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Gifted student achievement and motivation levels related to participation in gifted programming

Stacey M. Jambura
University of Northern Iowa

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Gifted Student Achievement and Motivation Levels Related to Participation in Gifted Programming

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Date Approved

Dr. Audrey C. Rule, Chair of Committee
Coordinator of the Education of the Gifted Program
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

8-5-13
Date Approved

Dr. Stephanie Logan, Second Reader
Elementary Education Division
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

8-13-13
Date Approved

Dr. Jill Uhlenberg, Department Chair
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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Abstract

This study evaluated the gifted program of an urban school district in the Midwestern United States. Fifteen identified gifted students (4 male, 11 female; 11 European-American, 4 African-American; 7 ninth grade, 4 tenth grade, and 4 eleventh grade students) participated in the study by replying to a survey. High school gifted student attitudes toward achievement and motivation were examined and open-ended prompts supplied information on program strengths and weaknesses. Results indicate that participation in the program has led to the development of critical thinking skills, increased students' desires to strive for excellence, and allowed students to examine different perspectives. Students suggested the program should add more independent work, more challenging and in-depth project work to courses, incorporate more advanced work into regular coursework, and continue to provide opportunities for gifted students to interact with their intellectual peers.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Gifted education has grown and evolved since the turn of the twentieth century when it was first recognized that gifted students had different needs than typical students (National Association for Gifted Children, 2008a). Giftedness was first defined by an individual's intelligence quotient (IQ) with a minimum IQ score being at least two standard deviations above the population average, a standard score of 130 or better (Feldman, 2003). Today, new perspectives on intelligence have emerged, from Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (1993) to Robert Sternberg's Triarchic Theory (1997, 2003). These and other theories propose a wider range and understanding of giftedness.

A multitude of models and strategies have been developed to support gifted students. Some gifted curriculum models are: the School-Wide Enrichment Model (Renzulli & Reis, 1985), Autonomous Learner Model (Betts, 1985), the Parallel Curriculum Model (Tomlinson, Kaplan, Renzulli, Purcell, Leppien, & Burns, 2002), and the Integrated Curriculum Model (VanTassel-Baska, 2009). Most models follow the same basic framework of curriculum design and development that is transferable and usable in all content areas and grade levels, is applicable across schools and grouping settings, and incorporates differentiation for the gifted learner (VanTassel-Baska & Brown, 2009).

With no national funding or specific requirements for gifted education, there is a wide variability between states and, in many cases, an even larger inconsistency between districts of the same state. This irregularity leaves room for interpretation of gifted education and what works best for gifted students. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) developed a set of PreK-12 Gifted Programming Standards to assist

school districts by providing a framework for gifted education (1998, 2010). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) also approved teacher preparation standards in gifted education, the NAGC-CEC Teacher Knowledge & Skill Standards for Gifted and Talented Education (2006). These standards were created jointly by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and the Association for the Gifted (CEC-TAG). Together these standards help create a more systematic approach to meeting the needs of gifted children.

Importance of Gifted Programming and Student Achievement and Motivation

There are many different settings in which the education of gifted students occurs. Many schools have pull-out programs in which identified students from the regular classroom are removed to a special classroom to receive specialized gifted instruction. Other schools differentiate instruction in the classroom to meet the needs of the wide range of student abilities or use a tracking method to provide instruction at different levels for homogeneously-grouped students. Alternatively, there are magnet schools or special schools within a school for gifted students that cater to their needs in an all-day program. Additionally, gifted students are often grade/subject accelerated or dual enrolled to join their intellectual peers (National Association for Gifted Children, 2008b). Unfortunately, there are many schools that prefer to teach students in heterogeneous groups and require everyone to work at the same level and pace; thus creating gifted students who are bored and unengaged in school (Winner, 1996).

Of particular interest to this researcher are pull-out programs because this form of gifted programming is used at the elementary level by the school district at which this

research project took place. At schools with pull-out programs, gifted and high ability students need to be presented with opportunities to be challenged both in and out of the regular classroom, allowing them to make continuous progress in school. Students who are not challenged often become bored and/or frustrated with school (Kanevsky & Keighley, 2003; Siegle & McCoach, 1999). Gifted programming allows gifted students to interact with like-ability peers, developing individual talents and abilities. A study by Vaughn, Feldhusen, and Asher (1991) examined nine pull-out programs for gifted students for effectiveness. This study found that pull-out models in gifted education had significant positive effects on student achievement, critical thinking, and creativity. Many studies have found that gifted students who participate in gifted pull-out programs have more positive attitudes towards school, giftedness, and their programs of study than those gifted students who stay in the regular classroom (Rogers, 2007; Shields 2002). "When pull-out gifted programs were eliminated, parents reported that their children were experiencing – 'a decline in energy, curiosity, and intrinsic motivation to achieve at high levels and were beginning to disengage from the traditional curriculum'" (Purcell, 1993).

Issues Related to Retention of Gifted Students in Gifted Programs and Schools

Numerous studies on the effectiveness of gifted programming have been conducted as indicated later in this paragraph. Longitudinally, students who participate in gifted programming have increased aspirations for college and careers, develop post-secondary and career plans, and achieve more advanced degrees. Students also develop creativity and motivational skills that are later applied to their careers (Colangelo, Assouline, Gross, 2004; Lubinski, Webb, Morelock, & Benbow, 2001; Delcourt, 1993; Hérbert, 1993; Taylor, 1992). Additionally, gifted programs are effective at serving gifted

and advanced students from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic populations in a variety of educational settings and have been found to reverse underachievement in these students. (Baum, 1998; Baum Hébert, & Renzulli, 1999; Colangelo, Assouline, & Gross, 2004; Gavin, et. al., 2007; Hébert & Reis, 1999; Little, et. al., 2007; Reis & Diaz, 1999; Reis, et. al., 2007).

For gifted students to remain motivated in school and develop habits of lifelong learning, a gifted program should include these five components: choice, interest, enjoyment, personal meaning, and challenge (Gentry & Ferriss, 1999). Allowing students to choose curricula and problems to research increases interest and motivation to achieve, resulting in enjoyment of the tasks and increased personal meaning because the tasks are self-selected and self-directed. Higher-level content and higher-level thinking skills work together to promote challenge. Together these five concepts help build an intellectually stimulating environment where gifted students thrive and progress. If the level of challenge and intellectual stimulation is off-balance (i.e. low challenge and low stimulation, high challenge and low stimulation, high challenge and adequate stimulation), students may become bored, indifferent, or frustrated (Siegle & McCoach, 1999). When the level of challenge is in balance with the level of intellectual stimulation, students will be motivated and successful.

Statement of the Problem

The identification of students for inclusion in a gifted education program may occur as early as pre-kindergarten, but does early identification positively or negatively effect future motivation and academic achievement? The following are the research questions addressed by this study:

- What are the reported attitudes of students participating in the school district's gifted and talented program?
- What are the reported impacts of the gifted program on students?
- What suggestions do students have for improving the program?

Personal Interest in the Topic

The researcher chose to conduct this study after years of involvement in gifted education both as a student and as a teacher. As a product of gifted programming beginning with grade acceleration into kindergarten at the age of four, to all-day gifted programming in elementary and middle-school, to honors and advanced placement courses in high school, the researcher experienced first-hand the importance of gifted education and the positive and negative impacts it can have on a student. Now that the researcher is a teacher in the field of gifted education, it is of extreme interest and importance to ensure that students who participate in a gifted program receive a quality education and a positive experience.

Terms Related to the Study

Gifted and Talented Students/Individuals: The meaning of giftedness has been widely debated, thus, there are many variations of the definition. Many states and districts follow the federal definition but the National Association for Gifted Children definition also includes sensorimotor skills. Collectively, these definitions produce a more comprehensive understanding of giftedness.

Federal Definition: This definition is taken from the Javits Act, which provides grants for education programs serving bright children from low-income families: "The term gifted and talented student means children and youths who give evidence of higher

performance capability in such areas as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools in order to develop such capabilities fully."

The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act defines gifted students as "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 and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities." [Title IX, Part A, Definition 22. (2002)]

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Definition (2008c): "Gifted individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as an exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10% or rarer) in one or more domains. Domains include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system (e.g., mathematics, music, language) and/or set of sensorimotor skills (e.g., painting, dance, sports)."

Identification of Gifted Students: Most theorists believe that intelligence tests and other cognitive abilities tests provide an important piece of information about an individual's potential; however, they should not be over relied on as they do not supply all the information needed to identify gifted students (Callahan, 1982; Torrance, 1984; Birch, 1984; Borland & Wright, 1994). Other indicators should also be used in the identification process and should be given equal consideration when making decisions about the services an individual may need. Two different categories of indicators include status information and action information (Renzulli, 2004). Status information includes all data that can be recorded such as test scores, grades and academic accomplishments, and

teacher, parent, peer, and self-nominations. Action information is similar to dynamic assessment or performance-based assessment; however, it is used to make proactive decisions rather than an evaluation of student progress. In the end, professional judgment, rather than instruments and scores, should be used to make the final decision for identification.

Program Evaluation: Program evaluation should be an ongoing process throughout the course of a school year rather than an end-of-the-year assessment. Goals and objectives should be set prior to the start of a program, as they are the foundation on which the program will be built. A methodology should also be designed to measure whether the goals and objectives are met (Tomlinson & Callahan, 1994).

Sample Survey: A sample survey consists of a selection of a subset from an entire population (Wiersma, 1986). Sample surveys that target a significant portion of the population may determine the frequency of an attribute in a group and its distribution (Krathwohl, 1998).

Systematic Sampling: A systematic sampling is conducted by selecting every *n*th subject of a population to participate in a study. The weakness of conducting a sampling of this nature occurs if the population is initially arranged in a pattern. This could result in only subjects with similar characteristics or contexts to be studied (McMillan, 2012). To avoid a potential flaw in data, this study arranged all subjects from each school alphabetically by last name and selected every 2nd student. This helped ensure students from all cultures and ethnicities were included, as there are cultural trends in last names.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following literature review outlines research regarding gifted education and its impacts. The current definition and requirements of quality gifted programs are indentified. The social-emotional needs of gifted students as well as student impacts from gifted programming are examined. Finally, the purpose and importance of program evaluation are discussed.

Quality Gifted Programs

When examining whether a gifted program is of high quality, it is important to note that gifted programs should focus around developing students' abilities and supplying them with opportunities (Clark, 1997) and most importantly, gifted education is not a separate entity from the regular education program; rather it builds and expands upon it (Hunsaker & Callahan, 1991).

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) developed Gifted Program Standards for grades PK-12 (1998) to support districts as they examine the quality of their gifted programs. They addressed standards in seven areas that follow the basic framework of minimal standards and exemplary standards: student identification, professional development, socio-emotional guidance and counseling, program evaluation, program design, program administration and management, and curriculum and instruction. NAGC further explained that these standards are recommendations, not mandates, for how to construct a quality program and establish a level at which all should aspire to perform.

Research suggests that current strengths in gifted programs include a dedicated personnel with a diversity of approaches and options (VanTassel-Baska, 2006). However,

current limitations are more numerous. VanTassel-Baska discussed the perceived notion that gifted programs are highly beneficial for students, but research reveals that programs suffer from poor teaching and lack of curricular structure. This researcher found that systematic evaluations of programs were lacking; current identification systems in place were imperfect; program development failed to grow with student or school needs; gifted education educators lacked educational background in gifted education; and, furthermore, gifted education lacked needed resources, including personnel and funding (VanTassel-Baska, 2006). Thus, a gifted program should include strengths in each of these areas in order to be considered a "quality gifted program".

Social-Emotional Needs of the Gifted

One of the issues gifted students face is fitting in with age peers. Hollingworth (1942) was the first psychologist to study peer relationships of gifted students of varying intelligence levels. She found that students with an IQ between 125-155 had "socially optimal intelligence" because these students tended to be well-balanced, self-confident, outgoing, and able to make friends amongst their age group. Hollingworth found that students with an IQ over 160 had such a large disparity of intelligence from their chronologically aged peers that they were not able to find others with like-abilities or interests. Students who are extremely gifted (IQ of 170+) tend to have "considerably more difficulty in making social adjustments" than moderately gifted students (Burks, Jensen, Terman, 1930). These highly talented students are the most vulnerable when it comes to being accepted by their peers most likely because "they are exceedingly 'out of sync' with school, friends, and even family" (Janos & Robinson, 1985). They may appear to be adjusted but may not have strong and fulfilling social connections. Despite these

troubling findings, students who are removed from inappropriate grade placements and placed with their intellectual peers are able to make friends and be accepted by their classmates (Hollingworth, 1942). Acceleration also positively affects students psychologically. Mental stability, lack of anxiety and nervousness, happiness, and self-concept (regarding their own competence within academic, social, global, athletic, behavioral, and physical appearance domains) all increase (Rogers, 2002).

Many gifted students worry that the gifted label, rather than their personal qualities, affects others' attitudes and opinions toward them. This perception tends to negatively affect gifted student performance as students purposefully underachieve to try to gain social acceptance (Gross, 1993).

A study conducted by Rogers (1986) examined the motivation levels of gifted students. She contended that gifted students are more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated. Her finding is consistent with more recent research conducted by Gottfried & Gottfried (1996). In addition, Rodgers (1986) found that gifted students prefer independent tasks to mixed-ability group work and do not like "being given the responsibility for the learning achievements of classmates."

Perfectionism affects gifted students. One study by Baker (1996) confirmed that gifted students are stressed by perfectionism more than other students. Another study of 112 seventh and eight grade gifted students found that 87.5% of the students had strong tendencies toward perfectionism (Schuler, 1999). Holding high standards or expectations of one's own ability is important, however, this mindset may become negative if there is no flexibility to change standards when necessary, resulting in intense frustration and neuroticism. It becomes a clinical concern if "it prohibits gifted students from

appreciating their competency or the adequacy of their work" (Baker, 1996). "Neurotic perfectionists" are unable to feel satisfaction because they feel they cannot do things at a level they find acceptable (Hamacheck, 1978). Perfectionism may also cause other problems including underachievement (Lind, 1992), procrastination (Ferrari, 1992), and later in life, career obstacles and failures (Connolly, 1994). Fortunately, perfectionism can also be a positive force in a student's life. Self-oriented perfectionism leads to intrinsic motivation and goal orientation, self-efficacy in learning and performance, effective resource management, along with adaptive cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Compared to self-oriented perfectionism, social perfectionism has negative impacts in these areas leading to test anxiety and the need to be recognized by others (Mills & Blankstein, 2000).

Most Important Impacts of Gifted Programs

There has been little research of gifted program impacts on gifted students. Most studies have focused on program effectiveness of specific program models, short-term learning outcomes, and program improvements. Because of the limited literature regarding gifted education program impacts, Callahan (1996) and Reis (2001) urged educators to pursue follow-up studies of gifted programs and how participation has impacted student lives.

Hertzog (2003) conducted interviews of college students who had participated in gifted programs at the elementary level to document how early experiences impacted their lives. Students interviewed noted that gifted education had an exceptionally positive impact on their lives. They discussed how programs had better prepared them for college and careers, taught them how to study effectively, supported organization and time

management, enhanced their work ethic, helped them accomplish more difficult tasks, and, overall, improved their self-esteem. Students in this 2003 study remarked that gifted classes were more thought-provoking and allowed them to engage in discussions, hands-on activities, group work, and problem solving. Participants in Hertzog's study noted that the most memorable experiences in gifted programming were project-based and centered around student interest. Student interviews also revealed that gifted education teachers created a more engaging, challenging, and motivating environment compared to regular classroom teachers. Teachers in the gifted program were more caring, helped motivate the students, implemented a variety of instructional activities, and allowed students to work independently and at their own pace.

VanTassel-Baska (2006) also conducted a study in which gifted students were surveyed on their experiences in gifted education. These applications of student surveys suggests that acquiring student feedback may also be an important factor to consider when evaluating the quality of gifted programs.

Gifted Program Evaluation

One of the purposes of program evaluation is to ensure a program is stable and effective through the documentation of program impacts (Callahan & Caldwell, 1995). The National Association for Gifted Children published gifted education programming criterion concerning program evaluation in 1998. They defined program evaluation as "the systematic study of the value and impact of service provided". Guiding principles for program evaluation include purposeful evaluation, efficient and economic evaluation, and competent and ethical evaluation. Results from evaluations must also be made available through written reports. Together these principles help address whether gifted services

have reached their intended goals.

Gifted education lacks credibility in part because of "multiple conceptions of giftedness and multiple models with limited research behind them" (Van-Tassel-Baska, 2006). As of 2000, there were only 15 evaluation reports over a period of ten years that were associated with gifted education program findings and results (Johnsen, 2000). Tomlinson and Callahan (1994) found that evaluation literature emphasized the need to utilize findings, suggesting that many of the reports are not used to improve gifted programs. However, more recent literature suggests that there has since been some progress in this area (Avery & VanTassel-Baska, 2001; Avery, VanTassel-Baska, & O'Neill, 1997).

Overall, quality gifted programs should focus on developing students' abilities and provide students with opportunities not offered in the regular classroom. Gifted programming is important for meeting gifted students' social-emotional needs and development without which students may struggle with building meaningful peer relationships. Gifted programs are intended to be extensions of the regular, heterogeneously grouped classroom, not a separate entity (except in the case of gifted magnet schools). Currently, it appears as though gifted programs are lacking and need additional support. Implementing and utilizing program evaluations may help to increase the quality of current gifted programs in schools and impacts on student achievement and motivation levels.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Design of the District's Gifted Education Program

The district in which this study took place adopted the Autonomous Learner Model in 1984 with support from the school board. This approach provides the framework for the current gifted education program.

The Autonomous Learner Model (ALM) developed by Betts and Knapp (1980) leads students in grades K-12 though five dimensions to foster autonomy and meet the needs of students. The first dimension, Orientation, helps develop a foundation for students by uncovering the concepts of giftedness, talent, intelligence, and creativity, and examines how to develop potential. This level also encourages group interaction. The second dimension, Individual Development, guides students through the process of developing skills and attitudes essential for becoming a lifelong learner including cognitive skills, social and emotional skills, inter-and intra-personal skills, physical skills, along with concepts and attitudes of lifelong learning. At this level, students also develop organizational and productivity skills. The third dimension of the Autonomous Learner Model, Enrichment, provides students the freedom to explore content and curriculum not typically part of the regular classroom curriculum. Students are required to design, implement, complete, and present a project. This level also promotes a humanitarian spirit through cultural and service activities and events. The fourth dimension, Seminars, is designed for students to experience guided independent group learning. Groups are provided with the opportunity to research and present a topic of interest to the rest of the class and other interested parties. This helps move the role of the passive student to the role of the active learner. The fifth and final dimension, In-Depth Studies, grants students

the opportunity to pursue long-term in-depth studies of choice. Students have complete control over what will be learned, how it will be learned, and how to present what was learned. Students also determine the level of facilitation needed from a teacher or mentor. In all, "the goal of the model is to facilitate the growth of students as independent, self-directed learners, with the development of skills, concepts, and positive attitudes within the cognitive, emotional, and social domains" (Betts, Toy, Vasquez, 1996).

Participants and Research Setting

Fifteen high school students (4 male, 11 female; 11 European-American, 4 African-American; 7 ninth grade, 4 tenth grade, and 4 eleventh grade students) at an urban public school system in Iowa participated in the study. All students who were both currently enrolled in high school in the district and gifted programming or who had participated in gifted programming in past years were collected on a list. The list was then systematically divided in half. Those on the final list were invited to participate in the study. Consent to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Northern Iowa's human subjects review committee and the district's associate superintendent. All student participants and their parents received a letter explaining the purpose of the study and consented in writing to participate.

Research Design

The research design involved administration and analysis of a program evaluation survey. The survey is shown in the Appendix. The survey instrument consisted of four sections: (1) a basic information section; (2) a gifted education history section; (3) an education experience survey section; and (4) a gifted education experience survey section.

The basic information section requested each student's age, month and year of birth, current high school, current grade level, and current grade point average. The gifted education history section documented the student's current and past enrollments in the gifted program, advanced classes, and AP classes. This section also asked for the grade level in which the student was first identified for gifted programming and how many years the student had been involved in gifted programming, advanced classes, and/or AP classes.

The education experience survey section listed fifty questions that used a seven-point rating scale: strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, not sure, somewhat disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The questions focused on students' education experiences thus far in their schooling. These questions were designed to help determine students' motivation levels, desire to learn and acquire knowledge, and drive to seek out challenges. The final section of the survey, gifted education experience, consisted of ten seven-point rating scale questions and four short answer questions. The survey questions were designed to assess the district's current goals for their gifted program. These questions were used to rate the efficacy of the gifted program. The short answer questions allowed participants to provide insights concerning their experiences in gifted programming and to offer suggestions about how to improve the program.

Data Analysis

The first research question, "What are the reported attitudes of students participating in the school district's gifted and talented program?" was answered with rating scale data from the survey. The survey statements fit into five categories and were rated using a seven-point scale: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, desire to seek

out challenge, desire to seek out academic learning opportunities, and perfectionism. The mean answer for each survey statement was calculated to determine the consensus of students.

The second research question, "What are the reported impacts of the gifted program on students?" was answered through the short answer response question, "Has participating in gifted/advanced education changed who you are as a student? How or how not?" and through gifted program-specific survey statements. Students were also presented with an additional short response question that asked them to share their most memorable lesson or unit they participated in since identification for the gifted program and what made it memorable. All data from the survey questions were collected and categorized based on similarities in student answers. Answers that fit into similar categories were tallied to determine the most frequent responses. Survey statements were analyzed in a similar fashion to the survey statements that determined student attitudes about school and their education.

The third research question, "What suggestions do students have for improving the program?" was answered through short answer responses on the survey. Student comments were categorized and tallied to determine the most desired changes to the current program. The results from each of these questions are documented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

Student Responses to Attitude Items

Mean student responses to survey questions regarding intrinsic motivation are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. Table 1 shows survey statements worded so that the best outcome would be strong student agreement (a score near "1").

Results from the survey statements in Table 1 suggest that students exhibit self-confidence in their academic abilities and potential. Students appear to not be solely motivated by grades (although this is a motivating factor as illustrated in Table 3).

Table 1.

General Education Survey Statements Examining Intrinsic Motivation Part I

Survey Statement	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
Compared with others in my school, I think I am a good student.	1.6 (0.6)	Agree	Agree
I have very high expectations of myself.	1.6 (0.6)	Agree	Agree
I am genuinely motivated to do well in school because I want to learn.	2.1 (0.8)	Agree	Agree
In class, I want to see what I can learn and accomplish for myself.	2.1 (1.3)	Agree	Agree
I go to school because when I succeed in school I feel important.	2.3 (1.2)	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am motivated to study because I want to know and understand the material.	2.4 (1.4)	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am motivated to study because I want to develop myself as much as possible.	2.5 (1.6)	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I go to school because school is fun.	3.2 (1.4)	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Agree
TOTAL	2.2 (0.5)	Agree	Strongly Agree

Results imply that students do not fully consider school to be "fun;" however, this statement could potentially be interpreted in several different ways.

Statements in Table 2 were worded so that the most desirable answer would be strong disagreement (a score near "7"). Most students disagree about no longer demonstrating a desire to attend school. However, there was an outlier for this item. One participant surveyed strongly agreed with the first two statements (a score of "1") listed in Table 2 suggesting that she may not be receiving a desired level of challenge. It is important to note that this student also currently has a 4.0 GPA.

Table 2.

General Education Survey Statements Examining Intrinsic Motivation Part II

Survey Statements	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
I once had good reasons for going to school; however, now I wonder whether I should continue.	6.3 (1.6)	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I don't know why I go to school. I feel like I'm wasting my time.	6.2 (1.7)	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
If I do not do well in a class or assignment, it is because I do not have talent in that area and probably will never do well in it.	5.5 (1.4)	Disagree	Disagree
I complete just the minimum amount of school work required of me.	5.4 (2.1)	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
When work is hard, I either give up or study only the easy parts.	5.2 (1.7)	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
My top reason for NOT studying is that I can get by fine without studying.	3.2 (2.2)	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
TOTAL	5.3 (1.1)	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The result from the survey statement, "My top reason for NOT studying is that I can get by fine without studying" implies that students do not find studying necessary, perhaps because they already know the content or because of the level of confidence they

exhibit regarding their academic ability to quickly learn. It is hard to tell from this statement alone, therefore further research is needed to determine the exact cause behind student responses.

Table 3 and Table 4 explore the level to which participants are extrinsically motivated. Desired results in Table 3 is strong agreement with the statements.

Table 3.

General Education Survey Statements Examining Extrinsic Motivation Part I

Survey Statement	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
My grades are important because I want to get into college.	1.1 (0.4)	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
My grades are important because I want to graduate with honors.	1.7 (1.0)	Agree	Strongly Agree
I go to school because I think a high school education will help better prepare me for the career I have chosen.	1.8 (0.9)	Agree	Agree
I take some courses because they will look good on my transcripts when I apply to college.	1.8 (1.1)	Agree	Strongly Agree
In class, I want to outdo my classmates and friends.	1.9 (1.1)	Agree	Strongly Agree
I work hard to get a good grade even when I don't like the class.	2.0 (1.4)	Agree	Strongly Agree
My grades are important because I don't want to disappoint my family.	2.3 (1.7)	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is important to me to be recognized when I do well in school.	2.3 (1.6)	Agree	Agree
I go to school for the pleasure I experience when I excel in my studies.	2.5 (0.9)	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Agree
I go to school because I need at least a high school degree in order to find a high-paying job later on.	3.5 (2.1)	Not Sure	Strongly Agree
I never boast about my grades.	4.4 (2.1)	Not Sure	Disagree
TOTAL	2.3 (0.9)	Agree	Strongly Agree

The majority of participants strongly agreed that their desire to attend college is why grades are important to them. Other reasons indicate that students are extrinsically motivated to perform well in school because they are preparing for the future beyond their enrollment in the public school system. This indicates that students are goal-oriented and extrinsically motivated in a positive manner.

Table 4 statements were designed with the hope that participants would rate the statements as strongly disagree (a score near "7") to demonstrate that they are not solely motivated for extrinsic means.

Table 4.

General Education Survey Statements Extrinsic Motivation Part II

Survey Statement	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
I sign up for the easiest teacher so my grades will be better.	5.8 (1.4)	Disagree	Disagree
I am motivated in school ONLY because I want to get good grades.	4.2 (1.7)	Not Sure	Strongly Agree
I go to school for my social life - to be with friends.	3.5 (1.7)	Not Sure	Somewhat Agree
I need to always know how well I'm doing in order to feel motivated to work.	2.7 (1.8)	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
TOTAL	4.0 (1.3)	Not Sure	Somewhat Agree

One survey result shows that most students do not sign up for easier teachers so that it will help their GPAs. Other results point towards students' need to know their current grade standings in class in order to feel motivated to work. The result from this statement however does not detail whether a poor grade or high grade is the means for motivation. The third item in Table 4, "I go to school for my social life – to be with

friends," is problematic because it contains more than one idea. The statement should have been worded, "I *only* go to school for my social life – to be with friends." Therefore results of this statement will not be interpreted.

The results shown in Table 5 and Table 6 examine participants' desires to seek out challenges in school and their level of persistence once presented with challenges. Desirable responses would be strong agreement (a score of "1") as listed in Table 5, whereas Table 6 would show strong disagreement (a score of "7").

In Table 5, responses indicate participants are persistent when presented with challenges and continue to work through problems until a solution is found, resulting in a feeling of accomplishment. The last three items in Table 5 indicate that students do not enthusiastically seek out challenge. Because the sample size was small, the results are not definitive, thus, further research is needed.

Table 5.

General Education Survey Statements Challenge Part I

Survey Statement	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
I am persistent and don't give up when faced with a problem.	2.3 (1.0)	Agree	Agree
I get satisfaction from meeting intellectual challenges and pushing my limits.	2.4 (1.4)	Agree	Agree
I prefer class work that is challenging so I can learn new things.	2.7 (1.1)	Somewhat Agree	Agree
I take courses that are harder because I enjoy being challenged.	2.9 (1.7)	Somewhat Agree	Agree
I prefer difficult tasks as opposed to moderate tasks.	2.9 (1.3)	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Agree
TOTAL	2.6 (0.3)	Somewhat Agree	Agree

The neutral result of student response to the statement is Table 6 could possibly be influenced by high school degree requirements. This result does not state whether students willingly opt in or out of advanced courses which bring greater challenge and the possibility of reduced success.

Table 6.

General Education Survey Statements Challenge Part II

Survey Statement	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
I try to only take courses in which I know I will be successful.	4.4 (1.5)	Not Sure	Disagree

Ideal responses to statements in Table 7 would be strongly agree (a score near "1"). All participants surveyed expressed that they plan to attend college. Most also agreed that they enjoy learning new things. It appears, however, that many students are not satisfied with average grades, even when learning occurs. This reveals that students have high expectations in their abilities (as indicated in Table 1); additionally, some may exhibit perfectionistic traits (as highlighted in Table 8).

Results documented in Table 8 suggest that there is no consensus amongst students regarding perfectionism. When the raw data were examined, an equal number of students agreed with the statements compared to those who disagreed with the statements. This could potentially indicate that some students may in fact exhibit some perfectionistic tendencies. More research in this area is needed to definitively show that this is accurate.

Table 7.

General Education Survey Statements Concerning Academic Learning

Survey Statement	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
I plan to attend college.	1.0 (0.0)	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
I go to school because eventually it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.	1.5 (0.6)	Agree	Strongly Agree
No matter how much I like or dislike a class, I still try to learn from it.	1.9 (1.0)	Agree	Agree
I go to school because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.	2.2 (0.9)	Agree	Agree
I go to school for the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me.	2.3 (1.0)	Agree	Agree
When I do poorly on a test, I try to learn from my mistakes rather than viewing it as a total loss.	2.6 (1.5)	Somewhat Agree	Agree
I go to school for the pleasure I experience when I discover new things I've never seen before.	2.6 (1.2)	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Agree
If I am not doing well in a class, it is because I need to study and practice more; eventually I will do well.	2.6 (1.2)	Somewhat Agree	Agree
I learn simply for the sake of learning.	3.2 (1.5)	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Agree
I take time to learn new things even when they are not required for a class.	3.5 (1.5)	Not Sure	Somewhat Agree
I am satisfied with an average grade as long as I learn from my mistakes.	5.2 (1.9)	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
TOTAL	2.6 (1.1)	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

Perfectionism (as presented in Table 8) tends to be an issue with gifted students as previously discussed in the literature review of this topic in Chapter 2. Because of this, it is important for educators to realize the potential for students to face this social-emotional obstacle. Through support and guidance, teachers may help prevent potential negative impacts associated with perfectionism.

Table 8.

General Education Survey Statements on Perfectionism

Survey Statement	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
I do all that I can to make my assignments turn out perfectly; flawless work is very important.	3.4 (1.7)	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Agree
If I do not score top grades in a class, I am very disappointed in myself and feel like a failure.	3.9 (1.8)	Not Sure	Somewhat Agree
I feel helpless about school after I receive a few bad grades and I want to give up.	5.1 (2.1)	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOTAL	4.2 (2.0)	Not Sure	Somewhat Agree

The survey statements in Table 9 were created to assess the district's current gifted education curriculum standards. The results from this section indicate that, in general, students agreed with the statements, suggesting that the goals of the district's program are being satisfied. While strong agreement (a score of "1") is ideal, the positive response in data is encouraging.

Table 9.

Gifted Education Survey Questions

Survey Question	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
Participating in gifted/advanced education has helped me identify my interests, strengths, and gifts.	1.9 (1.3)	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have had opportunities to engage in and explore my interests, strengths, and gifts because of participating in gifted/advanced education.	1.9 (1.4)	Agree	Strongly Agree
I enjoy engaging in creative thinking processes.	2.0 (1.4)	Agree	Strongly Agree

Table continues

Survey Question	Mean (SD)	Mean Answer	Mode Answer
I enjoy engaging in critical thinking processes.	2.0 (1.5)	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can identify my strengths and weaknesses and I use that information to help grow in my learning.	2.1 (1.1)	Agree	Agree
I can positively and effectively communicate and engage in group interactions.	2.1 (1.5)	Agree	Agree
I feel better prepared to make future career decisions because of participating in gifted/advanced education.	2.3 (1.5)	Agree	Agree
I apply lifelong learning concepts to my life.	2.5 (1.2)	Somewhat Agree	Agree
I understand and can ethically apply a variety of research methods.	2.5 (1.4)	Somewhat Agree	Agree
I understand what it means to be a lifelong learner.	2.5 (1.7)	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
TOTAL	2.2 (0.2)	Agree	Strongly Agree

Student Responses to the Open-Ended Prompts

Participants' short answer responses were categorized and their frequencies tallied. Table 10, Table 11, Table 12, and Table 13 list these responses.

Students shared their most memorable lesson or project and what made it memorable, as illustrated in Table 10. The most frequent response was that students considered independent projects with integrated creativity as most memorable. Students found the most important aspect that made projects or lessons memorable was self-direction or choice was incorporated. These findings should be considered when gifted and talented teachers design curriculum for their gifted and talented classrooms and groups.

Table 10.

Students' Responses Regarding the Most Memorable Lesson or Project

Frequency	Most memorable gifted education lesson or project
6	Independent Projects with Integrated Creativity
3	Discussion of Goals/ Giftedness of Self/ Personal Strengths
2	Simulations
2	Debating/ Discussing
2	Written Product
1	Service Learning
Frequency	**Reason the lesson or project was memorable**
5	Self-Direction/ Choice
3	Challenging
3	Social-Emotional Development
2	Highly Creative
1	Real-Life Connection

The responses presented in Table 11 share students' beliefs of program experiences that all gifted students should encounter. The most frequent responses focused around experiencing challenging work that requires in-depth study. Team building and feeling part of a community were also important experiences students noted.

Table 11.

Students' Responses Concerning Program Experiences Others Should Have

Frequency	One event experienced that all gifted students should experience
6	Challenging, in-depth work
5	Team Work & Sense of Community
2	Self-Direction/ Choice
2	Social-Emotional Development
1	Creativity
1	Motivating Teacher
1	I never experienced anything exciting.

An alarming response uncovered a student who would not recommend any experiences she had during enrollment in the program because she has "never experienced anything exciting." In spite of this student's current 4.0 GPA, this finding reveals an at-risk student whose needs are not being met in the current program.

Table 12 lists participants' opinions concerning areas of the current gifted program that need improvement. The most numerous responses included increasing student independence and challenge. Many other students wished that the advanced level of work required in the gifted program would be integrated into other courses that were not currently "advanced". Other, more varied, responses are also important to consider as they highlight program areas that could be improved.

Table 12.

Participants' Desired Changes to the Current Gifted Program

Frequency	Desired changes to the gifted program
8	Independence
6	More challenge
5	Gifted education level work in other courses
4	No changes
2	Build stronger relationships between students
1	More creativity
1	More funding to pay for larger and more expanded projects.
1	Make sure the instructors are qualified because it's a vital part of the program.
1	Become a weighted grade course to recognized students' abilities and accomplishments.
1	Don't combine gifted education time with reading class, but have a separate class.

Participants expressed the impacts the gifted program has had on them as documented in Table 13. Most all of the impacts reported were positive in nature and demonstrated that they improved students' academic abilities and motivation levels. Many disclosed that participating in gifted programming helped them develop critical

thinking skills and the ability to approach problems in new ways.

One student revealed that the program has had little impact other than allowing her to work with like-ability peers. This finding is concerning and demonstrates that not all student needs, nor program goals, are being met by the current gifted program.

Table 13.

Program Impacts Reported

Frequency	Ways the gifted program has impacted students
6	The challenge helped me develop critical thinking.
4	Motivated me to strive for excellence
4	Helped me view problems from different perspectives
2	Enjoyment of school
2	Real-world and career preparation
1	Self-discovery
1	It has helped me be creative.
1	Not much. It's given me a chance to be around people of my same intelligence, but hasn't changed my learning or wanting to be challenged.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary of Results

The results of this research investigation reveal many positive impacts gifted programming in the studied school district has had on students. Students involved in the program exhibited self-confidence in their abilities, had high expectations of themselves, were motivated intrinsically because they feel a sense of accomplishment, were motivated extrinsically because they seek success in their futures, enjoyed learning and being challenged, and were persistent when presented with difficult tasks. All participants surveyed expressed that they plan to attend college.

Overall, the goals of the current gifted program are being met, with the exception of one participant who expressed that she has not been affected academically or motivationally by the program, except that she has had the opportunity to be around like-ability peers. This could potentially indicate that other students who did not participate in this study may also feel this way, though this is unknown. In general, students found independent projects that included choice and self-direction to be the most memorable lessons during their enrollment in the gifted program. They believed that challenging, in-depth work, teamwork, and community building were areas that all gifted students should experience.

Students also expressed their desires for program changes. Some of these changes included increasing the independence and challenge level in the gifted program and incorporating gifted-level work into other courses.

In summary, participation in the program seems to have led to the development of critical thinking skills, increased student desires to strive for excellence, and allowed

students to examine different perspectives.

Recommendation of Changes to the Survey

The survey used in this study was introduced to a sample of the gifted population in the district. After implementation and analysis, it is clear that some improvements are needed to refine the survey. Several survey statements would be more effective and direct if reworded more clearly and definitively. Utilizing other current surveys used in program evaluation, in full or in part, (i.e. a survey created by VanTassel-Baska, 2006), may also be beneficial and offer more reliable data. The length of the survey may have deterred some students from participating thus shortening the survey may result in a higher number of participants.

Implications for Changes to Practices in the Current Gifted Program

Students' strongest desires were for incorporating more independence in the gifted program and more opportunities to engage in challenging and creative work. One student mentioned that having opportunities to apply for funding for larger, more in-depth projects would be beneficial. Students wanted the advanced level work they conduct in the gifted program to be integrated into their regular courses, though they expressed that they did not want gifted education experiences and opportunities to be limited to a single-subject area. They wished the grades they receive in the gifted program would be weighted like other advanced courses, as the work they perform is of an equal or greater caliber. Opportunities to build stronger relationships amongst their intellectual peers was also requested. Above all, qualified gifted education teachers were said to be a vital part of the gifted program.

> Translation of curricular models into effective practice varies considerably... Evidence strongly suggests that content-based accelerative approaches should be employed in any curriculum used in school-based programs for the gifted and that schools need to apply curricular models faithfully and thoroughly in order to realize their potential impacts over time" (VanTassel-Baska & Brown, 2009).

Based on VanTassel-Baska and Brown's suggestions it is important to consider full implementation of a gifted program model. While the district in which this study took place has adopted a model, currently it is implemented only in part. It may be important for the district to consider full implementation of the current model or to begin exploration of other models that would better fit the current dynamic of the district.

Recommendations for Future Research

While the results of this research are limited, they are important for the school district in which it took place. The results would be more reliable with a larger participant number, allowing for a greater number of students to share how the program has affected them and to express their opinions of the program. The data from a larger study may help to determine which aspects are excelling as well as those that are lacking, thus resulting in greater impacts on the program.

The lack of research pertaining to evaluations of gifted programs demonstrates the need for further investigation in the area. More studies in the domain of gifted program evaluations would unveil genuine student outcomes after participation in various gifted program models. Furthermore, including multiple districts that employ different gifted education curricular models would allow for a diversity of theories to be tested and evaluated for efficiency and effectiveness.

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Appendix: Student Survey

Please complete the entire survey to the best of your ability. Please provide accurate information and answer all questions thoughtfully and truthfully. Your specific responses to this survey will not be shared with your teacher or staff at your school. Your responses will not affect any of your grades. All surveys are confidential and will only be used for data collection purposes.

~ Thank you in advance for your participation.

Basic Information

Name _____

Current Age _____ Month and Year of Birth _____

High School Currently Attending:

- ☐ West High School
- ☐ East High School
- ☐ Expo High School

Circle current Grade Level: 9 10 11 12 Other: _____

Current GPA _____

Gifted Education History

Are you currently enrolled in: (check all that apply)

- ☐ ELP (Expanded Learning Program)
- ☐ Advanced Class(es)
- ☐ AP Course(s)
- ☐ I am not enrolled in any of these courses at this time.

Have you ever been enrolled in: (check all that apply) ELP

- ☐ Talent Development (elementary school)
- ☐ ELP (Expanded Learning Program – elementary, middle school, high school)
- ☐ Advanced Class(es) (middle school, high school)
- ☐ AP Course(s) (high school only)

When were you identified for ELP?

____ 3rd Grade ____ 4th Grade ____ 5th Grade
____ 6th Grade ____ 7th Grade ____ 8th Grade
____ 9th Grade ____ 10th Grade ____ 11th Grade ____ 12th Grade

How many years have you been involved in ELP, Talent Development (elementary), advanced class(es), and/or AP course(s)?

_____ year(s)

Have you ever been accelerated?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, check all that apply:

- ☐ Subject Accelerated
- ☐ Grade Accelerated

If acceleration is checked, what subjects/grades were you accelerated in? (Example, from 3rd to 4th grade; or in 4th grade, attended 5th grade math)

_____

Education Experience

Listed below are 50 statements that address your educational experience so far. Using the scale provided, rate these statements based on how they apply to you.

Please circle the best answer choice for each statement.

1. In class, I want to see what I can learn and accomplish for myself.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

2. In class, I want to outdo my classmates and friends.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

3. I am motivated to study because I want to get good grades.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

4. I am motivated to study because I want to know and understand the material.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

5. I am motivated to study because I want to develop myself as much as possible.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

6. My top reason for NOT studying is that I can get by fine without studying.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

7. I am genuinely motivated to do well in school because I want to learn.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

8. I am motivated in school ONLY because I want to get good grades.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

9. My grades are important because I want to graduate with honors.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

10. My grades are important because I want to get into college.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

11. My grades are important because I don't want to disappoint my family.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

12. I complete just the minimum amount of school work required of me.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

13. Compared with others in my school, I think I'm a good student.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

14. When I do poorly on a test, I try to learn from my mistakes rather than viewing it as a total loss.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

15. When work is hard, I either give up or study only the easy parts.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

16. It is important to me to be recognized when I do well in school.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

17. I take time to learn new things even when they are not required for a class.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

18. I try to only take courses in which I know I will be successful.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

19. I take courses that are harder because I enjoy being challenged.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

20. I prefer class work that is challenging so I can learn new things.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

21. I am persistent and don't give up when faced with a problem.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

22. I go to school because I need at least a high-school degree in order to find a high-paying job later on.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

23. I go to school because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

24. I go to school because I think a high-school education will help better prepare me for the career I have chosen.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

25. I go to school for my social life – to be with friends.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

26. I don't know why I go to school. I feel like I'm wasting my time.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

27. I go to school for the pleasure I experience when I excel in my studies.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

28. I go to school for the pleasure I experience when I discover new things I've never seen before.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

29. I go to school because eventually it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

30. I go to school because school is fun.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

31. I once had good reasons for going to school; however, now I wonder whether I should continue.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

32. I go to school because when I succeed in school I feel important.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

33. I go to school for the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

34. I plan on attending college.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

35. I take some courses because they will look good on my transcript when I apply to college.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

36. I need to always know how well I'm doing in order to feel motivated to work.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

37. I get satisfaction from meeting intellectual challenges and pushing my limits.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

38. I work hard to get a good grade even when I don't like a class

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

39. If I am not doing well in a class, it is because I need to study and practice more; eventually I will do well.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

40. No matter how much I like or dislike a class, I still try to learn from it.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

41. If I do not do well in a class or assignment, it is because I do not have talent in that area and probably will never do well in it.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

42. I learn simply for the sake of learning.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

43. I prefer difficult tasks as opposed to moderate tasks.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

44. I never boast about my grades.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

45. I am satisfied with an average grade as long as I learn from my mistakes.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

46. I sign up for the easiest teacher so my grades will be better.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

47. I feel helpless about school after I receive a few bad grades and I want to give up.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

48. I do all that I can to make my assignments turn out perfectly; flawless work is very important.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

49. If I do not score top grades in a class, I am very disappointed in myself and feel like a failure.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

50. I have very high expectations of myself.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

Gifted Education Experience

Listed below are 10 statements that address your gifted education experience so far. Using the scale provided below, rate these statements based on how they apply to you.

Please circle the best answer choice for each statement.

1. Participating in gifted/advanced education has helped me identify my interests, strengths, and gifts.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

2. I have had opportunities to engage in and explore my interests, strengths, and gifts because of participating in gifted/advanced education.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

3. I can identify my strengths and weaknesses and I use that information to help grow in my learning

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

4. I enjoy engaging in critical thinking processes.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

5. I enjoy engaging in creative thinking processes.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

6. I understand what it means to be a lifelong learner.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

7. I apply lifelong learning concepts to my life.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

8. I understand and can ethically apply a variety of research methods.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

9. I can positively and effectively communicate and engage in group interactions

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

10. I feel better prepared to make future career decisions because of participating in gifted/advanced education.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Agree Somewhat 3	Not Sure or N/A 4	Somewhat Disagree 5	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 7

Short Answer Questions

Please answer each of the following short answer questions to the best of your ability. If you need more space, please continuing writing on the back and include the question number.

1a. What is most memorable lesson/project you worked on in ELP (any grade level)?

1b. What made it memorable?

2. What is one thing that you experienced in gifted/advanced education that all ELP students should have the opportunity to experience?

3. If there were three things you could change about the gifted program, what would they be and why?

First:

Second:

Third:

4. Has participating in gifted/advanced education changed who you are as a student? How or how not?

Verification

By signing below, I verify that I completed this survey to the best of my ability and provided accurate information. I answered all questions thoughtfully and truthfully.

_____

Student Signature Date

Thank you for taking this survey. Your input will help ensure that future students involved in gifted and advanced education will experience a strong gifted education program that supports their learning needs.