there is a statistically significant difference in the percent exceeding district standards in grade 5. In addition, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean RIT scores for the two groups. However, for this assessment the mean score for the Challenge students was higher than the Non-Challenge students.

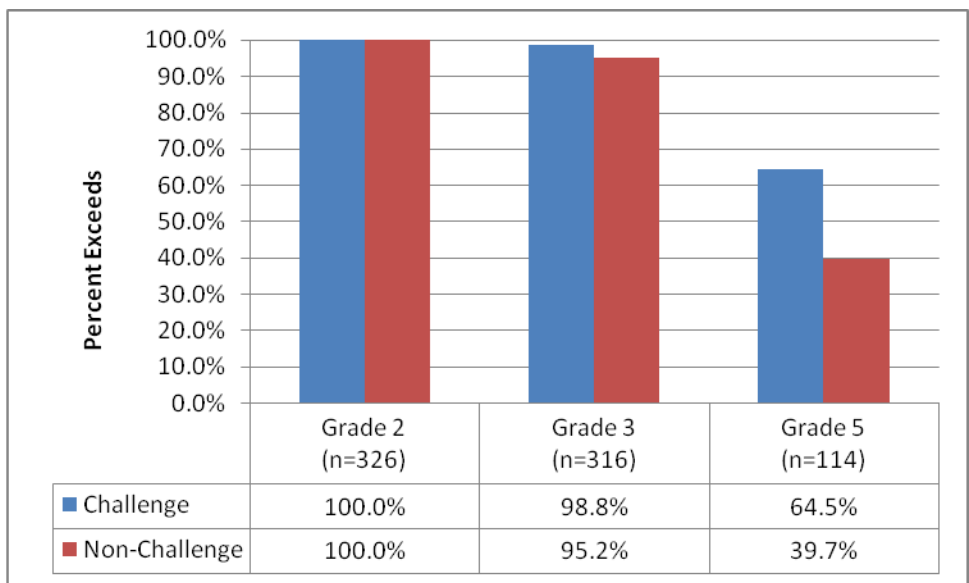


Figure 13. Percent of Challenge and non-Challenge students exceeding district standards in math on the MAP. Statistically significant difference in Grade 5.

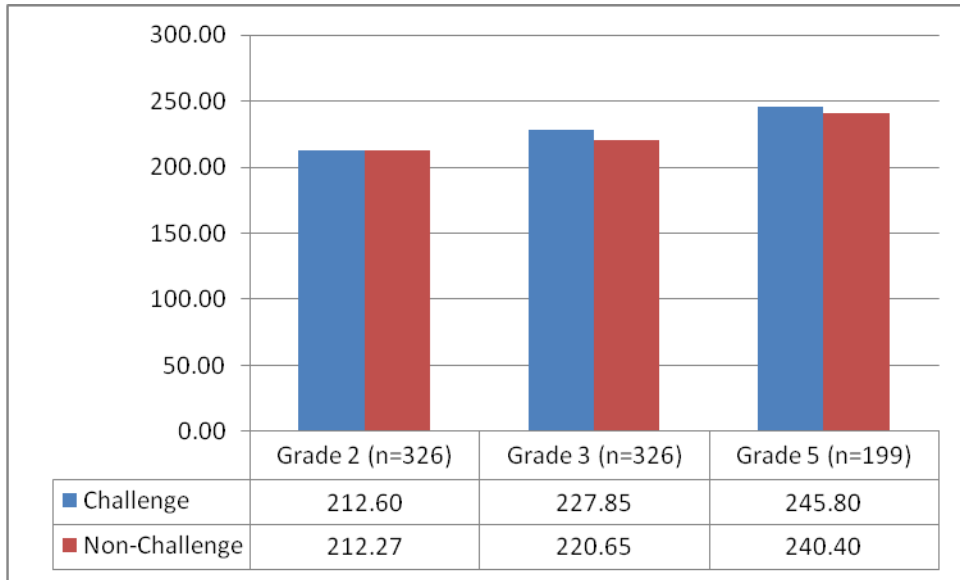


Figure 14. Mean RIT scores in math obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students on the MAP. Statistically significant difference in Grades 3 and 5.

The next three Figures (14-16) display comparisons between Challenge and Non-Challenge student performance on various subtests of the ISAT and MAP. On every subtest, the Challenges students scored higher than the Non-Challenge students and almost all were a statistically significant difference.

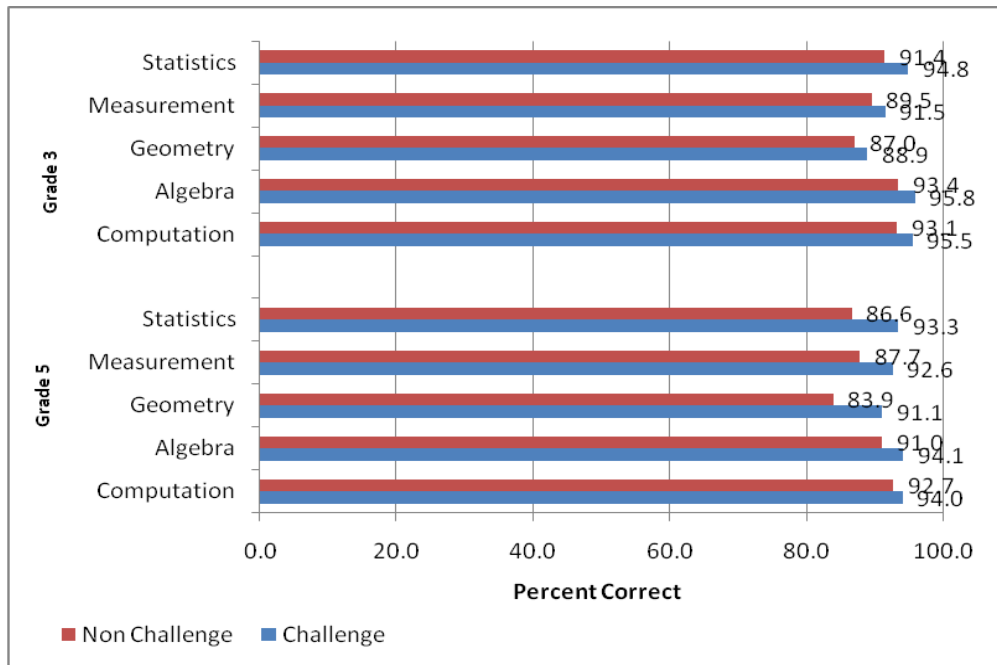


Figure 15. Percent of items correct on each subtest in math on the ISAT obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students. All differences are statistically significant except Grade 3 Geometry and Grade 5 Computation.

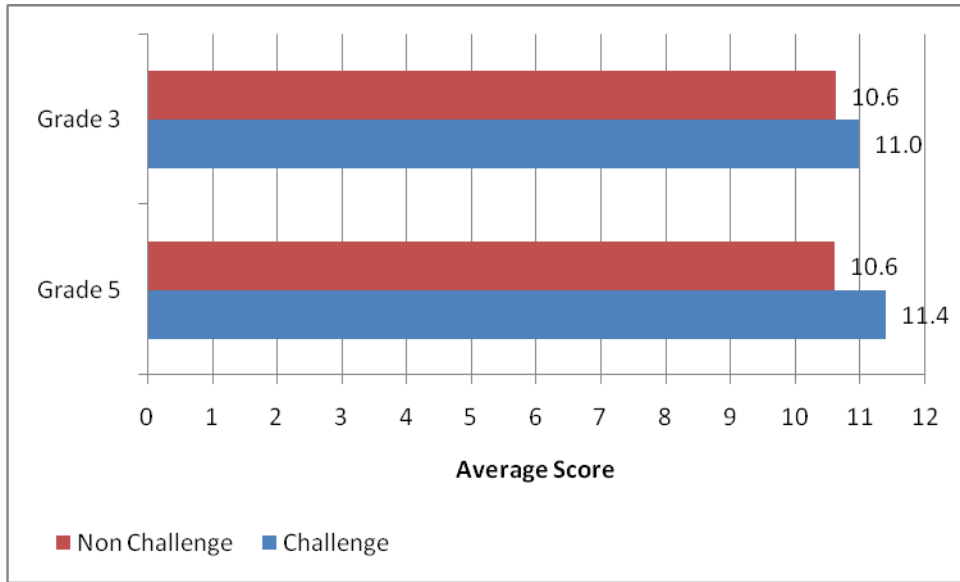


Figure 16. Average score on the math extended response of the ISAT obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students. Statistically significant difference in both grades.

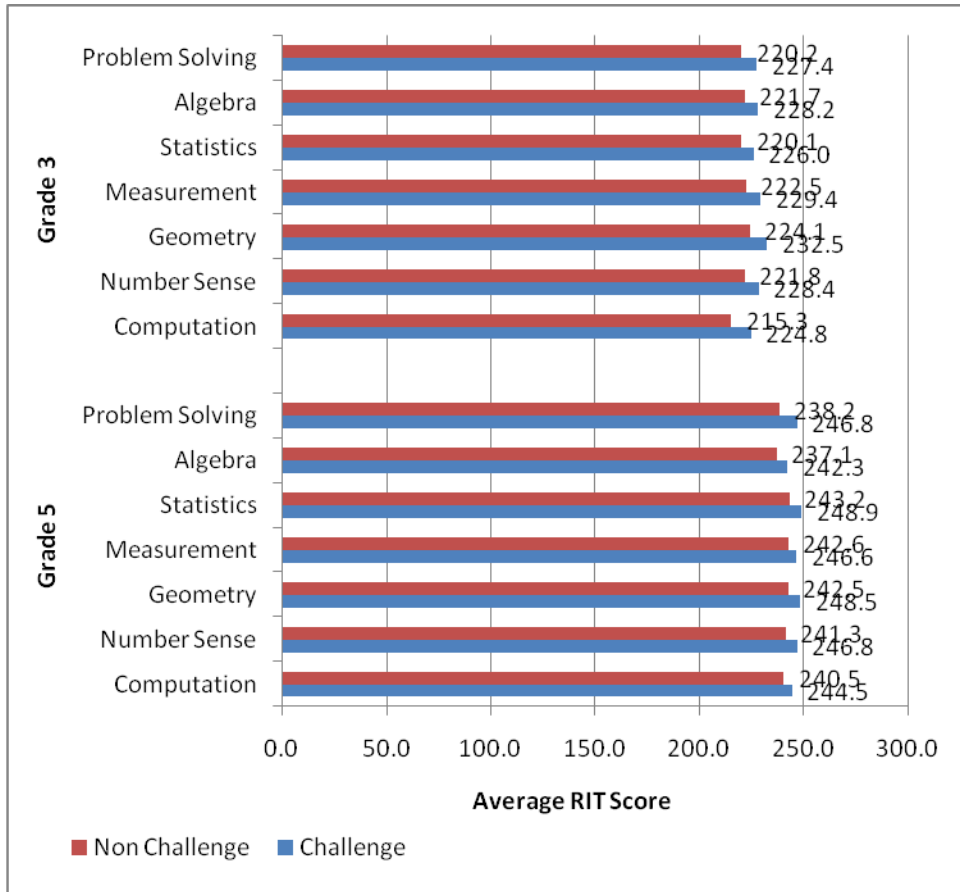


Figure 17. Average score on subtests in math on the MAP obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students. All differences are statistically significant except Grade 5 Computation and Measurement.

Interdisciplinary Achievement Data

Figures 18 and 19 display the reading achievement results of students in the interdisciplinary Challenge program on ISAT and MAP. One hundred percent of the Challenge students met or exceeded state standards on the ISAT and 99% met or exceeded district standards on the MAP. The expectation would be that all students would exceed standards on these two assessments. Results from the ISAT show that there is a decrease in the percent of students exceeding from grade 3 to grade 8, and on the MAP, there is an overall decrease from grade 2 to 8. On both assessments student performance improves in grade 5. This fifth grade trend is the opposite of what we saw previously for the math results.

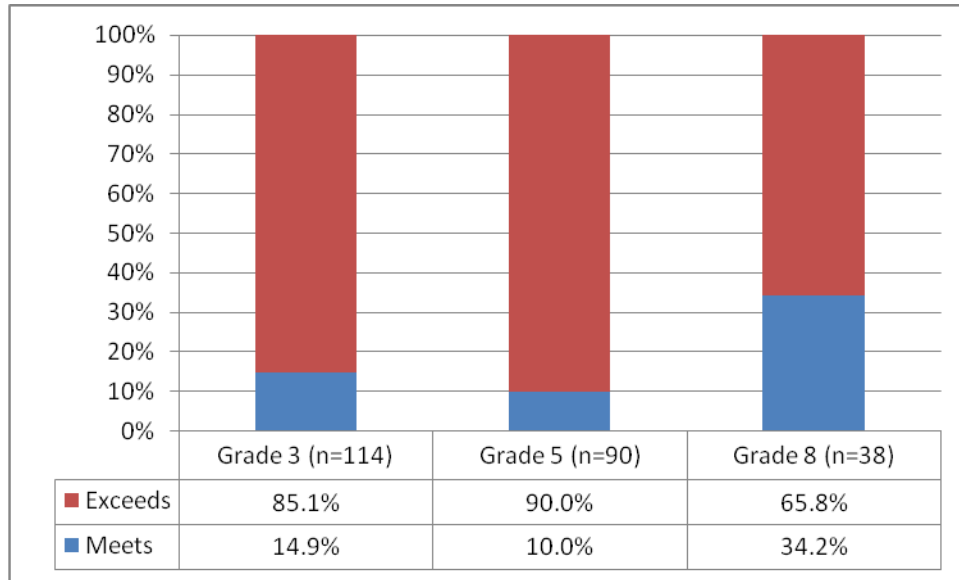


Figure 18. Percent of Challenge students meeting and exceeding state standards in reading on the ISAT.

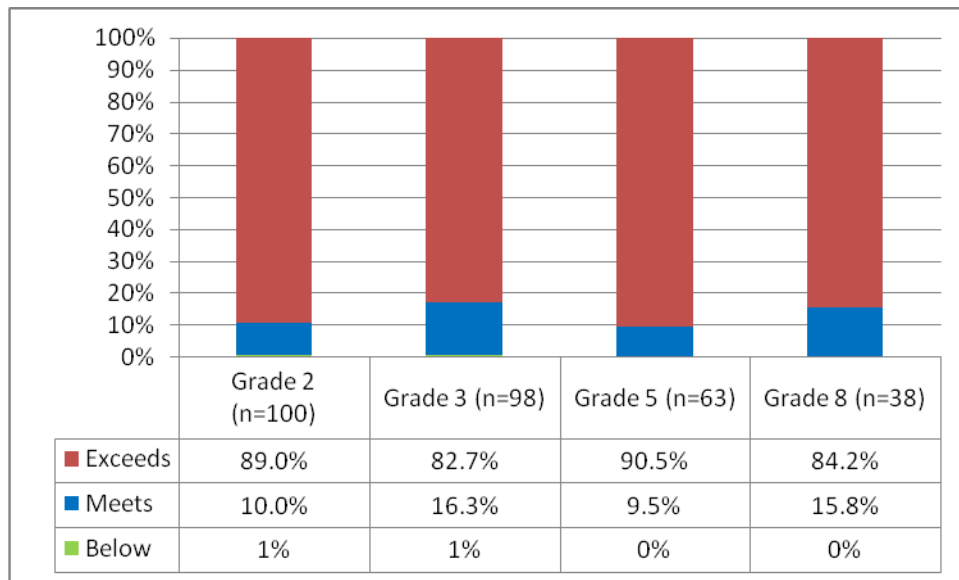


Figure 19. Percent of Challenge students meeting district standards in reading on the MAP.

Demographic Comparisons

Figures 20 and 21 display the percent of males and females exceeding state standards in reading on the ISAT and the percent exceeding district standards on the MAP. There is no clear pattern of one gender scoring better than the other. There is no statistically significant difference between the academic achievement of males and females on the ISAT, but in grade 8 a statistically significant greater percent of girls exceed standards on the MAP.

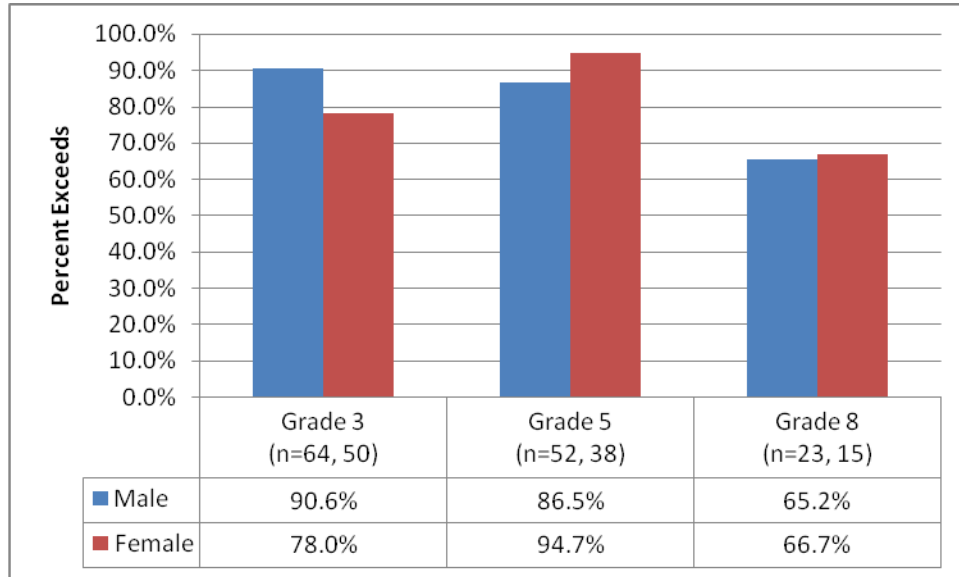


Figure 20. Percent of male and female Challenge students exceeding state standards in reading on the ISAT. No differences are statistically significant.

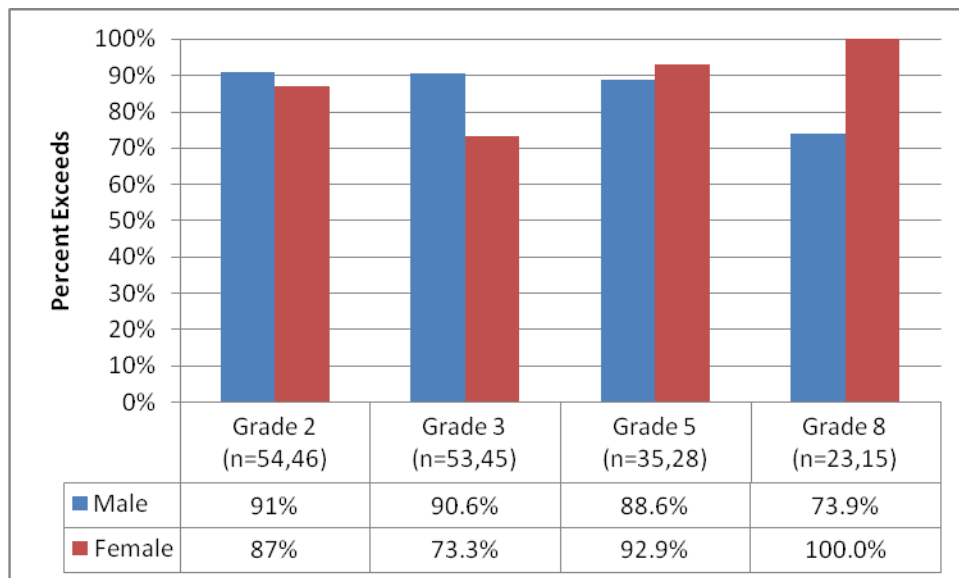


Figure 21. Percent of male and female Challenge students exceeding district standards in reading on the MAP. Grade 8 difference is statistically significant.

Figures 22 and 23 display the percent of students exceeding state standards on the ISAT and district standards on the MAP in each ethnic group. There are no statistically significant differences in academic achievement between ethnic groups on the ISAT. Even though there is a statically significant difference on the fifth grade MAP, this only is based on the performance of one student in that ethnic group and does not warrant concern.

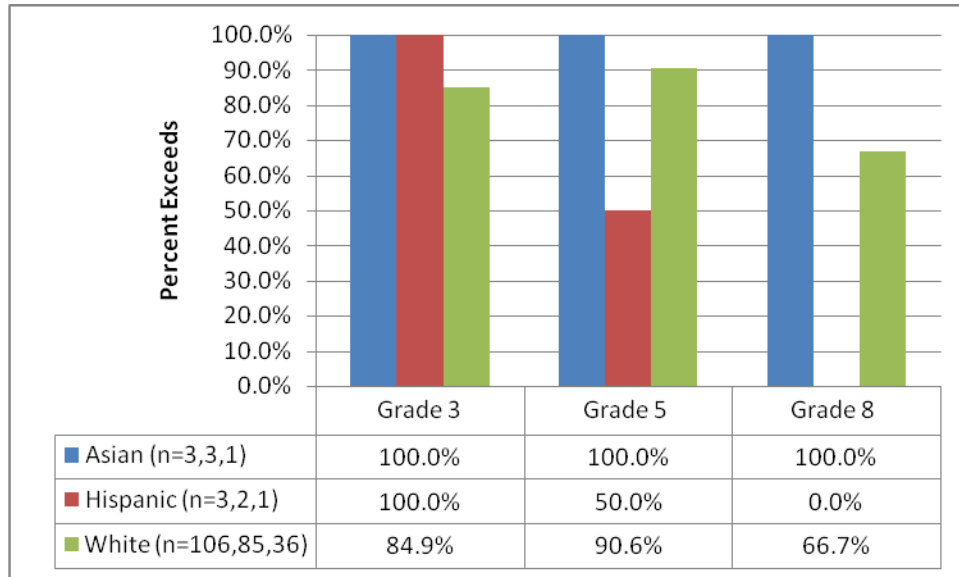


Figure 22. Percent of Challenge students exceeding state standards in reading on the ISAT by ethnic group. No differences are statistically significant.

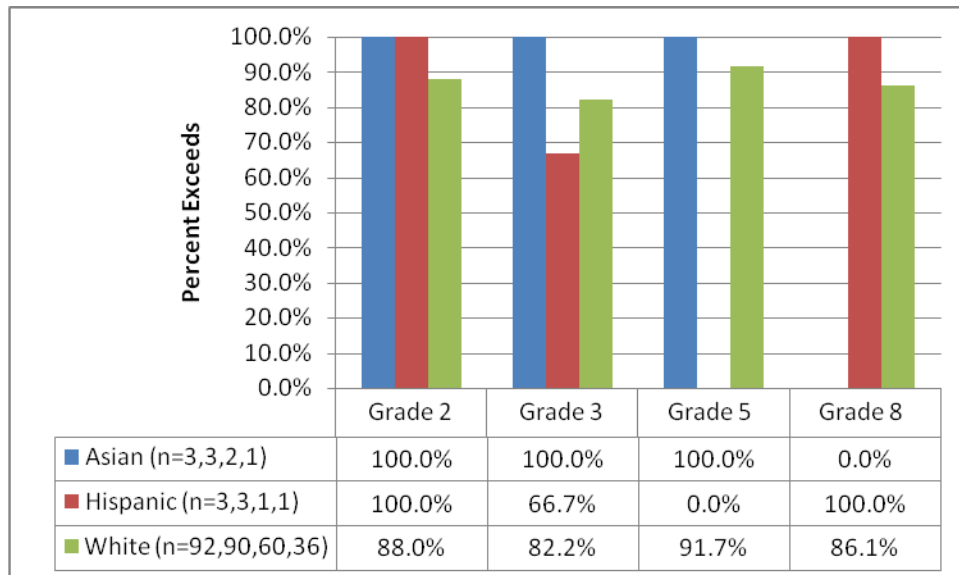


Figure 23. Percent of Challenge students exceeding district standards in reading on the MAP by ethnic group. Grade 5 difference is statistically significant.

Figures 24 and 25 display the percent of challenge students exceeding state and district standards by cohort. Although previous math results showed an increase in the percent exceeding standards between grade 3 and 5, these results show a gradual decrease in these numbers over time. These decreases are seen in grade 8, as well. This could be attributed to the gradual decrease in interdisciplinary services over time.

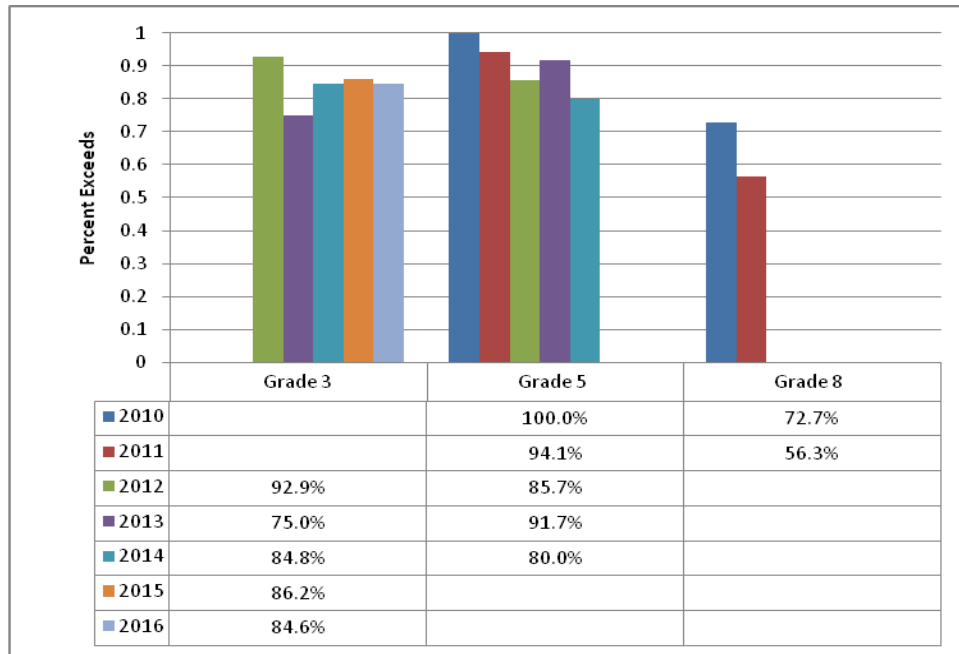


Figure 24. Percent of students exceeding state standards in reading on the ISAT in each cohort.

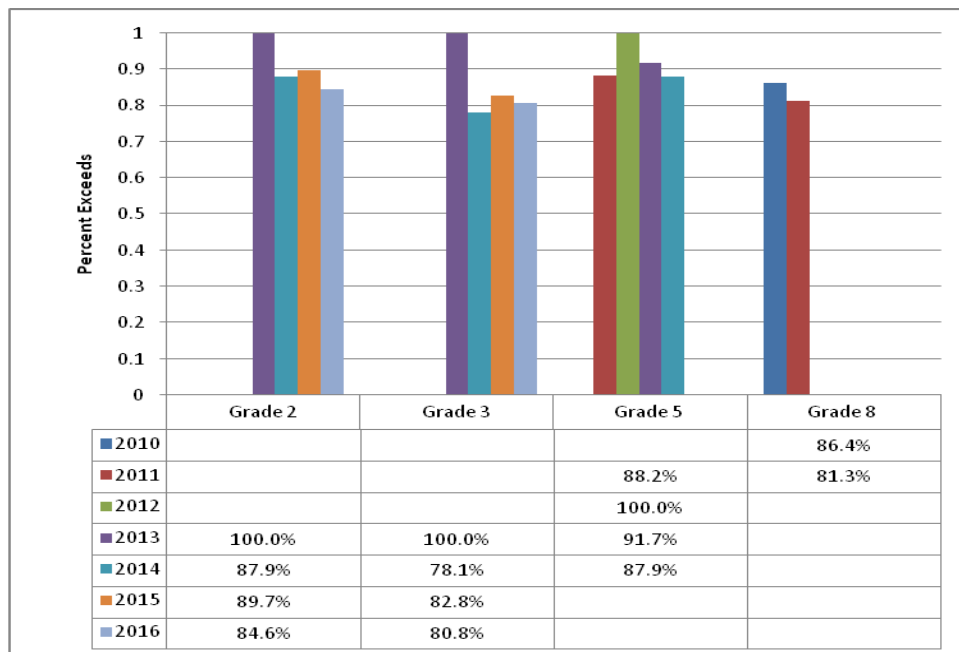


Figure 25. Percent of students exceeding district standards in reading on the MAP in each cohort.

Challenge and Non-Challenge Comparisons

As with the math program, a Non-Challenge group was formed for the interdisciplinary program to make comparisons with those who participated in Challenge. Figure 26 shows that on the ISAT, a statistically significant greater percent of Challenge students exceeded state standards in reading than their Non-Challenge peers. When comparing their mean grade 3 reading score, Challenge students scored statistically significantly higher than their Non-Challenge peers. However, the Non-Challenge group scored statistically significantly higher than the Challenge group in grade 5.

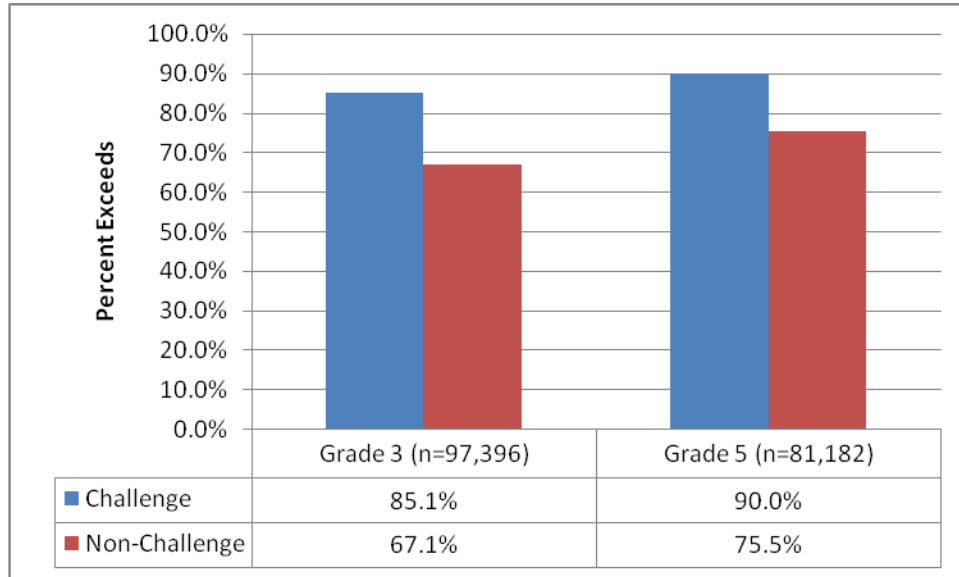


Figure 26. Percent of Challenge and non-Challenge students exceeding state standards in reading on the ISAT. Statistically significant difference in both grades.

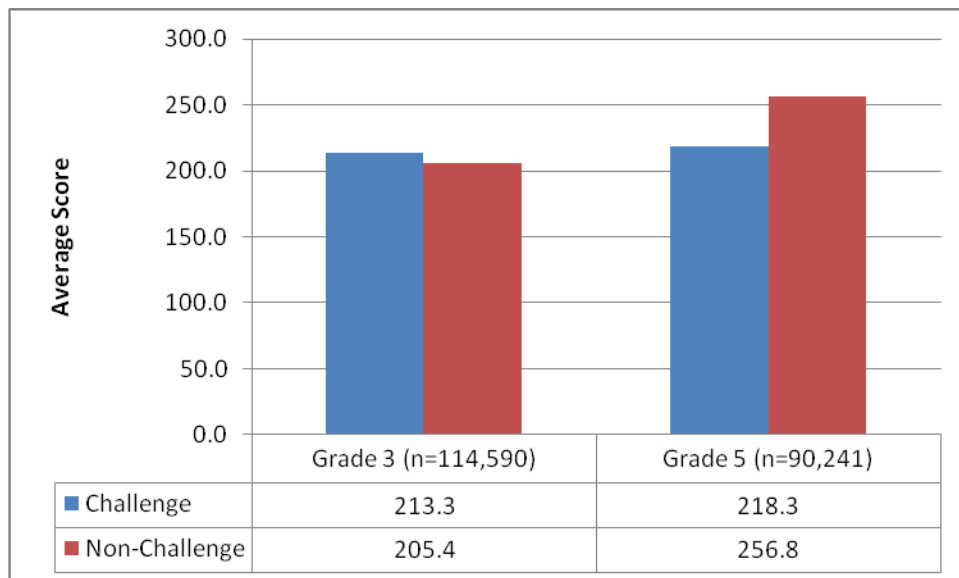


Figure 27. Mean standard scores in reading obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students on the ISAT. Statistically significant difference in both grades.

Figures 28 and 29 display the same comparison using MAP data. The Challenge and Non-Challenge groups' mean scores were not significantly differently but the percent of Non-Challenge students exceeding district standards was significantly higher than the Challenge group. In grades 3 and 5, the Challenges students' mean scores were statistically significantly higher than the Non-Challenge group but there was no difference found in the percent of students exceeding district standards.

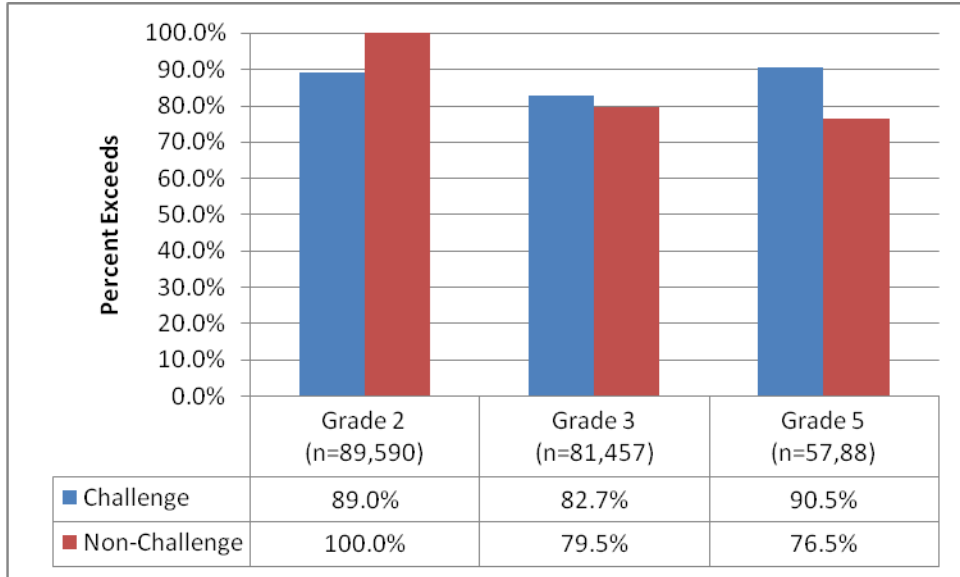


Figure 28. Percent of Challenge and non-Challenge students exceeding district standards in reading on the MAP. Statistically significant difference in Grade 2.

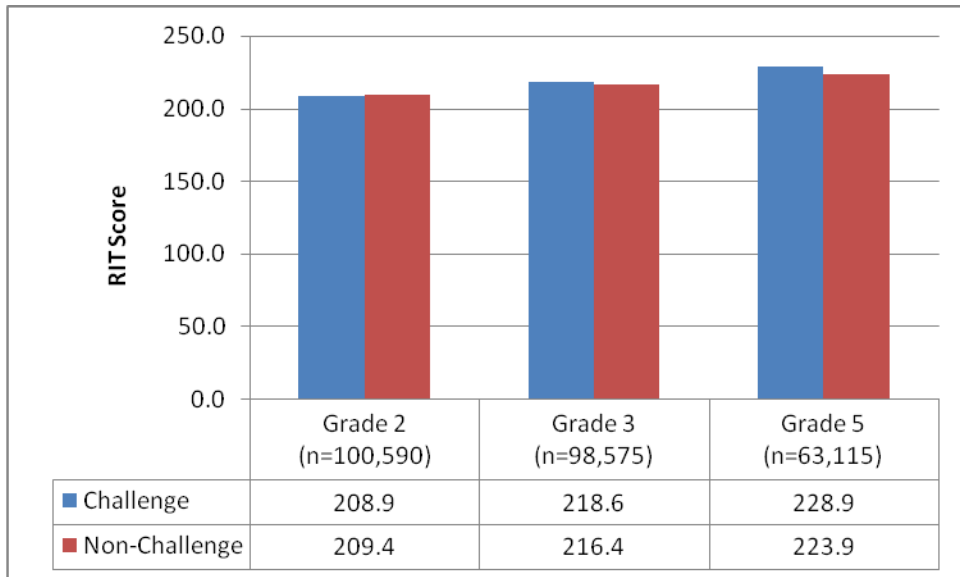


Figure 29. Mean RIT scores in reading obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students on the MAP. Statistically significant difference in Grades 3 and 5.

Figures 30-32 display comparisons between the two groups on the various subtests of the ISAT and MAP. In almost all subtests, the Challenge students score statistically significantly higher than the Non-Challenge group.

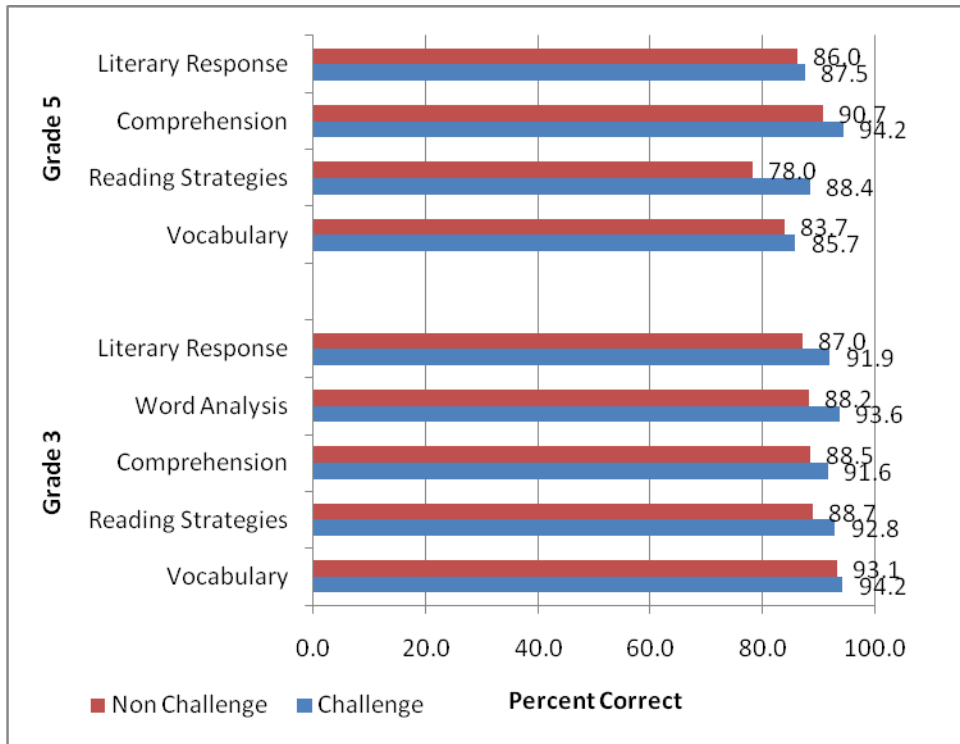


Figure 30. Percent of items correct on each subtest in reading on the ISAT obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students. All differences are statistically significant except Grade 3 Vocabulary and Grade 5 Vocabulary and Literary Response.

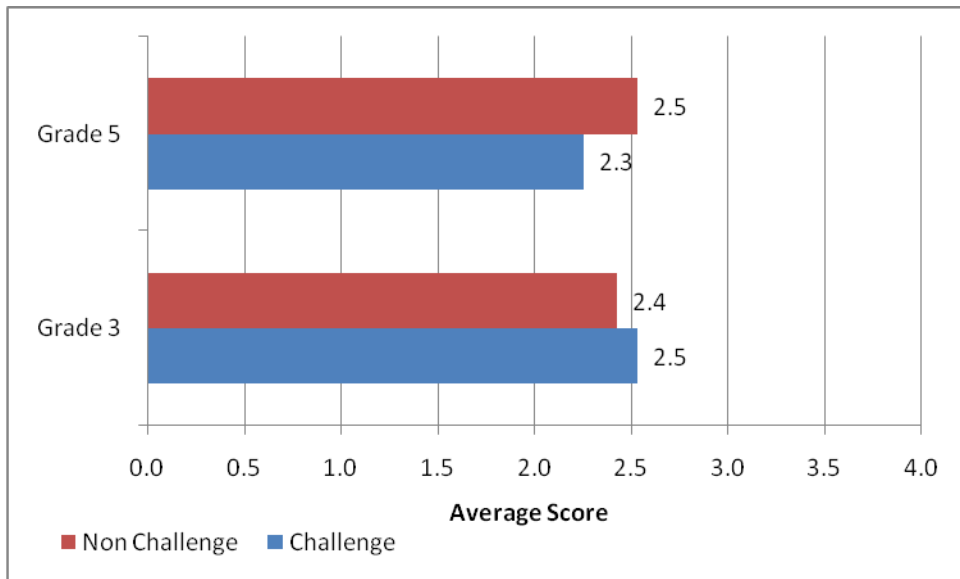


Figure 31. Average score on the reading extended response of the ISAT obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students. Statistically significant difference in Grade 3.

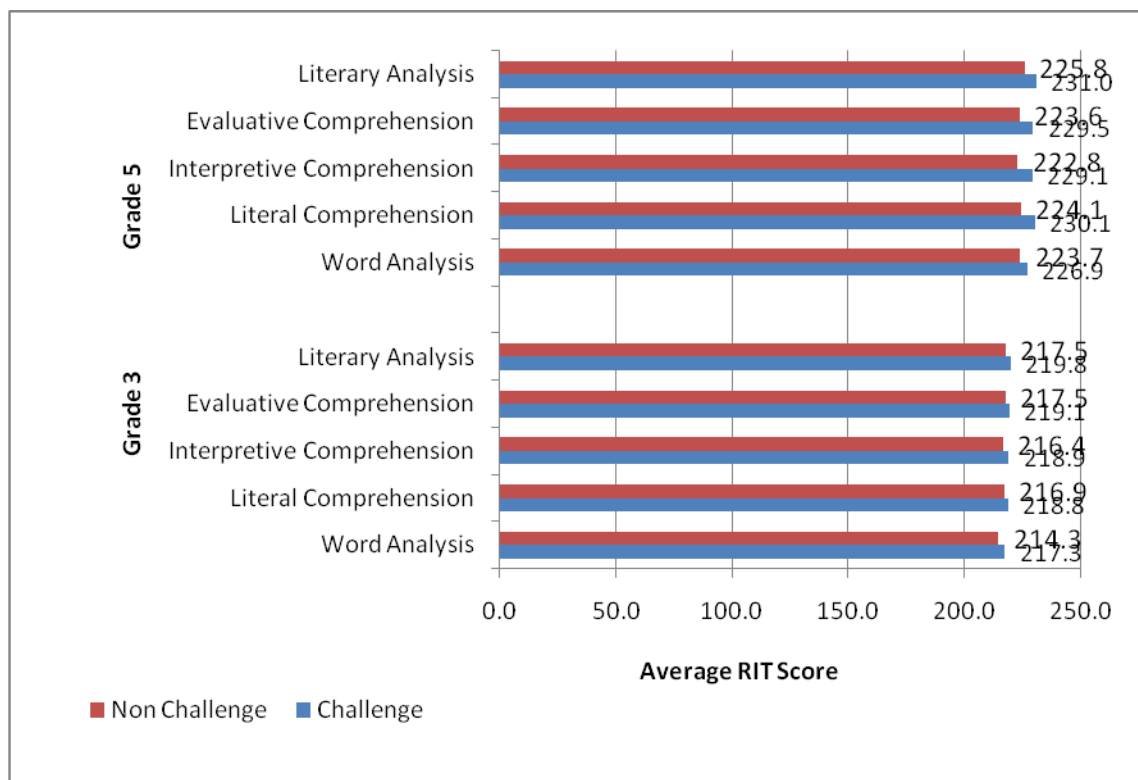


Figure 32. Average score on subtests in reading on the MAP obtained by Challenge and non-Challenge students. All differences are statistically significant.

Parent Perceptions

Surveys were sent out in the spring of 2007 to all parents of current Challenge students. The data were analyzed to gain information about parent knowledge of the components of the mathematics and interdisciplinary program, parent satisfaction with the two programs, and parent perceived need for expansion of the program.

General Information

A total of 145 parent surveys were completed and returned. This represents a 49% return rate. Fifty-three percent (53%) were returned from elementary parents and 47% from middle level parents. Seventy-four percent (75%) were completed by parents of students in the mathematics program, 10% by parents of students in the interdisciplinary program, and 15% by parents of students in both programs. Four percent (4%) were returned from Alice Gustafson School, 12% from Grace McWayne School, 3% from H.C. Storm School, 15% from Hoover-Wood School, 10% from J.B. Nelson School, 10% from Louise White School, and 46% from Rotolo Middle School. The committee was concerned about the low return rate from H.C. Storm and Alice Gustafson. The process for survey collection in future program evaluations will be reviewed and improved.

Mathematics Program

Parents were asked a series of questions to determine their knowledge of various components of the Challenge program. Middle school parents were not asked about entrance procedures because all students who participate in the elementary program automatically participate in the middle school program. The purpose of these questions was not to test the knowledge of parents, but to evaluate the teachers' level of communication of these components. The committee would expect that at least 75% of parents would have knowledge of these components. According to the results in Figure 33, the only area in which parents had sufficient knowledge was in the progress of their child. In all areas, middle school parents reported having more knowledge than elementary parents.

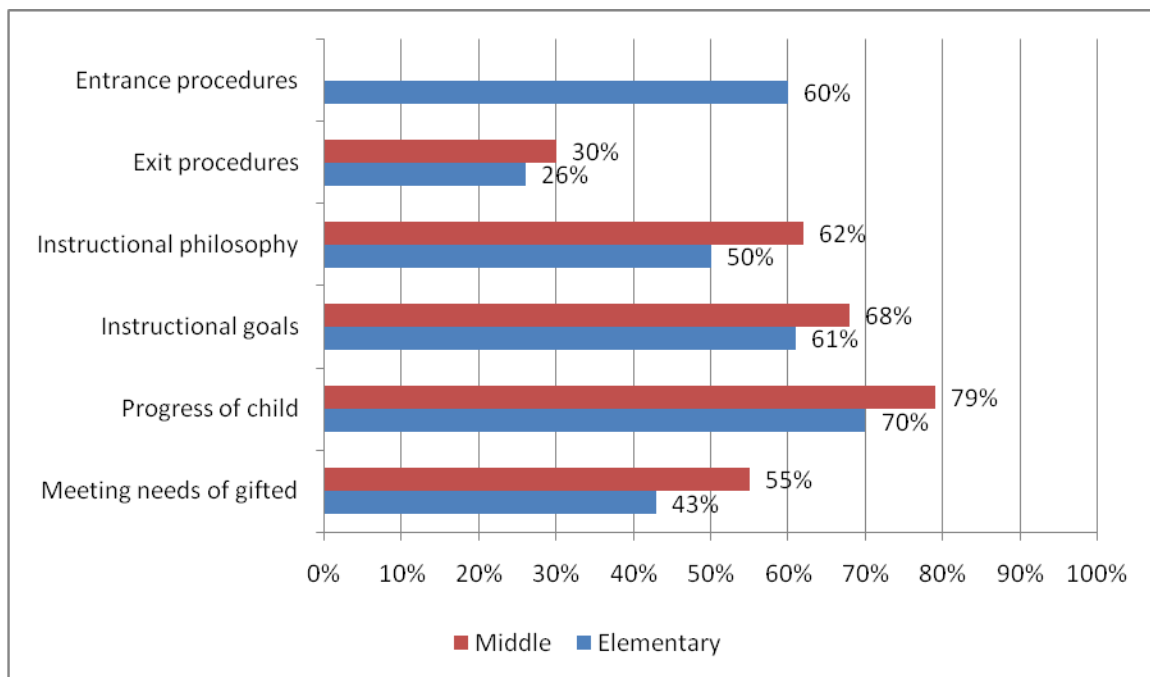


Figure 33. Percent of parents indicating they were fairly knowledgeable or very knowledgeable of the components of the math Challenge program.

Figure 34 displays the results of the satisfaction parents had with the same components of the Challenge program. Committee members would hope for at least 75% of parents to be satisfied with these components. The only satisfaction level of a component that met that expectation was middle school parents satisfaction with the progress of their child. Middle school parents reported a higher level of satisfaction than elementary parents.

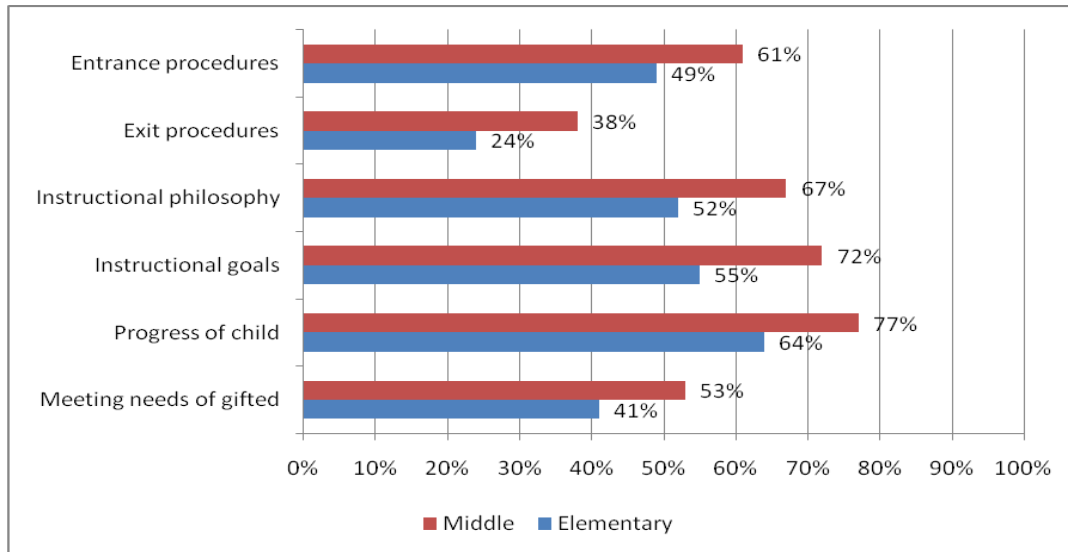


Figure 34. Percent of parents who were fairly satisfied or very satisfied with components of the math Challenge program.

Figure 35 displays the level of satisfaction parents reported with the instruction their child receives in the math Challenge program. Again, middle school parents reported a higher level of satisfaction than elementary parents. However, only two areas did not meet the committee’s expectation of satisfaction: instructional time at the elementary level and communication at both levels.

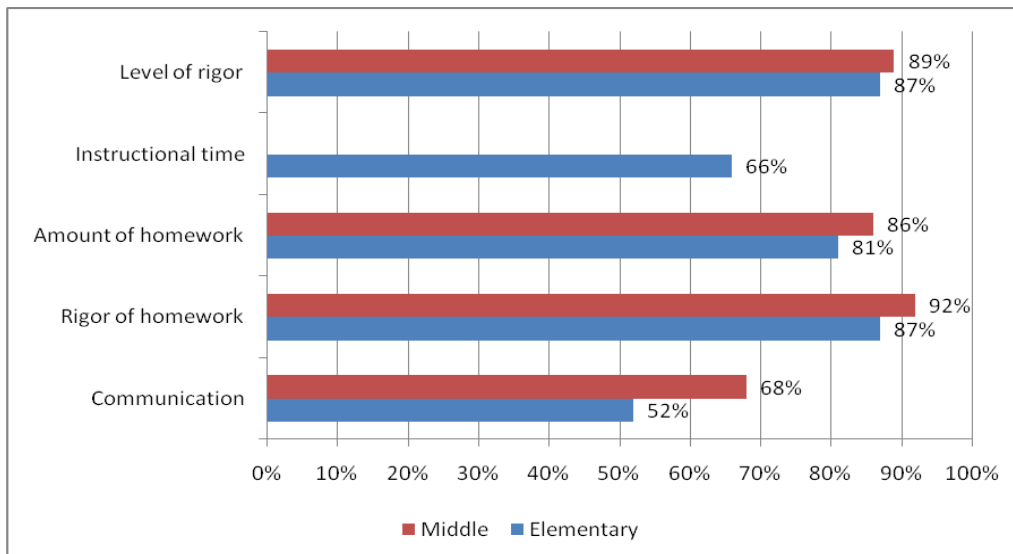


Figure 35. Percent of parents who were fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the instruction of the math Challenge program.

Interdisciplinary Program

Parents were asked about the same program components mentioned previously as they related to the interdisciplinary program. Because the program operates differently at the middle school level, parents were only asked of their awareness of the program and their overall satisfaction of the program. Figure 36 displays the results of parents' reported knowledge of the program components. These percentages are considerably lower than those reported for the math program. Similarly, the level of satisfaction reported by parents for this program (Figures 37 and 38) is much less than the math program.

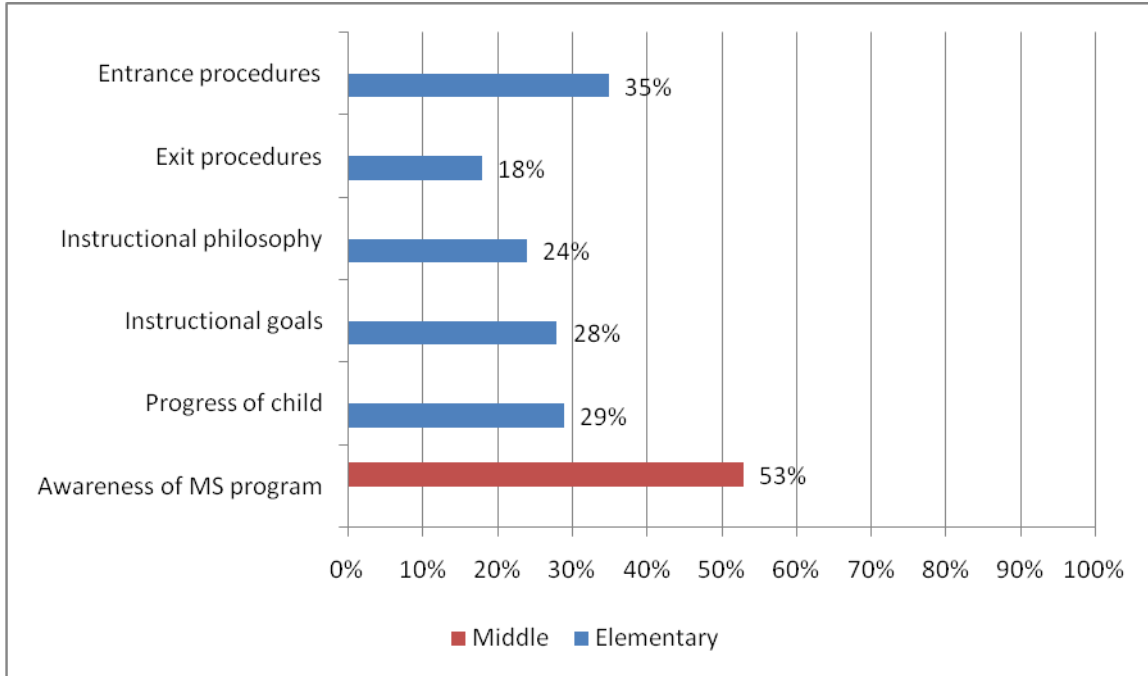


Figure 36. Percent of parents indicating they were fairly knowledgeable or very knowledgeable of the components of the interdisciplinary Challenge program.

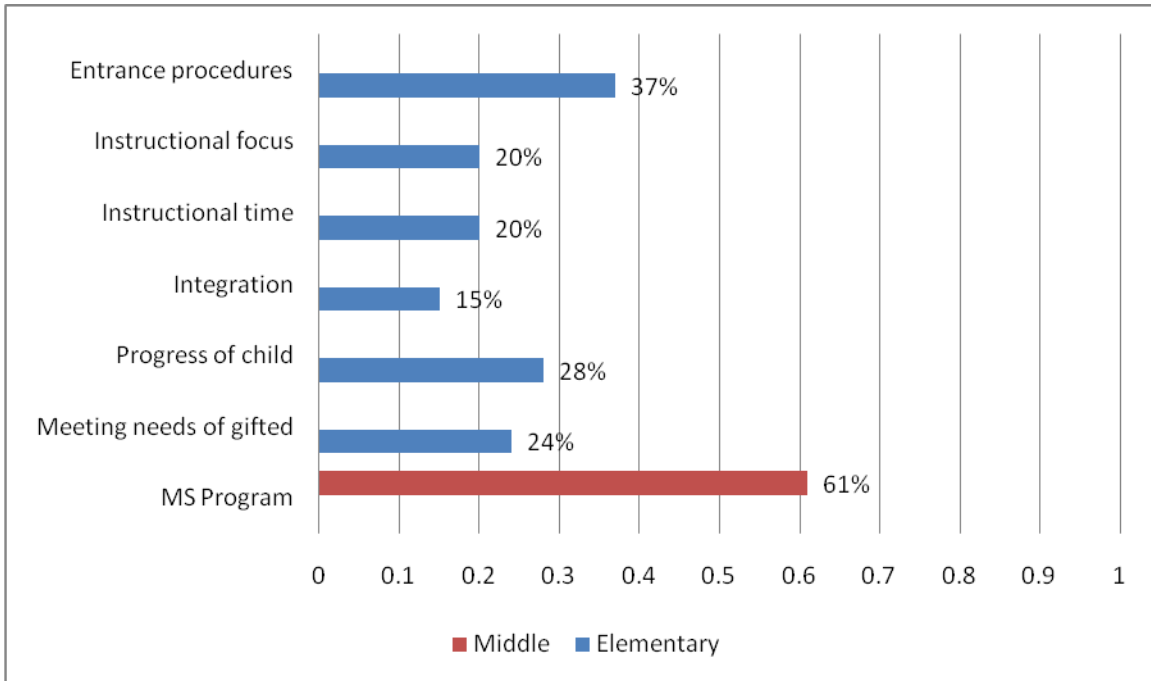


Figure 37. Percent of parents who were fairly satisfied or very satisfied with components of the interdisciplinary Challenge program.

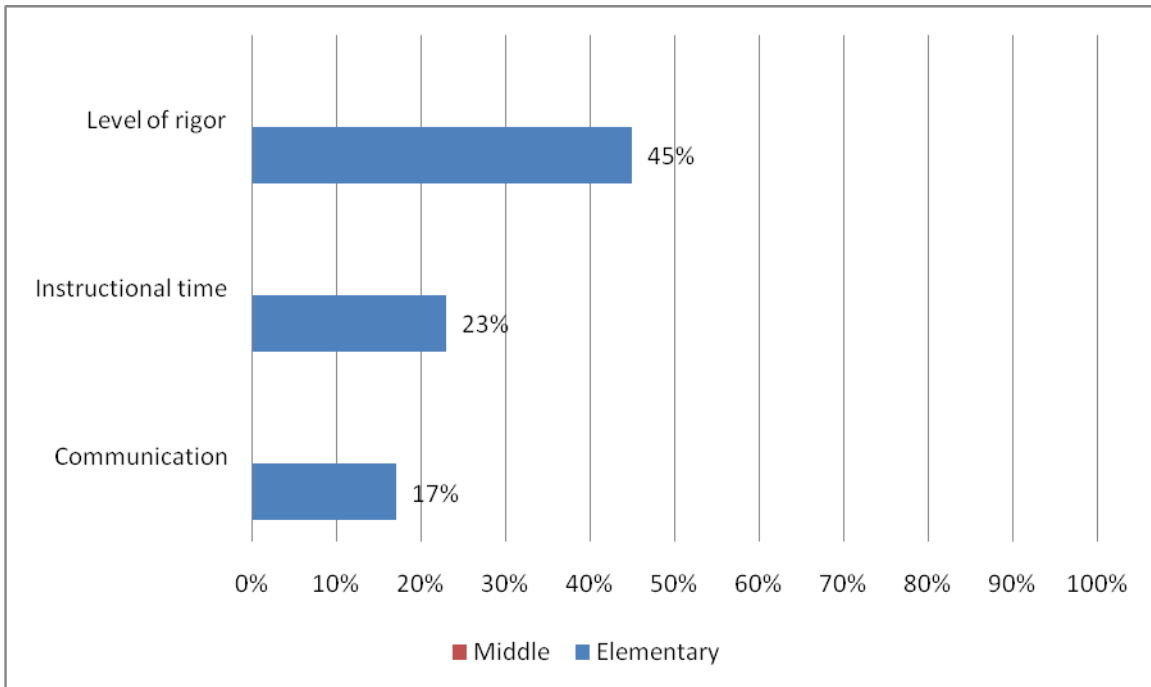


Figure 38. Percent of parents who were fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the instruction of the interdisciplinary Challenge program.

Program Expansion

Parents were asked about their perceived need for Challenge program expansion and areas in which the program might be expanded. According to the results displayed in Figure 39, elementary parents reported a greater need for expansion than middle school parents. Areas of greatest need for expansion are reading, writing, science, and interdisciplinary instruction.

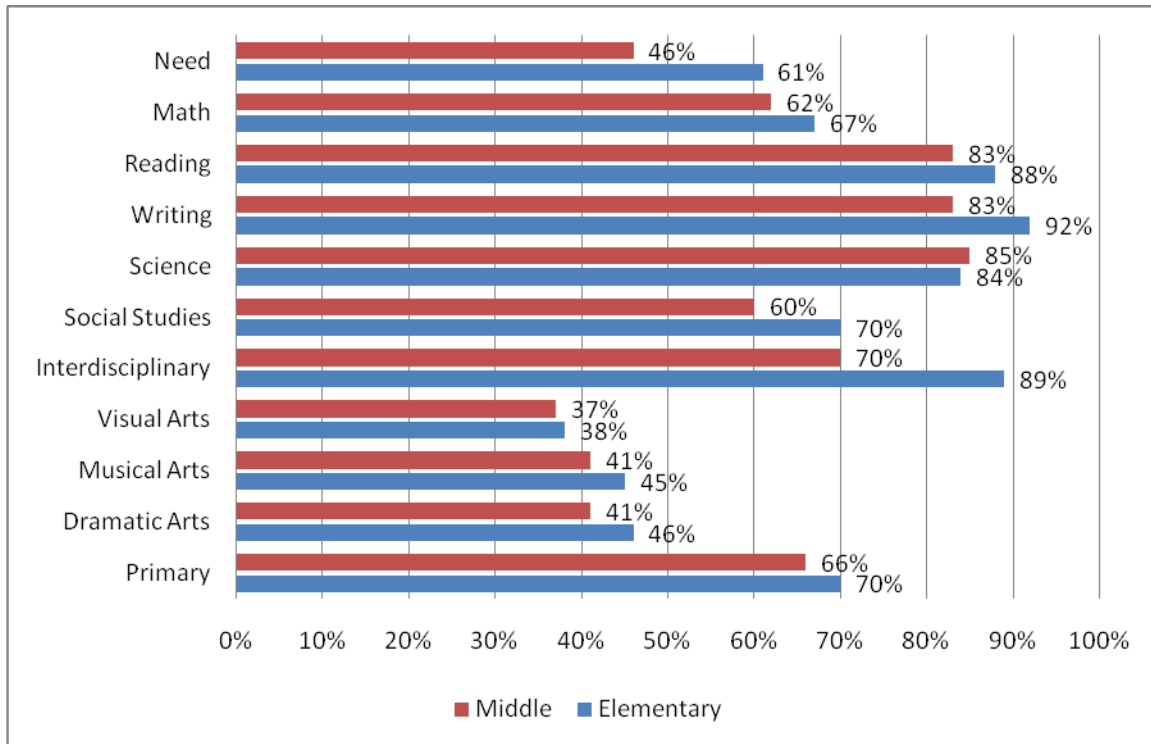


Figure 39. Percent of parents reporting Challenge program expansion was fairly needed or very needed and the areas to expand services.

At the end of the survey, parents were asked to respond to two open-response questions to provide additional perceptions. The following themes were found in analyzing this data:

- There is a need for improved communication between the Challenge teacher and the parents.
- Elementary parents suggested that students be involved in district-wide activities prior to middle school to engage with their grade-level peers from other schools.
- Parents expressed a need to be more knowledgeable about the program, especially the curriculum, qualifications of Challenge teachers, and requirements to enter the program after the initial second grade selection.
- Parents were concerned about a perceived lack of consistency and rigor in the program, especially the interdisciplinary component.

Staff Perceptions

In the spring of 2006, all teachers in grades K through 12 were surveyed to obtain their perceptions of the Challenge program. The following fall, administrators in each building were surveyed for the same purpose. The data were analyzed to gain information about staff knowledge of the components of the mathematics and interdisciplinary program, staff satisfaction with the two programs, and staff perceived need for expansion of the program.

General Information

A total of 225 teachers responded to the survey, 114 elementary, 72 middle school, and 38 high school. A total of 11 administrators responded to the survey, 4 elementary, 2 middle school, and 5 high school. Three percent (3%) of the teachers reported having a gifted education endorsement and 39% reported having taken at least one course in gifted education. Thirty-four elementary teachers reported being cluster teachers and 54 were not cluster teachers. It is a recommended practice in the elementary schools to cluster Challenge students into one or two sections of the grade level to ease scheduling and to allow students the opportunity of interacting with their intellectual peers.

Results are divided here among the three levels of staff: elementary, middle, and high. Some questions were the same among the three groups, but because of the variations in programming, several questions were not asked of middle and high school staff as was asked of elementary staff.

Elementary School Teachers and Administrators

Mathematics Program

Teachers were asked a series of questions to determine their knowledge of various components of the Challenge program. The purpose of these questions was not to test the knowledge of staff, but to evaluate the Challenge teachers' level of communication of these components. The committee would expect that at least 75% of teachers and 100% of administrators would have knowledge of these components. According to the results in Figure 40, there was no knowledge area that met the committee's expectations.

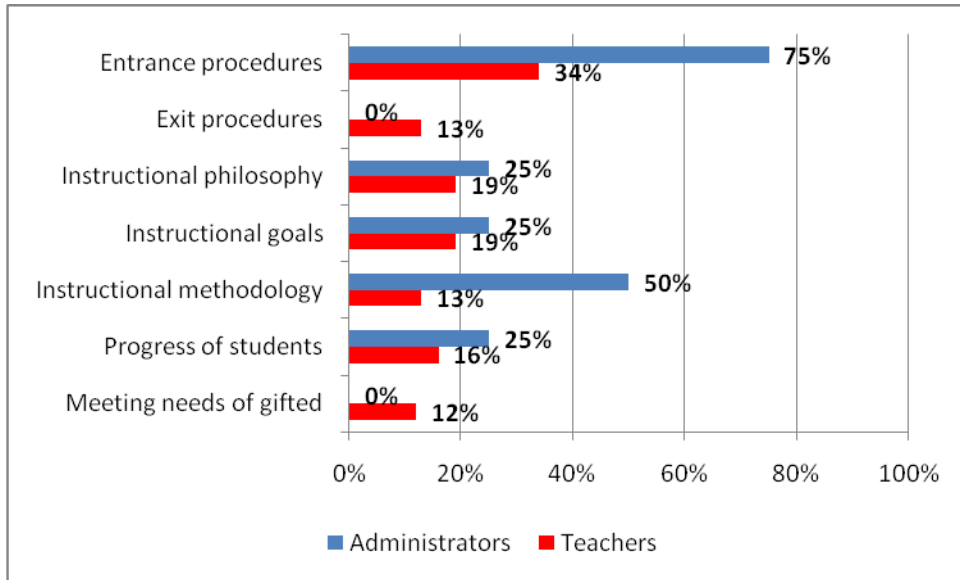


Figure 40. Percent of elementary teachers and administrators reporting they are fairly or very knowledgeable about components of the math Challenge program.

When the same questions are disaggregated by Cluster teachers and non-Cluster teachers, Figure 41 shows that Cluster teachers have a higher level of knowledge about the program. The committee expected this because these teachers, who teach students in the program, have more direct contact with the program. However, not even these teachers' level of knowledge met the committee's expectation.

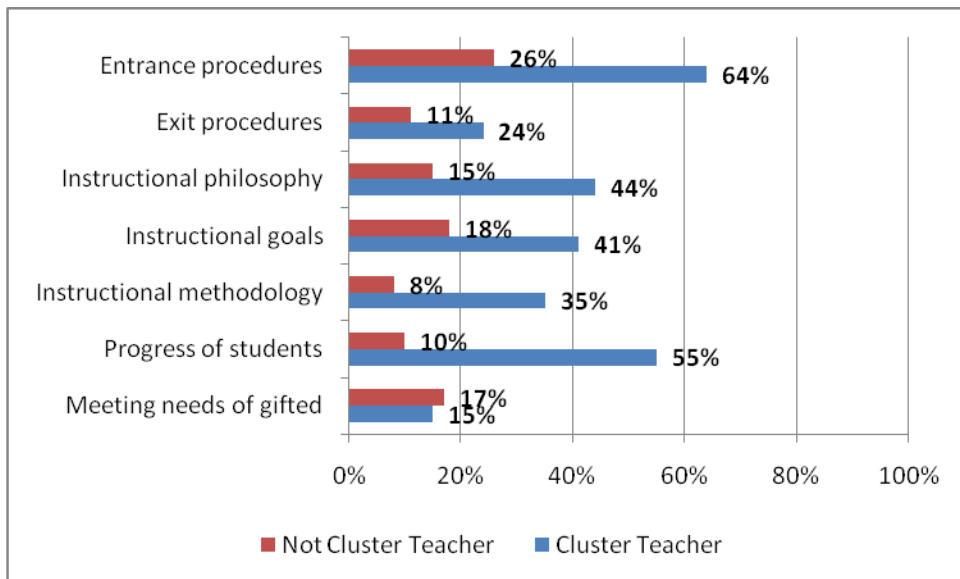


Figure 41. Percent of elementary cluster teachers reporting they are fairly or very knowledgeable about math Challenge program components as compared to non-Cluster teachers.

Figure 42 displays the results of the satisfaction staff had with the same components of the Challenge program. Committee members would hope for at least 75% of staff to be satisfied with these components. The only satisfaction level of a component that met that expectation was administrator satisfaction with the level of rigor of the program.

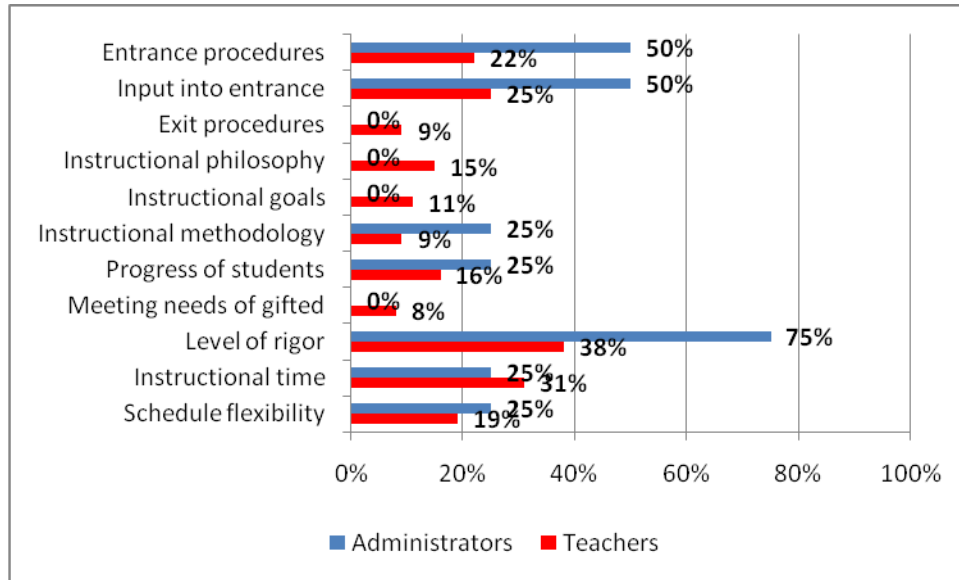


Figure 42. Percent of elementary teachers and administrators reporting they are fairly or very satisfied with components of the math Challenge program.

When the same questions are disaggregated by Cluster teachers and non-Cluster teachers, Figure 43 shows that Cluster teachers have a higher level of satisfaction with the program. The only area of teacher satisfaction that met the committee’s expectation was in the level of rigor in the math program.

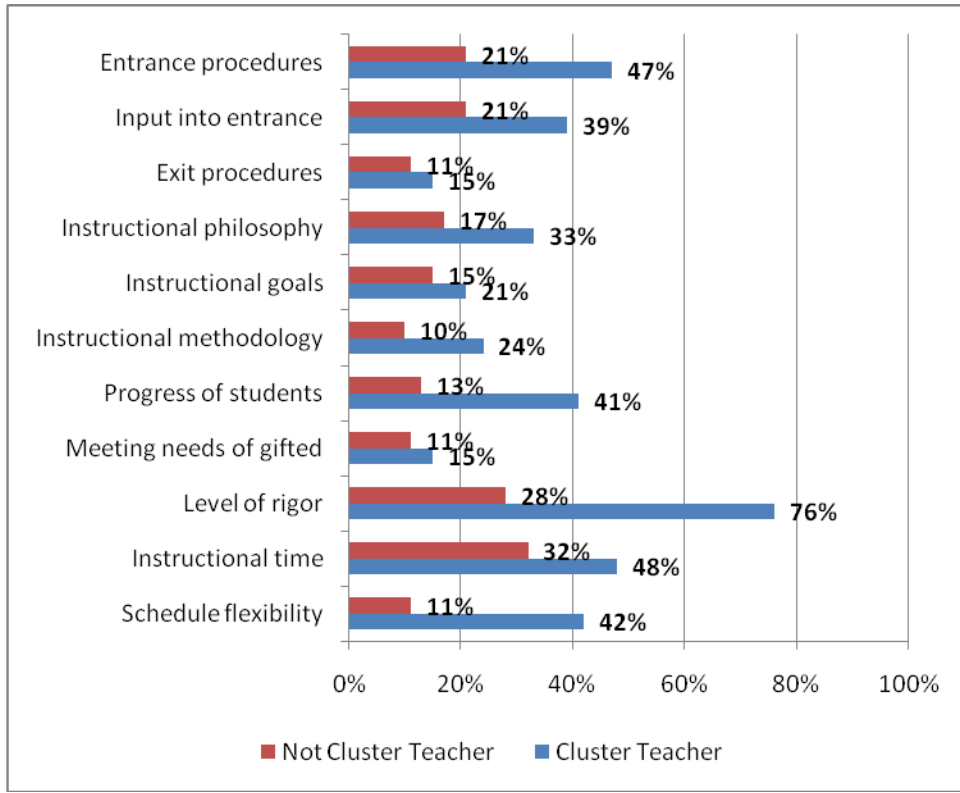


Figure 43. Percent of elementary cluster teachers reporting they are fairly or very satisfied with math Challenge program components as compared to non-Cluster teachers.

Interdisciplinary Program

Staff was asked about the same program components mentioned previously as they related to the interdisciplinary program. Figure 44 displays the results of elementary staffs’ reported knowledge of the program components. These percentages are considerably lower than those reported for the math program. Similarly, the level of satisfaction reported by staff for this program (Figure 45) is much less than the math program.

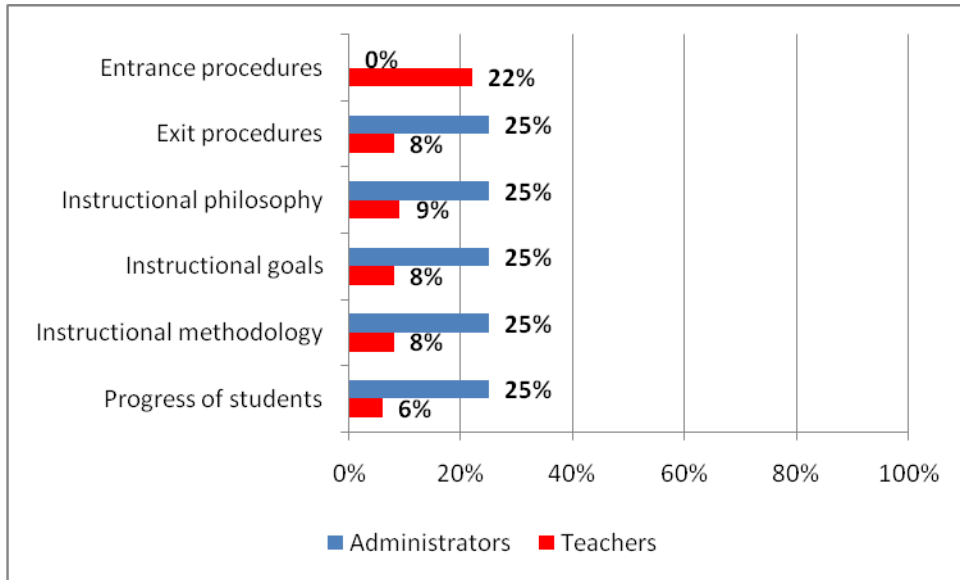


Figure 44. Percent of elementary teachers and administrators reporting they are fairly or very knowledgeable about components of the interdisciplinary Challenge program.

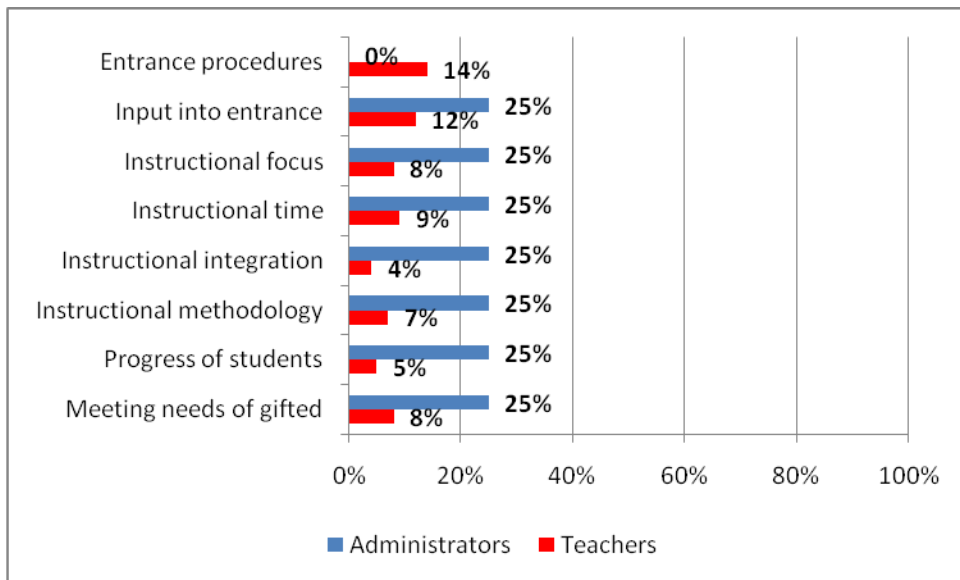


Figure 45. Percent of elementary teachers and administrators reporting they are fairly or very satisfied with components of the interdisciplinary Challenge program.

Middle School Teachers and Administrators

The questions asked of middle school teachers and administrators were focused solely on the interdisciplinary program. The knowledge of the mathematics program at the middle school is limited to teachers in the math department. Figure 46 displays the level of knowledge teachers and administrators reported. Using the previous expectation of 75% of staff being knowledgeable about the program, this was only met by administrators in the school.

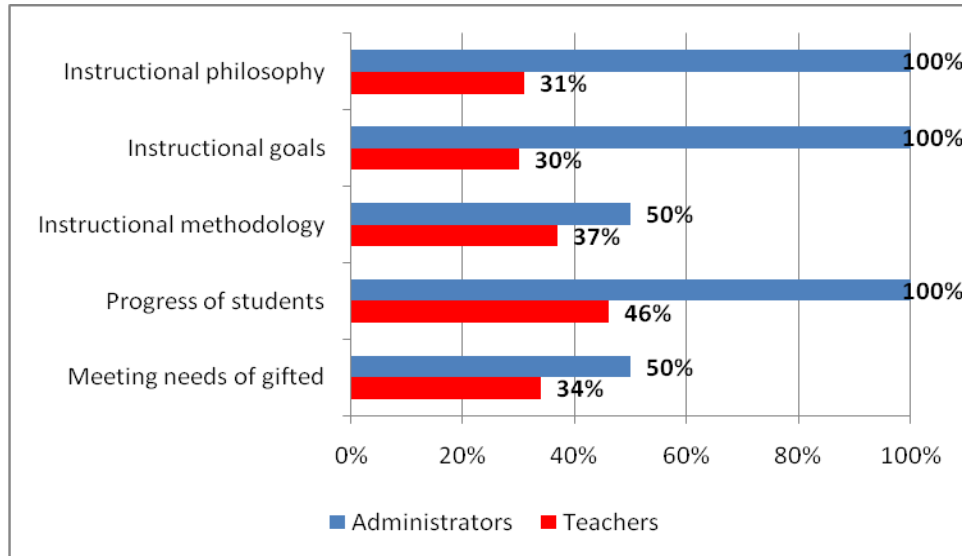


Figure 46. Percent of middle school teachers and administrators reporting they are fairly or very knowledgeable about components of the Challenge program.

Figure 47 displays the level of satisfaction teachers and administrators have with the program. For most components, administrators had a higher level of satisfaction. For none of the components did the teachers' level of satisfaction meet the committee's expectation.

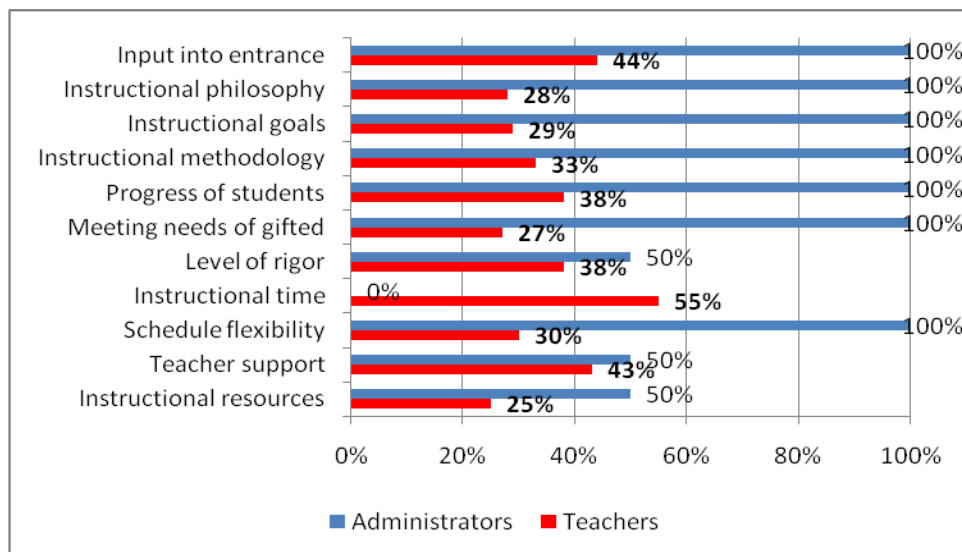


Figure 47. Percent of middle school teachers and administrators reporting they are fairly or very satisfied with components of the Challenge program.

High School Teachers and Administrators

Because the gifted program at the high school is limited to honors and advanced placement classes, the survey given to staff consisted of only four questions. Figure 48 shows that staff is not satisfied with communication about which students in their classes have been previously identified as gifted. However, a large percentage of teachers and administrators reported satisfaction with honors classes meeting academic and social-emotional needs of gifted students. Less satisfaction was reported for other supports available to students in meeting their social-emotional needs.

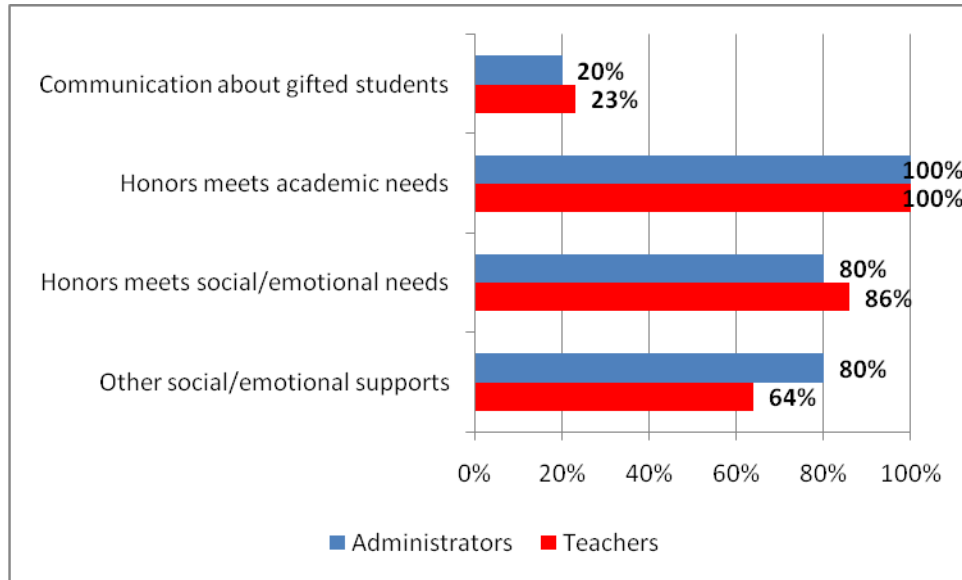


Figure 48. Percent of high school teachers and administrators reporting they are fairly or very satisfied with components of the Challenge program.

Program Expansion All Levels

Staff was asked about their perceived need for Challenge program expansion and areas in which the program might be expanded. According to the results displayed in Figures 49 and 50, teachers reported a greater need for expansion than administrators. High school staff reported a greater perceived need in most areas than the other levels. Areas of greatest need for expansion at all levels are reading, writing, science, and interdisciplinary instruction.

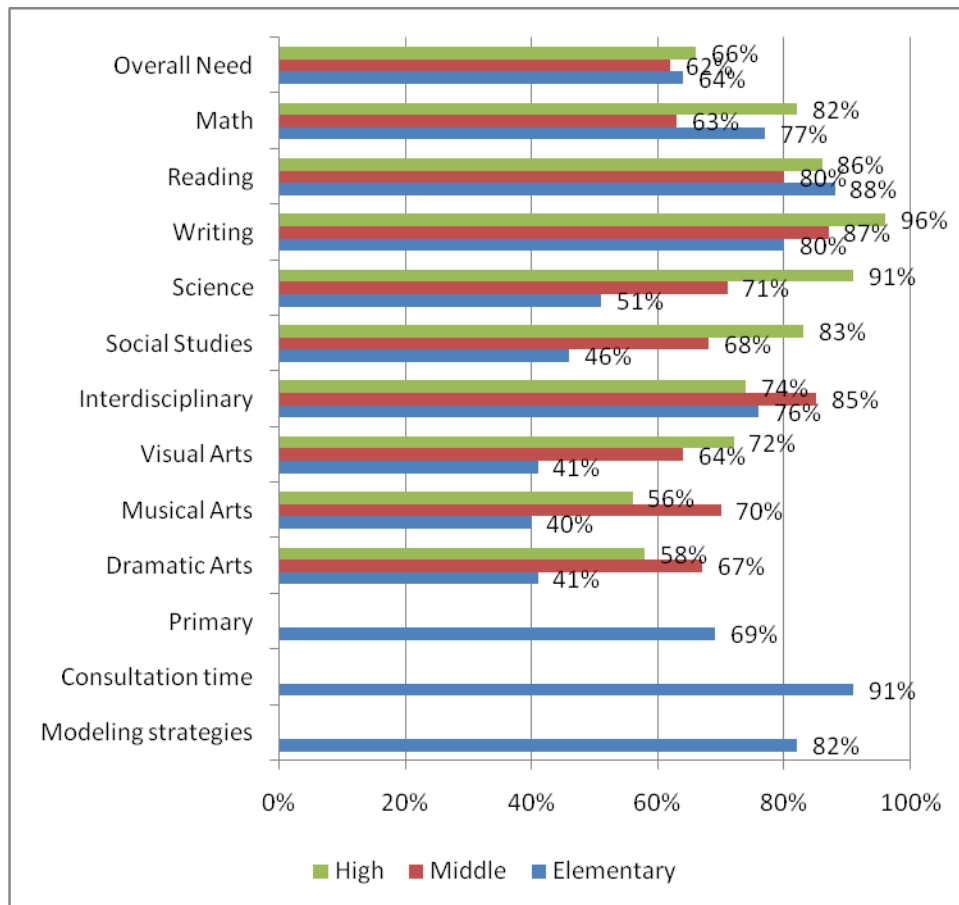


Figure 49. Percent of teachers reporting Challenge program expansion was fairly needed or very needed and the areas to expand services.

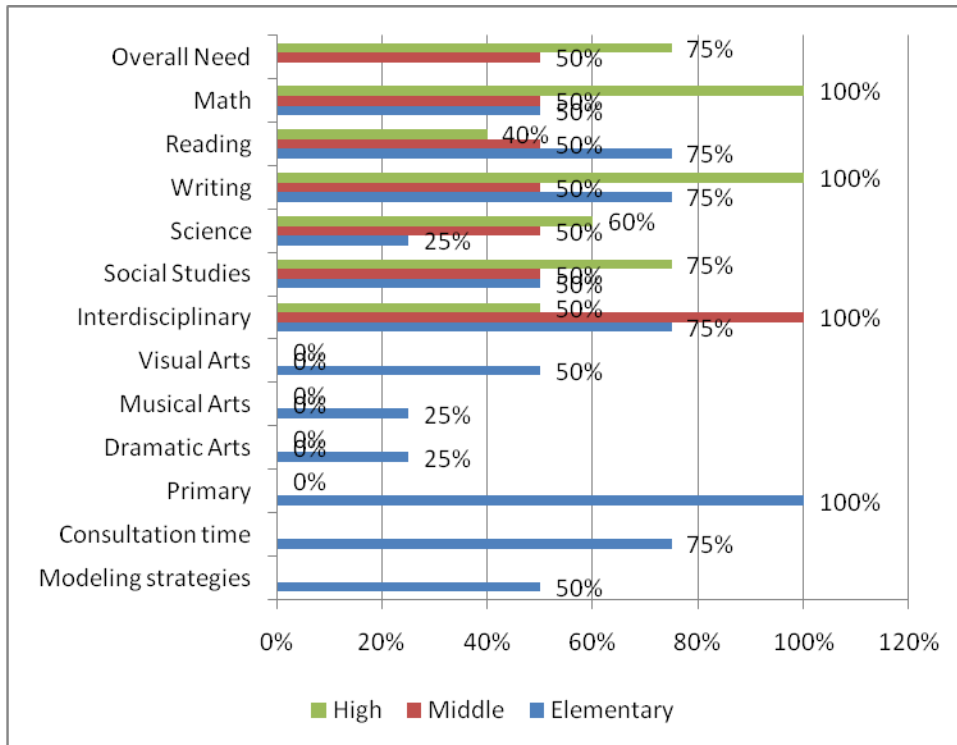


Figure 50. Percent of administrators reporting Challenge program expansion was fairly needed or very needed and the areas to expand services.

At the end of the survey teachers and administrators were asked to respond to two open-response items to provide additional comments about the program. The following themes were found in the analysis of this data:

- Teachers were concerned about the lack of communication between them and the Challenge teacher student progress.
- Teachers did not feel they had adequate knowledge of the program.
- Expansion of the program is a perceived need at all levels.
- Teachers expressed concerns about the lack of social-emotion support, especially social work services.

Student Data

A focus group consisting of about 40 freshman and sophomore students was conducted at the high school. In addition, a focus group of about 30 eighth grade students was conducted at the middle school. Students were very out-spoken, sincere and perceptive about their experiences in the Challenge program. We asked them to talk about elementary math and interdisciplinary times, middle school math and interdisciplinary, and how being in Challenge influenced high school learning. The following themes emerged from these discussions:

- Elementary Program
 - The math program was good but could have been a little harder
 - Communication between the classroom teacher and the Challenge teacher seemed disorganized
 - Being clustered together was beneficial for social and academic interaction
 - Interdisciplinary was not very rigorous and inconsistent. They wanted more time for this program.
 - Sometimes being in the program was more work, not different work so they had too much to do or missed important things going on in the classroom.
 - Social worker time not valuable and rather insignificant.
- Middle School Program
 - Difficulty with several different teachers in 8th grade one year (Cohort 2010)
 - Curriculum too fast paced in math
 - Better transition needed from 6th to 7th grade math in regards to rigor
 - More projects wanted that pertain to real life and get them ready for high school math
 - Want more interdisciplinary times to be pulled out for different experiences with the same books that are used in the regular classroom
- High School
 - Being in Challenge influenced them to take rigorous classes but more so their parents influenced them to take Honors classes
 - They like the rigor of the harder classes the high school has to offer
 - They enjoy being in classes with older students while taking geometry and advanced algebra

It is important to note that the students the committee interviewed were a part of the first two cohorts of the program. Many of the concerns they raised (i.e. missing other subjects, different teachers in grade 8, rigor of program) were improved upon in subsequent years.

Data from Area School Districts

Table 6 displays data gathered from our benchmark districts describing their gifted programs. In every district, the amount of time devoted to language arts/reading instruction far exceeds what we provide. Most districts provide a daily replacement for math and language arts at both the elementary and middle school levels.

School District	Elementary Math	Elementary Language Arts/Reading	Middle School Math	Middle School Language Arts/Reading
Barrington	Daily Replacement Gr. 3-5	3 rd Pullout Twice Weekly 4 th -5 th daily Pull out	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement
Elmhurst	90 minutes per week	90 minutes per week	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement
Geneva	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement
Naperville Dist. 203	Enrichment K – 2 Daily Replacement Gr. 4-5	Enrichment K – 2 Daily Replacement Gr. 4-5	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement
Naperville Dist. 204	150 minutes weekly - Gr. 1-2 200 minutes weekly - Gr. 3-5	150 minutes weekly Gr. 1-2 200 minutes weekly Gr. 3-5	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement
St. Charles	Daily Replacement Gr. 4-5	Enrichment 1-3 Special curriculum within classroom Gr. 4-5	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement
Wheaton	Daily Replacement Gr. 3-5	Daily Replacement Gr. 3-5	Daily Replacement	Daily Replacement
<i>Batavia</i>	<i>Daily Replacement Gr. 3-5</i>	<i>30 to 45 minutes average per week Gr. 3-5</i>	<i>Daily Replacement</i>	<i>Flexible Scheduling</i>

Table 6. Characteristics of gifted programs provided by our benchmark districts

Analysis of the NAGC Gifted Program Standards

As stated previously, a version of the NAGC Gifted Program Standards are located in Appendix A. The actual document contains minimum and exemplary descriptors. The Committee chose to include only the minimum standards in this report. As a method of self-assessment, the Committee reviewed these standards and judged whether or not our Challenge program currently meets these standards. In the appendix, the standards that the Committee judged as having been met are in bold type.

Some of the bolded standards apply to our overall program. The Committee judged that our program meets most standards regarding program evaluation and program administration and management. The Committee believes our overall program meets few standards in professional development, and socio-emotional guidance and counseling.

Some of the bolded standards apply only to our math program. According to the minimum criteria, our program meets the standards in identification and curriculum and instruction. The Committee believes our math program meets few standards in program design. In evaluating our interdisciplinary program, the Committee believes standards regarding identification, curriculum and instruction, and program design are not being met.

Part Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

The Challenge Program Evaluation Committee convened in the fall of 2007 to analyze the findings of the achievement and perceptions data. The purpose of this section is to draw conclusions and propose recommendations for improvement of the Challenge program. Based on the achievement data, and staff, parent, and student perceptions data, the committee has drawn the following conclusions.

- In general, there is a lack of understanding by staff and parents as to the identification criteria, instructional philosophy and goals, and how our program meets the social-emotional needs of gifted students. Although cluster teachers report more perceived knowledge, the level of knowledge among all of these stakeholder groups does not meet the committee's expectations.
- In both math and interdisciplinary, Blacks, Hispanics, low income, and female students are underrepresented based on their proportion to the general population.
- The mathematics program appears to be a successful instructional approach for our gifted students. A larger proportion of Challenge students exceed state and district standards in math as compared to their Non-Challenge peers. In addition, Challenge students outperform these peers in all subtests of the ISAT and MAP. Parents report high levels of satisfaction with the level of rigor and the progress of their child in the program. Staff satisfaction is lower than parent satisfaction. However, satisfaction is higher among cluster teachers, those who have personal knowledge of the program, than non-cluster teachers.
- The mathematics program is not perceived as perfect, and staff and parents expressed dissatisfaction in some areas. Even with the lack of perceived knowledge of entrance procedures for the program, parents expressed dissatisfaction with these procedures. Four days of instruction, rather than five, was a perceived concern. Communication between the Challenge teacher and parent, as well as with the classroom teacher, was a perceived area of improvement.
- The results of the interdisciplinary program appear to be inconclusive. The percent of student exceeding state and district standards is not consistent, and in middle school grades the percent exceeding diminishes. When compared to their Non-Challenge peers, Challenge students score higher. However, because of the small amount of time students receive direct instruction from the Challenge teacher, it is difficult to factor in whether their achievement is attributable to classroom instruction or Challenge instruction. Despite this achievement, there is overwhelming dissatisfaction among parents, staff, and students for this program at the elementary grades. Middle school teachers have a higher level of satisfaction for the instruction students receive. However, middle school student achievement is much lower than elementary student achievement.
- The committee was not able to evaluate the level of performance of high school students who have been in these two programs because the oldest cohort is now sophomore students. However, high school staff have the highest levels of satisfaction with what they are able to instructionally offer gifted students. Their only concern was with the lack of communication about students in their classes who have been identified as gifted.

Based on the achievement data, staff, parent, and student perceptions data, data gathered from benchmark districts, and documented research, the overarching recommendation is to expand the Challenge program. In expanding the program, the following considerations should be made:

- The mathematics program should be expanded to five days of instruction for third through fifth grade students.
- An enrichment program and targeted differentiation should occur for students in kindergarten through grade two.
- A replacement language arts program should be created for grades three through eight. The major focus of this program should be reading and writing, but should utilize inquiry-based instruction that incorporates global issues in science and social studies that are of interest to students.
- Identification procedures for the language arts program should consist of multiple criteria that include assessment of reading, writing, and verbal ability. An investigation should be conducted to determine why we have underrepresented populations in our current program. The purpose of this investigation should be to improve the current identification process of math students, as well as create an equitable process for the language arts program. There should be clear and frequent communication to staff and parents regarding identification procedures, program design, and instructional methodology.
- Professional development should be provided to classroom teachers who have students in either program. Topics may include, but are not limited to: characteristics of gifted students, understanding the social-emotional needs of the gifted, strategies for differentiation of instruction, and planning/collaboration time with the Challenge teacher. Challenge teachers should be expected to participate in a minimum number of hours of professional development each year. Topics should target gaps in their own learning as well as topics to meet the needs of their students.
- Social-emotional guidance and counseling should be available for students based on their needs. Special attention should be given to underachieving gifted students and to those who lack study, time management, organizational, social, and peer relationship skills. Middle and high school students should be given career guidance in choosing a strong career path.
- The following forms of program design and acceleration should be investigated: early admission/entrance into the next learning level, multiage classes, early high school graduation and admission into college, curriculum compacting, flexible grouping, independent study, distance learning, and dual credit classes.
- As expansion occurs, management of the program will become more complex. A full time program coordinator should be assigned to this task. Responsibilities would include, but are not limited to: oversee the program at all schools, liaison between elementary, middle, and high schools, coordination of professional development, mentoring of staff, grant application and management, resource allocation, and liaison with parents and the Regional Office of Education.

The committee truly believes the information presented in this report, including the conclusions and recommendations herein will support the District's mission of "Educating students today to meet the challenges of tomorrow." An expansion of the Challenge program will fortify the District's vision and augment its success of reaching its goals. We encourage the Board to allocate the appropriate resources in order to fully recognize and encourage its gifted students to excel. An expansion of the curriculum, as indicated in this recommendation, will ensure that Batavia Public Schools fully supports the development of *all* students in reaching their potential. The Challenge Committee is committed to continuing to work with the board and administration as these recommendations are explored and implemented.

Appendix A: Pre-K – 12 Gifted Program Standards

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Student Identification	
Description: Gifted learners must be assessed to determine appropriate educational services.	
Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards
1. A comprehensive and cohesive process for student nomination must be coordinated in order to determine eligibility for gifted education services.	<p>1.0M Information regarding the characteristics of gifted students in areas served by the district must be annually disseminated to all appropriate staff members.</p> <p>1.1M All students must comprise the initial screening pool of potential recipients of gifted education services.</p> <p>1.2M Nominations for services must be accepted from any source (e.g., teachers, parents, community members, peers, etc.).</p> <p>1.3M Parents must be provided with information regarding an understanding of giftedness and student characteristics.</p>
2. Instruments used for student assessment to determine eligibility for gifted education services must measure diverse abilities, talents, strengths, and needs in order to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate any strengths.	<p>2.0M Assessment instruments must measure the capabilities of students with provisions for the language in which the student is most fluent, when available.</p> <p>2.1M Assessments must be culturally fair.</p> <p>2.2M The purpose(s) of student assessments must be consistently articulated across all grade levels.</p> <p>2.3M Student assessments must be sensitive to the current stage of talent development.</p>
3. A student assessment profile of individual strengths and needs must be developed to plan appropriate intervention.	<p>3.0M An assessment profile must be developed for each child to evaluate eligibility for gifted education programming services.</p> <p>3.1M An assessment profile must reflect the unique learning characteristics and potential and performance levels.</p>
4. All student identification procedures and instruments must be based on current theory and research.	<p>4.0M No single assessment instrument or its results denies student eligibility for gifted programming services.</p> <p>4.1M All assessment instruments must provide evidence of reliability and validity for the intended purposes and target students.</p>
5. Written procedures for student identification must include, at the very least, provisions for informed consent, student retention, student reassessment, student exiting, and appeals procedures.	<p>5.0M District gifted programming guidelines must contain specific procedures for student assessment at least once during the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.</p> <p>5.1M District guidelines must provide specific procedures for student retention and exiting, as well as guidelines for parent appeals.</p>

Note: The committee concluded that the standards in bold print are evidenced only in our math program that services third through twelfth grade students.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Professional Development

Description: Gifted learners are entitled to be served by professionals who have specialized preparation in gifted education, expertise in appropriate differentiated content and instructional methods, involvement in ongoing professional development, and who possess exemplary personal and professional traits.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards
1. A comprehensive staff development program must be provided for all school staff involved in the education of gifted learners.	1.0M All school staff must be made aware of the nature and needs of gifted students. 1.1M Teachers of gifted students must attend at least one professional development activity a year designed specifically for teaching gifted learners.
2. Only qualified personnel should be involved in the education of gifted learners.	2.0M All personnel working with gifted learners must be certified to teach in the areas to which they are assigned, and must be aware of the unique learning differences and needs of gifted learners at the grade level at which they are teaching. 2.1M All specialist teachers in gifted education must hold or be actively working toward a certification (or the equivalent) in gifted education in the state in which they teach. 2.2M Any teacher whose primary responsibility for teaching includes gifted learners, must have extensive expertise in gifted education.
3. School personnel require support for their specific efforts related to the education of gifted learners.	3.0M School personnel must be released from their professional duties to participate in staff development efforts in gifted education.
4. The educational staff must be provided with time and other support for the preparation and development of the differentiated education plans, materials, curriculum.	4.0M School personnel must be allotted planning time to prepare for the differentiated education of gifted learners.

Note: The committee concluded that the standards in bold print are evidenced in our program.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling

Description: Gifted education programming must establish a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional development of gifted learners.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards
1. Gifted learners must be provided with differentiated guidance efforts to meet their unique socio-emotional development.	1.0M Gifted learners, because of their unique socio-emotional development, must be provided with guidance and counseling services by a counselor who is familiar with the characteristics and socio-emotional needs of gifted learners.
2. Gifted learners must be provided with career guidance services especially designed for their unique needs.	2.0M Gifted learners must be provided with career guidance consistent with their unique strengths.
3. Gifted at-risk students must be provided with guidance and counseling to help them reach their potential.	3.0M Gifted learners who are at risk must have special attention, counseling, and support to help them realize their full potential.
4. Gifted learners must be provided with affective curriculum in addition to differentiated guidance and counseling services.	4.0M Gifted learners must be provided with affective curriculum as part of differentiated curriculum and instructional services.
5. Underachieving gifted learners must be served rather than omitted from differentiated services.	5.0M Gifted students who are underachieving must not be exited from gifted programs because of related problems.

Note: The committee concluded that none of these standards are evidenced in our program.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Evaluation

Description: Program evaluation is the systematic study of the value and impact of services provided.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards
1. An evaluation must be purposeful.	1.0M Information collected must reflect the interests and needs of most of the constituency groups.
2. An evaluation must be efficient and economic.	2.0M School districts must provide sufficient resources for program evaluation.
3. An evaluation must be conducted competently and ethically.	3.0M Persons conducting the evaluation must be competent trustworthy. 3.1M The program evaluation design must address whether or not services have reached intended goals. 3.2M Instruments and procedures used for data collection must be valid and reliable for their intended use. 3.3M Ongoing formative and summative evaluation strategies must be used for substantive program improvement and development. 3.4M Individual data must be held confidential.
4. The evaluation results must be made available through a written report.	4.0M Evaluation reports must present the evaluation results in a clear and cohesive format.

Note: The committee concluded that the standards in bold print are evidenced in our program.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Design

Description: The development of appropriate gifted education programming requires comprehensive services based on sound philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards
1. Rather than any single gifted program, a continuum of programming services must exist for gifted learners.	1.0M Gifted programming services must be accessible to all gifted learners.
2. Gifted education must be adequately funded.	2.0M Gifted education funding should be equitable compared to the funding of other local programming.
3. Gifted education programming must evolve from a comprehensive and sound base.	3.0M Gifted education programming must be submitted for outside review on a regular basis. 3.1M Gifted programming must be guided by a clearly articulated philosophy statement and accompanying goals and objectives. 3.2M A continuum of services must be provided across grades pre-K–12.
4. Gifted education programming services must be an integral part of the general education school day.	4.0M Gifted education programming should be articulated with the general education program. 4.1M Appropriate educational opportunities must be provided in the regular classroom, resource classroom, separate, or optional voluntary environments.
5. Flexible groupings of students must be developed in order to facilitate differentiated instruction and curriculum.	5.0M The use of flexible grouping of gifted learners must be an integral part of gifted education programming.
6. Policies specific to adapting and adding to the nature and operations of the general education program are necessary for gifted education.	6.0M Existing and future school policies must include provisions for the needs of gifted learners.

Note: The committee concluded that the standards in bold print are evidenced only in our math program that services third through twelfth grade students.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Administration and Management

Description: Appropriate gifted education programming must include the establishment of a systematic means of developing, implementing, and managing services.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards
1. Appropriately qualified personnel must direct services for the education of gifted learners.	1.0M The designated coordinator of gifted education programming must have completed coursework or staff development in gifted education and display leadership ability to be deemed appropriately qualified.
2. Gifted education programming must be integrated into the general education program.	2.0M The gifted education program must create linkages between general education and gifted education at all levels.
3. Gifted education programming must include positive working relationships with constituency and advocacy groups, as well as with compliance agencies.	<p>3.0M Gifted programming staff must establish ongoing parent communication.</p> <p>3.1M Gifted programs must establish and use an advisory committee that reflects the cultural and socio-economic diversity of the school or school district's total student population, and includes parents, community members, students, and school staff members.</p> <p>3.2M Gifted education programming staff must communicate with other on-site departments as well as other educational agencies vested in the education of gifted learners (e.g., other school districts, school board members, state departments of education, intermediate educational agencies, etc.).</p>
4. Requisite resources and materials must be provided to support the efforts of gifted education programming.	<p>4.0M Resources must be provided to support program operations.</p> <p>4.1M Technological support must be provided for gifted education programming services.</p> <p>4.2M The library selections must reflect a range of materials including those appropriate for gifted learners.</p>

Note: The committee concluded that the standards in bold print are evidenced in our program.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Curriculum and Instruction

Description: Gifted education services must include curricular and instructional opportunities directed to the unique needs of the gifted learner.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards
1. Differentiated curriculum for the gifted learner must span grades pre-K–12.	1.0M Differentiated curriculum (curricular and instructional adaptations that address the unique learning needs of gifted learners) for gifted learners must be integrated and articulated throughout the district.
2. Regular classroom curricula and instruction must be adapted, modified, or replaced to meet the unique needs of gifted learners.	2.0M Instruction, objectives, and strategies provided to gifted learners must be systematically differentiated from those in the regular classroom. 2.1M Teachers must differentiate, replace, supplement, or modify curricula to facilitate higher level learning goals. 2.2M Means for demonstrating proficiency in essential regular curriculum concepts and processes must be established to facilitate appropriate academic acceleration. 2.3M Gifted learners must be assessed for proficiency in basic skills and knowledge and provided with alternative challenging educational opportunities when proficiency is demonstrated
3. Instructional pace must be flexible to allow for the accelerated learning of gifted learners as appropriate.	3.0M A program of instruction must consist of advanced content and appropriately differentiated teaching strategies to reflect the accelerative learning pace and advanced intellectual processes of gifted learners.
4. Educational opportunities for subject and grade skipping must be provided to gifted learners.	4.0M Decisions to proceed or limit the acceleration of content and grade acceleration must only be considered after a thorough assessment.
5. Learning opportunities for gifted learners must consist of a continuum of differentiated curricular options, instructional approaches, and resource materials.	5.0M Diverse and appropriate learning experiences must consist of a variety of curricular options, instructional strategies, and materials. 5.1M Flexible instructional arrangements (e.g., special classes, seminars, resource rooms, mentorships, independent study, and research projects) must be available.

Note: The committee concluded that the standards in bold print are evidenced only in our math program that services third through twelfth grade students.

Appendix B: Parent Survey

Demographics

A. What grade is your child currently in?

1. 3
2. 4
3. 5
4. 6
5. 7
6. 8

B. At what school does your child attend?

1. Alice Gustafson
2. Grace McWayne
3. H.C. Storm
4. Hoover-Wood
5. J.B. Nelson
6. Louise White
7. Rotolo Middle School

C. Which gifted program is your child currently enrolled?

1. Elementary Mathematics
2. Elementary Interdisciplinary
3. Elementary Mathematics and Interdisciplinary
4. Middle School Advance Mathematics

D. How many children have been enrolled in our gifted program?

1. One
2. Two
3. Three
4. More than three

**COMPLETE PAGE 2 AND 3 ONLY IF YOUR CHILD HAS EVER BEEN ENROLLED
IN THE ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS PROGRAM.**

IF NOT GO TO PAGE 4.

Elementary Math Program

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our elementary math program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable

E. Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4
F. Exit procedures	1	2	3	4
G. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4
H. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4
K. Progress of your child	1	2	3	4
J. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the gifted	1	2	3	4

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our elementary math program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

K. Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
L. Exit procedures	1	2	3	4	5
M. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
N. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
O. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
P. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5

Q. To what degree do you believe the elementary math program is at the appropriate level of rigor for our students?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor

R. To what degree do you believe that the amount of weekly instructional time (one hour, four days a week), given to students by the elementary math teacher, is appropriate?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little

S. To what degree do you believe that the amount of homework, given to students by the elementary math teacher, is appropriate?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little

T. To what degree do you believe the elementary math homework is at the appropriate level of rigor for your child?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor

U. To what degree are you satisfied with the level of communication between you and the elementary math teacher?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied

**COMPLETE PAGE 4 AND 5 ONLY IF YOUR CHILD HAS EVER BEEN ENROLLED
IN THE ELEMENTARY INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM.
IF NOT GO TO PAGE 6.**

Elementary Interdisciplinary Program

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our elementary interdisciplinary program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable

V.	Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4
W.	Exit procedures	1	2	3	4
X.	Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4
Y.	Instructional goals	1	2	3	4
Z.	Progress of your students	1	2	3	4

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our elementary interdisciplinary program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

AA.	Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
AB.	Instructional focus	1	2	3	4	5
AC.	Instructional time per week	1	2	3	4	5
AD.	Instruction integrated with classroom curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
AE.	Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
AF.	Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5

AG. To what degree do you believe the elementary interdisciplinary program is at the appropriate level of rigor for our students?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor

AH. To what degree do you believe that the amount of weekly instructional, given to students by the elementary interdisciplinary teacher, is appropriate?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little

AI. To what degree are you satisfied with the level of communication between you and the elementary interdisciplinary teacher?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied

COMPLETE PAGE 6 AND 7 ONLY IF YOUR CHILD IS ENROLLED IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL ADVANCED MATHEMATICS PROGRAM.

IF NOT GO TO PAGE 8.

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our middle school advanced math program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable

AJ. Exit procedures	1	2	3	4
AK. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4
AL. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4
AM. Progress of your child	1	2	3	4
AN. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the gifted	1	2	3	4

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our middle school advanced math program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

AO. Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
AP. Exit procedures	1	2	3	4	5
AQ. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
AR. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
AS. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
AT. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5

AU. To what degree do you believe the elementary math program is at the appropriate level of rigor for our students?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor

AV. To what degree do you believe that the amount of homework, given to students by the elementary math teacher, is appropriate?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little

AW. To what degree do you believe the elementary math homework is at the appropriate level of rigor for your child?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor

AX. To what degree are you satisfied with the level of communication between you and the elementary math teacher?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied

At the middle school, there is no formal interdisciplinary program. However, classroom teachers differentiate instruction and assessment to meet the needs of higher ability students. Occasionally, these students will be taught by the gifted teacher for special units.

AY. Were you aware that this approach was being used with higher ability students?

1. Yes
2. No

AZ. To what degree are you satisfied that this approach met the needs of your child?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied

THIS LAST SECTION IS FOR ALL PARENTS.

Improvements to the Gifted Program

BA. To what degree do you perceive a need for an expansion of the gifted program?

1. Very needed
2. Fairly needed
3. Minimally needed
4. Not at all needed
5. Not applicable

In what area(s) should the program expand?

BB.	Math	1. Yes	2. No
BC.	Reading	1. Yes	2. No
BD.	Writing	1. Yes	2. No
BE.	Science	1. Yes	2. No
BF.	Social Studies	1. Yes	2. No
BG.	Interdisciplinary	1. Yes	2. No
BH.	Visual arts	1. Yes	2. No
BI.	Musical arts	1. Yes	2. No
BJ.	Dramatic arts	1. Yes	2. No
BK.	Primary students	1. Yes	2. No

What other improvements do you believe could be made to our gifted program?

What other comments would you like to offer?

Appendix C: Teacher Surveys

Elementary

Demographics

A. What level do you teach?

1. K
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 4
6. 5
7. K-5 specials or support

B. At what school do you teach?

1. Alice Gustafson
2. Grace McWayne
3. H.C. Storm
4. Hoover-Wood
5. J.B. Nelson
6. Louise White

C. Have you ever been a Challenge cluster teacher?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable

D. Do you have a gifted verification/endorsement?

1. Yes
2. No

E. Have you ever taken courses in gifted education?

1. Yes
2. No

Challenge Math Program

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our Challenge math program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable
5. Not Applicable

F. Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
G. Exit procedures	1	2	3	4	5
H. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
I. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
J. Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4	5
K. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
L. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the gifted	1	2	3	4	5

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our Challenge math program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

M. Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
N. Your input into student entrance	1	2	3	4	5
O. Exit procedures	1	2	3	4	5
P. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
Q. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
R. Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4	5
S. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
T. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5

U. To what degree do you believe the Challenge math program is at the appropriate level of rigor for our students?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor
4. Not applicable

V. To what degree do you believe that the amount of weekly instructional time (one hour, four days a week), given to students by the Challenge math teacher, is appropriate?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

W. To what degree do you believe the way Challenge math is scheduled for students gives you the needed flexibility for your classroom instructional schedule?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

X. It has been suggested that instead of being taught by a Challenge teacher, 3rd and 4th grade students could be scheduled for math with the grade above them. To what degree do you believe the quality of gifted instruction would be with this approach?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective

Y. If this approach is used to instruct Challenge math students, to what degree would you be allowed to maintain flexibility in your classroom schedule?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective

Challenge Interdisciplinary Program

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our Challenge interdisciplinary program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable

Z.	Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4
AA.	Exit procedures	1	2	3	4
BB.	Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4
CC.	Instructional goals	1	2	3	4
DD.	Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4
EE.	Progress of your students	1	2	3	4

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our Challenge interdisciplinary program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

FF.	Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
GG.	Your input into student entrance	1	2	3	4	5
HH.	Instructional focus	1	2	3	4	5
II.	Instructional time per week	1	2	3	4	5
JJ.	Instruction integrated with classroom curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
KK.	Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4	5
LL.	Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
MM.	Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5

Improvements to the Challenge Program

NN. To what degree do you perceive a need for an expansion of the Challenge program?

1. Very needed
2. Fairly needed
3. Minimally needed
4. Not at all needed
5. Not applicable

In what area(s) should the program expand?

OO.	Math	1. Yes	2. No
PP.	Reading	1. Yes	2. No
QQ.	Writing	1. Yes	2. No
RR.	Science	1. Yes	2. No
SS.	Social Studies	1. Yes	2. No
TT.	Interdisciplinary	1. Yes	2. No
UU.	Visual arts	1. Yes	2. No
VV.	Musical arts	1. Yes	2. No
WW.	Dramatic arts	1. Yes	2. No
XX.	Primary students	1. Yes	2. No
YY.	Teacher consultation time	1. Yes	2. No
ZZ.	Modeling of instructional strategies	1. Yes	2. No

What other improvements do you believe could be made to our Challenge program?

What other comments would you like to offer?

Middle School

Demographics

A. What level do you teach?

1. 6
2. 7
3. 8
4. 6-8 Exploratory or support

Do you teach the following subjects?

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------|-------|
| B. Mathematics | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| C. Language Arts | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| D. Science | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| E. Social Studies | 1. Yes | 2. No |

C. Do you have a gifted verification/endorsement?

1. Yes
2. No

D. Have you ever taken courses in gifted education?

1. Yes
2. No

Program

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our gifted program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable

E. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4
F. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4
G. Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4
H. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4
I. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the gifted	1	2	3	4

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our gifted program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

J. Your input into student inclusion	1	2	3	4	5
K. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
L. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
M. Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4	5
N. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
O. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5
P. Scheduling services for students	1	2	3	4	5
Q. Availability of resources for students	1	2	3	4	5

R. To what degree do you believe the Challenge program is at the appropriate level of rigor for our students?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor
4. Not applicable

S. To what degree do you believe that the amount of instructional time, given to students by the Challenge teacher, is appropriate?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

T. To what degree do you believe the way Challenge instruction is scheduled for students allows you the needed flexibility for your classroom instructional schedule?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

U. To what degree has the Challenge teacher been able to support you in implementing differentiation of instruction?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

Improvements to the Challenge Program

V. To what degree do you perceive a need for an expansion of the Challenge program?

1. Very needed
2. Fairly needed
3. Minimally needed
4. Not at all needed
5. Not applicable

In what area(s) should the gifted program expand?

W. Math	1. Yes	2. No
X. Reading	1. Yes	2. No
Y. Writing	1. Yes	2. No
Z. Science	1. Yes	2. No
AA.Social Studies	1. Yes	2. No
BB. Interdisciplinary	1. Yes	2. No
CC.Visual arts	1. Yes	2. No
DD.Musical arts	1. Yes	2. No
EE. Dramatic arts	1. Yes	2. No

What other improvements do you believe could be made to our Challenge program?

What other comments would you like to offer?

High School

Demographics

A. In what department do you teach? If there is more than one, choose the department in which you teach the most blocks.

1. Art
2. Business
3. English
4. Family Consumer Science
5. Foreign Language
6. Math
7. Music
8. Physical Education
9. Science
10. Social Studies
11. Special Education

B. Do you now or have you ever taught advanced placement or honors classes?

1. Yes
2. No

C. Do you have a gifted verification/endorsement?

1. Yes
2. No

D. Have you ever taken courses in gifted education?

1. Yes
2. No

Program

E. To what degree do you believe the communication to high school teachers, regarding students who have participated in our gifted program, is effective?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective
5. Does not Apply

F. To what degree do you believe advanced placement and honors classes meet the academic needs of gifted students?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective

G. To what degree do you believe advanced placement and honors classes meet the social/emotional needs of gifted students?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective

H. To what degree do you believe other supports or programs meet the social/emotional needs of gifted students?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective

Improvements to the Gifted Program

I. To what degree do you perceive a need to expand learning opportunities for gifted students at the high school?

1. Very needed
2. Fairly needed
3. Minimally needed
4. Not at all needed
5. Not applicable

In what area(s) should the high school expand learning opportunities for the gifted student?

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------|-------|
| J. Math | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| K. Reading | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| L. Writing | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| M. Science | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| N. Social Studies | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| O. Interdisciplinary | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| P. Visual arts | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| Q. Musical arts | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| R. Dramatic arts | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| S. Applied Learning | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| T. Other _____ | | |

BB. What other improvements do you believe could be made to our gifted program?

CC. What other comments would you like to offer?

Appendix D: Administrator Surveys

Elementary

Demographics

- A. Intentionally left blank
- B. Intentionally left blank
- C. Do you cluster Challenge students at your school?
 - 1. Yes
 - 2. No
- D. Do you have a gifted verification/endorsement?
 - 1. Yes
 - 2. No
- E. Have you ever taken courses in gifted education?
 - 1. Yes
 - 2. No

Challenge Math Program

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our Challenge math program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable
5. Not Applicable

F. Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
G. Exit procedures	1	2	3	4	5
H. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
I. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
J. Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4	5
K. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
L. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the gifted	1	2	3	4	5

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our Challenge math program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

M. Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
N. Your input into student entrance	1	2	3	4	5
O. Exit procedures	1	2	3	4	5
P. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
Q. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
R. Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4	5
S. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
T. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5

U. To what degree do you believe the Challenge math program is at the appropriate level of rigor for our students?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor
4. Not applicable

V. To what degree do you believe that the amount of weekly instructional time (one hour, four days a week), given to students by the Challenge math teacher, is appropriate?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

W. To what degree do you believe the way Challenge math is scheduled for students gives teachers the needed flexibility for their classroom instructional schedule?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

X. It has been suggested that instead of being taught by a Challenge teacher, 3rd and 4th grade students could be scheduled for math with the grade above them. To what degree do you believe the quality of gifted instruction would be with this approach?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective

Y. If this approach is used to instruct Challenge math students, to what degree would teachers be allowed to maintain flexibility in their classroom schedule?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective

Challenge Interdisciplinary Program

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our Challenge interdisciplinary program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable

Z.	Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4
AA.	Exit procedures	1	2	3	4
BB.	Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4
CC.	Instructional goals	1	2	3	4
DD.	Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4
EE.	Progress of your students	1	2	3	4

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our Challenge interdisciplinary program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

FF.	Entrance procedures	1	2	3	4	5
GG.	Your input into student entrance	1	2	3	4	5
HH.	Instructional focus	1	2	3	4	5
II.	Instructional time per week	1	2	3	4	5
JJ.	Instruction integrated with classroom curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
KK.	Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4	5
LL.	Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
MM.	Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5

Improvements to the Challenge Program

NN. To what degree do you perceive a need for an expansion of the Challenge program?

1. Very needed
2. Fairly needed
3. Minimally needed
4. Not at all needed
5. Not applicable

In what area(s) should the program expand?

OO.	Math	1. Yes	2. No
PP.	Reading	1. Yes	2. No
QQ.	Writing	1. Yes	2. No
RR.	Science	1. Yes	2. No
SS.	Social Studies	1. Yes	2. No
TT.	Interdisciplinary	1. Yes	2. No
UU.	Visual arts	1. Yes	2. No
VV.	Musical arts	1. Yes	2. No
WW.	Dramatic arts	1. Yes	2. No
XX.	Primary students	1. Yes	2. No
YY.	Teacher consultation time	1. Yes	2. No
ZZ.	Modeling of instructional strategies	1. Yes	2. No

What other improvements do you believe could be made to our Challenge program?

What other comments would you like to offer?

Middle School

Demographics

A. Intentionally left blank

B. Intentionally left blank

C. Do you have a gifted verification/endorsement?

1. Yes
2. No

D. Have you ever taken courses in gifted education?

1. Yes
2. No

Program

To what degree do you believe you understand the following components of our gifted program?

1. Very knowledgeable
2. Fairly Knowledgeable
3. Minimally Knowledgeable
4. Not at all Knowledgeable

E. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4
F. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4
G. Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4
H. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4
I. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the gifted	1	2	3	4

To what degree are you satisfied with the following components of our gifted program?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Minimally satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Not enough information to have an opinion

J. Your input into student inclusion	1	2	3	4	5
K. Instructional philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
L. Instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
M. Instructional methodology	1	2	3	4	5
N. Progress of your students	1	2	3	4	5
O. Meeting the social/emotional needs of the students	1	2	3	4	5
P. Scheduling services for students	1	2	3	4	5
Q. Availability of resources for students	1	2	3	4	5

R. To what degree do you believe the Challenge program is at the appropriate level of rigor for our students?

1. Too Rigorous
2. Just Enough Rigor
3. Little Rigor
4. Not applicable

S. To what degree do you believe that the amount of instructional time, given to students by the Challenge teacher, is appropriate?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

T. To what degree do you believe the way Challenge instruction is scheduled for students allows teachers the needed flexibility for their classroom instructional schedule?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

U. To what degree has the Challenge teacher been able to support staff in implementing differentiation of instruction?

1. Too Much
2. Just Right
3. Too Little
4. Not applicable

Improvements to the Challenge Program

V. To what degree do you perceive a need for an expansion of the Challenge program?

1. Very needed
2. Fairly needed
3. Minimally needed
4. Not at all needed
5. Not applicable

In what area(s) should the gifted program expand?

W. Math	1. Yes	2. No
X. Reading	1. Yes	2. No
Y. Writing	1. Yes	2. No
Z. Science	1. Yes	2. No
AA. Social Studies	1. Yes	2. No
BB. Interdisciplinary	1. Yes	2. No
CC. Visual arts	1. Yes	2. No
DD. Musical arts	1. Yes	2. No
EE. Dramatic arts	1. Yes	2. No

What other improvements do you believe could be made to our Challenge program?

What other comments would you like to offer?

High School

Demographics

A. Intentionally left blank

B. Do you now or have you ever taught advanced placement or honors classes?

1. Yes
2. No

C. Do you have a gifted verification/endorsement?

3. Yes
4. No

D. Have you ever taken courses in gifted education?

1. Yes
2. No

Program

E. To what degree do you believe the communication to high school teachers, regarding students who have participated in our gifted program, is effective?

1. Very Effective
2. Fairly Effective
3. Minimally Effective
4. Not at all Effective
5. Does not Apply

F. To what degree do you believe advanced placement and honors classes meet the academic needs of gifted students?

5. Very Effective
6. Fairly Effective
7. Minimally Effective
8. Not at all Effective

G. To what degree do you believe advanced placement and honors classes meet the social/emotional needs of gifted students?

5. Very Effective
6. Fairly Effective
7. Minimally Effective
8. Not at all Effective

H. To what degree do you believe other supports or programs meet the social/emotional needs of gifted students?

5. Very Effective
6. Fairly Effective
7. Minimally Effective
8. Not at all Effective

Improvements to the Gifted Program

I. To what degree do you perceive a need to expand learning opportunities for gifted students at the high school?

1. Very needed
2. Fairly needed
3. Minimally needed
4. Not at all needed
5. Not applicable

In what area(s) should the high school expand learning opportunities for the gifted student?

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------|-------|
| J. Math | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| K. Reading | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| L. Writing | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| M. Science | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| N. Social Studies | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| O. Interdisciplinary | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| P. Visual arts | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| Q. Musical arts | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| R. Dramatic arts | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| S. Applied Learning | 1. Yes | 2. No |
| T. Other _____ | | |

U. What other improvements do you believe could be made to our gifted program?

V. What other comments would you like to offer?

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