

# Western Association of Schools and Colleges

## FOCUS ON LEARNING

### *Piedmont High School*

#### Midterm Visiting Committee Report

April 3, 2009

#### Midterm Visiting Committee

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## *I. Introduction*

### **General Comments about the School**

Piedmont High School, with a student population of 865, is a small comprehensive high school (grades 9-12) located in the East Bay hills of the San Francisco Bay Area. The single high school in the Piedmont Unified School District, it has one feeder middle school located on an adjoining campus. Millennium High School, an alternative school program, shares the campus as do the district administrative offices. The facility itself was constructed in 1921, was reconstructed in 1976, weathered building closure over a period of a year due to structural damage discovered in 1986 and underwent significant reconstruction to address growth between 1995 and 1998. The city of Piedmont sustains a strong sense of community. Primarily residential in character the community supports a few small businesses; the residents are principally professional and business executives. The population earns a high per capita income and is stable.

City residents as well as the school parent population have a history of raising funds through special campaigns and regular passage of both tax and bond measures. The community, during the June 2005 election, passed two separate parcel taxes to support the schools by the largest margin in the history of California.

In 2004, citizens requested that the District conduct a Tier I screening of the school buildings, applying current standards to evaluate how school buildings would perform in a major earthquake. Since the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, there have been major advancements in building engineering and an increased understanding about how buildings behave in major earthquakes of magnitude 7 or greater. The findings from the initial screening were presented to the PUSD Board of Education in 2004 by community volunteers Janiele Maffei-Yovani and John Sumnicht. Based on the report, the PUSD Board of Education made a decision to develop a multi-year plan to improve identified weaknesses in the District's facilities. Out of fourteen buildings or areas on school campuses that were screened, eight were recommended for further study (three of which are PHS facilities).

Guided by input from the Division of the State Architects (DSA) during the Summer of 2005, the PUSD Board of Education entered into a contract with ATI Architects and Engineers and Vila Construction to conduct a more detailed and comprehensive district-wide seismic evaluation of the buildings identified in the initial screening, and a review of all school buildings and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Law (ADA).

At the beginning of the 2005 – 2006 school year, the seismic evaluation (now called the Seismic Risk Reduction Program [SRRP]) identified the Piedmont High School 30's Building Complex (30's Classrooms, Library, and Counseling Offices), the Alan Harvey Theatre, and the Student Center as needing significant seismic strengthening and ADA attention. Piedmont citizens approved a local general obligation bond measure. Titled "Measure E," this seismic upgrade bond program will begin June 2009 by seismically retrofitting the 30's Building and the Student Center. During this one-year retrofit project, all classrooms in the 30's Building, the Library, the College & Career Center, the Wellness Center, and the Piper Café will be relocated to either temporary housing on the Havens Elementary School Site or other locations in and around Piedmont High School.

There continues to be a steady priority to maintain educational programs and services and to upgrade or expand school facilities. Parent participation in school activities is extensive; parents and community members have developed a variety of support organizations for academics, athletics, visual arts, performing arts, Special Education and a community-wide educational foundation:

*The Parent's Club*

- supports staff development, student activity programs, the college and career center, and a variety of course offerings.

*School Site Council*

- develops the single plan for student achievement and supports intervention strategies for all students

*CHIME (Citizens Highly Interested in Music Education)*

- actively funds and supports performing arts education, including instrumental, vocal, dramatic, and dance for Piedmont's students.

*PAINTS (Promote Art in the Schools)*

- a non-profit membership organization of parents and community members whose mission is to promote visual arts by providing a forum for parents, teachers, and administrators to focus a coordinated art curriculum throughout the district.

*PAAC (Piedmont Asian American Club)*

- a non-profit membership organization of parents and community members whose mission is to sponsor educational programs aimed at promoting cultural awareness, encouraging diversity, and providing a forum for Asian American issues in Piedmont.

*The Athletic Boosters Club*

- supports the interscholastic athletic program with finances and parent volunteers.

*School Nutrition Advisory Committee*

- supports the school nutrition program by recommending menu changes, developing educational programs, awareness campaigns, and conducting research and surveys.

*The Piedmont Diversity Committee*

- promotes awareness, understanding, and appreciation of both differences and commonalities among students, staff, and community. The committee offers grants to teachers, students, and staff for school programs and produces free community events and a bi-monthly film series.

*PRAISE (Piedmonters for Resources, Advocacy, Information in Special Education)*

- actively supports and funds education for students, parents, teachers, and specialists involved with special education. Their mission is to promote awareness, understanding, and appreciation of learning differences among students, educators, administrators, parents, and the community.

*The Piedmont Educational Foundation*

- promotes educational excellence in schools through grants made by the Board in response to requests from individual teachers, school sites, and the District using individual donations, income from the Endowment Fund, corporate matches, and Dress Best for Less.

*College & Career Center*

- The College & Career Center is an information resource center of Piedmont High School's Counseling Office. Created in the late 1960's by a volunteer group of interested parents, the Center Director and supplies are funded by the PHS Parents Club.

Beginning in 1997, the Piedmont City parcel tax funds the College & Career Center Coordinator. The PHS College & Career Center is located next to the Counseling Office adjacent to the library. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. during school days.

Students and parents are encouraged to use the many resources at the Center. The Center offers information and resources in the following areas:

1. Colleges & universities
2. Career interests
3. College selection guidelines
4. Financial aid and scholarship opportunities
5. Testing registration
6. Community service opportunities
7. Job listings
8. Local, national & international summer programs

The Center hosts visits by college admissions officers who meet with junior and senior students. On-campus information programs such as annual College Orientation Night, case study night, returning grad night, and Parents Panel are offered by the College & Career Center to PHS students and parents.

Volunteerism extends to the daily staffing of the College and Career Center and the Food Service Program. Parents voice high expectations for a college preparatory education program and a wide range of extra-curricular programs, particularly including the performing and visual arts, athletics, and community service.

### Student Performance Data

Piedmont High School's students continue to perform well on all measures of testing as evidenced by the data that follows:

#### (a) Academic Performance Index (API) School Report

API growth score has decreased by 1 point over the past three years with scores of 913 (2006), 896 (2007), and 912 (2008). Both Statewide Rank and the Similar School Rank have remained 10 and 10 respectively.

#### Base Reports

2008 API: 912	2007 API: 896	2006 API: 913
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#### Ranks

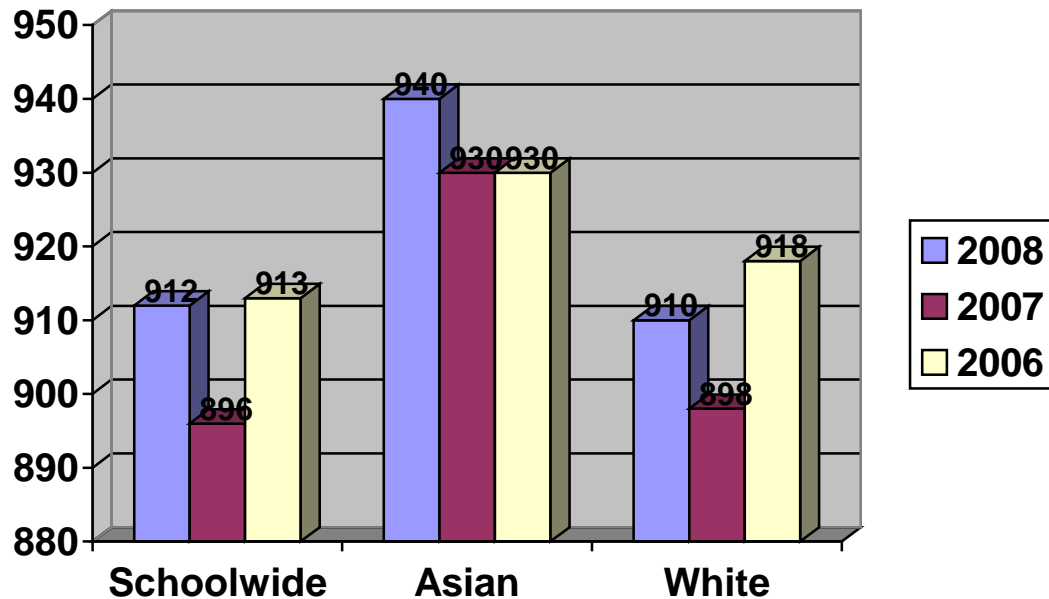
2008 Statewide Rank	N/A
2008 Similar School Rank	N/A
2007 Statewide Rank	10
2007 Similar School Rank	9
2006 Statewide Rank	10
2006 Similar School Rank	10

#### Targets

'07 – '08 Growth Target	A
'07 – '08 API Target	A
'06 – '07 Growth Target	A
'06 – '07 API Target	A
'05 – '06 Growth Target	A
'05 – '06 API Target	A

(A: means the school scored at or above the statewide performance target of 800)

#### API Subgroups

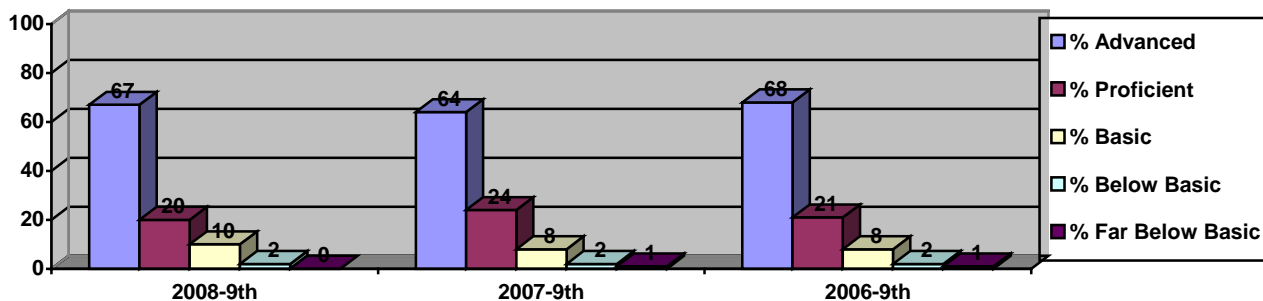


**(b) California Standards Test 07-08, 06-07, 05-06**

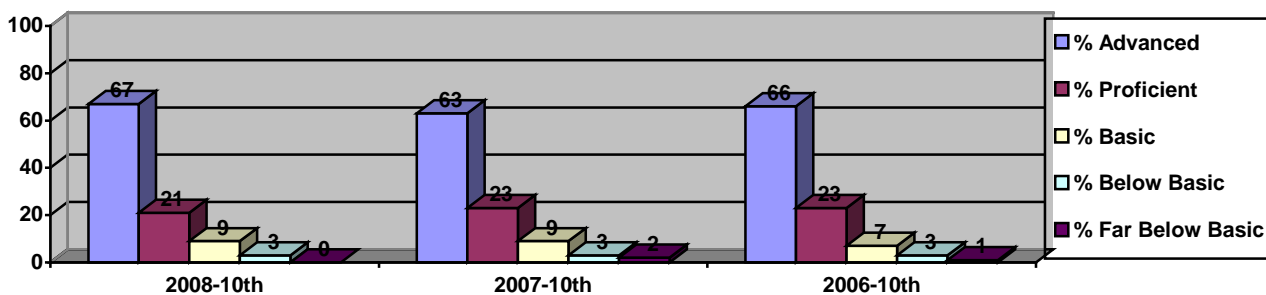
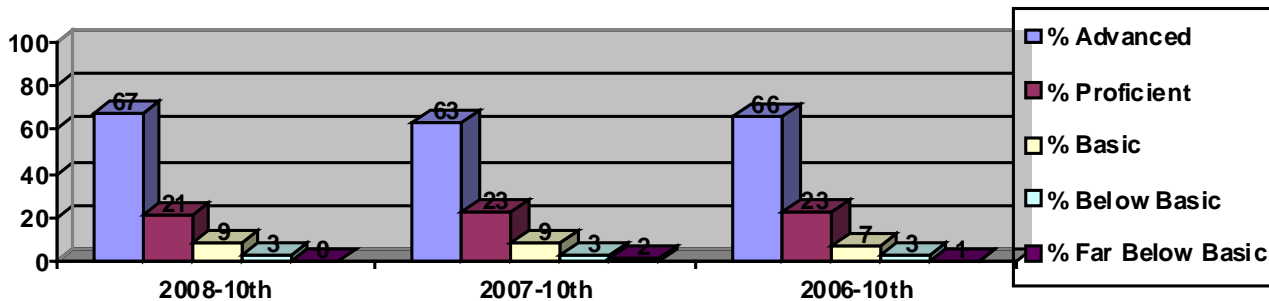
*CST – English Language Arts*

For 2008, 2007, and 2006 STAR, approximately 87% of students scored proficient or advanced on the California Standards-based Tests (CST) in English Language Arts.

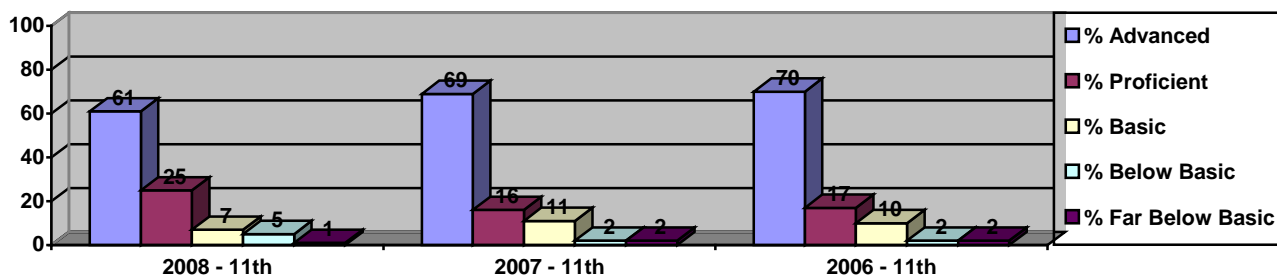
**9<sup>th</sup> grade**



**10<sup>th</sup> grade**

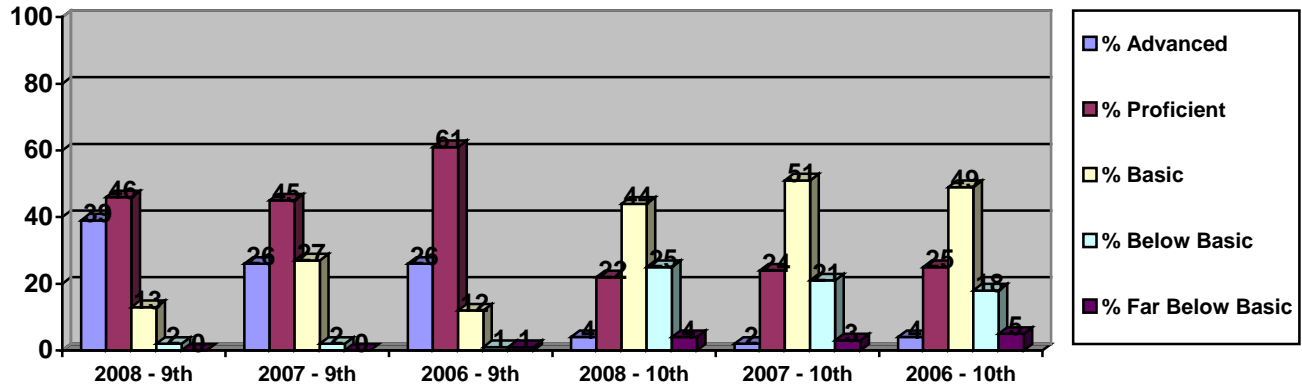


**11<sup>th</sup> grade**



CST – Geometry

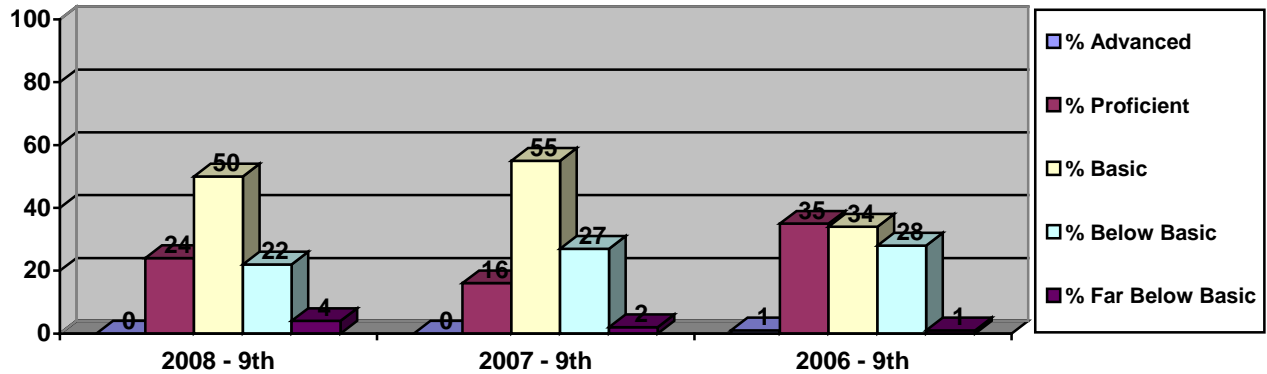
For 2008, 2007, and 2006 STAR, approximately 81% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced on the California Standards-based Tests (CST) in Geometry. Approximately 27% of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced.



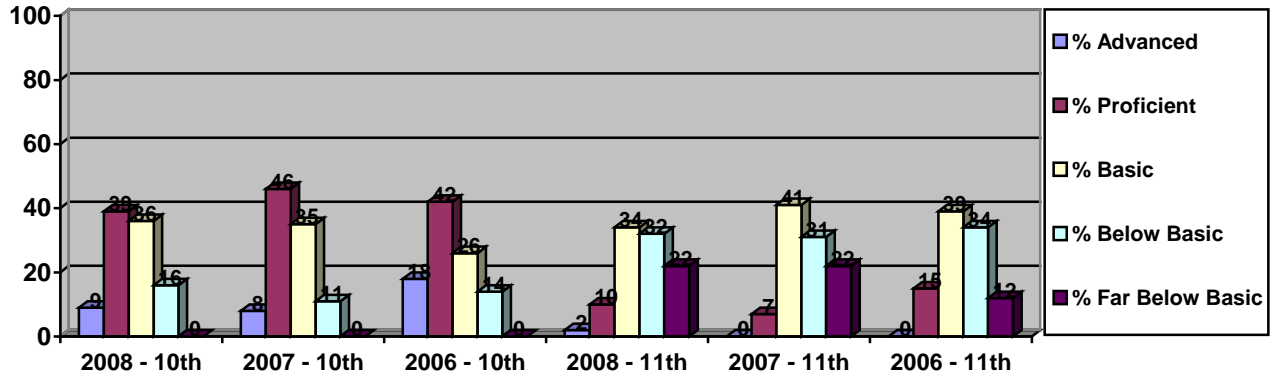
CST – Algebra I & II

For 2008, 2007, and 2006 STAR, approximately 25% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced on the California Standards-based Tests (CST) in Algebra I. Approximately 54% of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Algebra II, while approximately 11% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Algebra II.

Algebra I

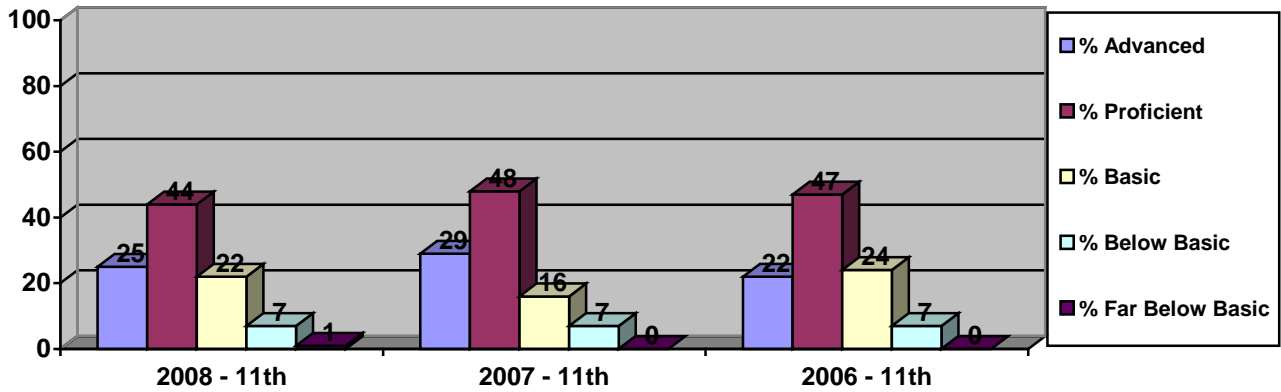


Algebra II



CST – Summative Mathematics

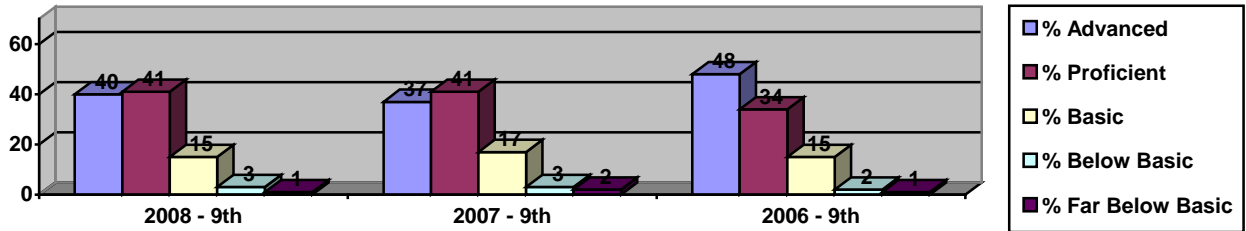
For 2008, 2007, and 2006 STAR, 72% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Summative Mathematics.



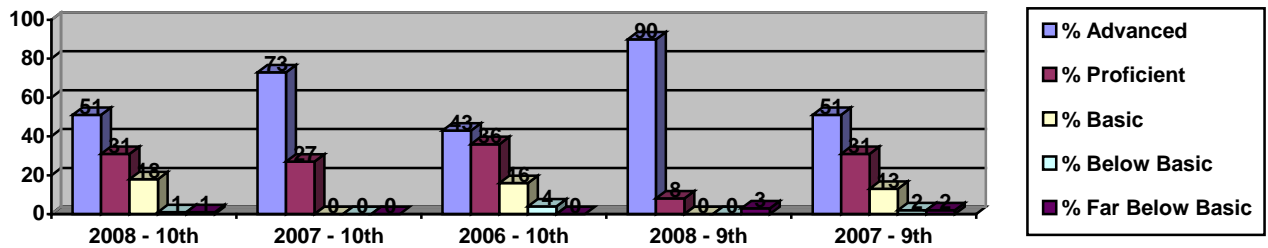
CST – Earth Science & Biology

For 2008, 2007, and 2006 STAR, 80% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Earth Science. For 2008 and 2007, approximately 90% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Biology and 87% of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Biology.

Earth Science

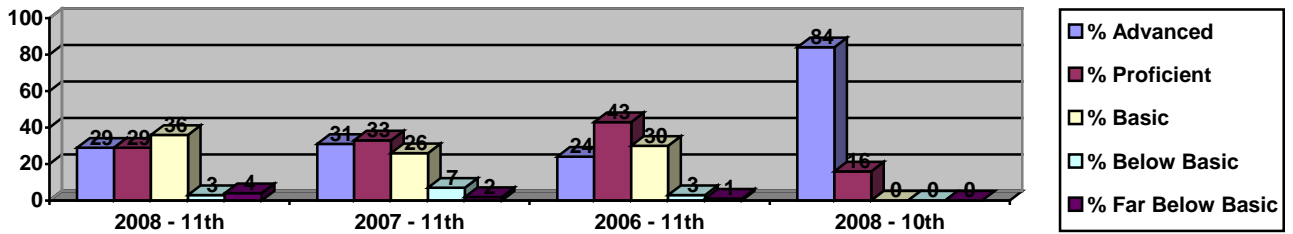


Biology



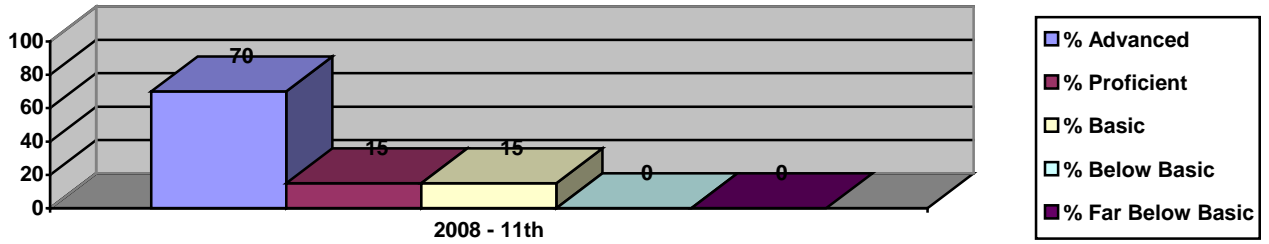
Chemistry

For 2008, 2007, and 2006 STAR, 63% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Chemistry. In 2008, 100% of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Chemistry.



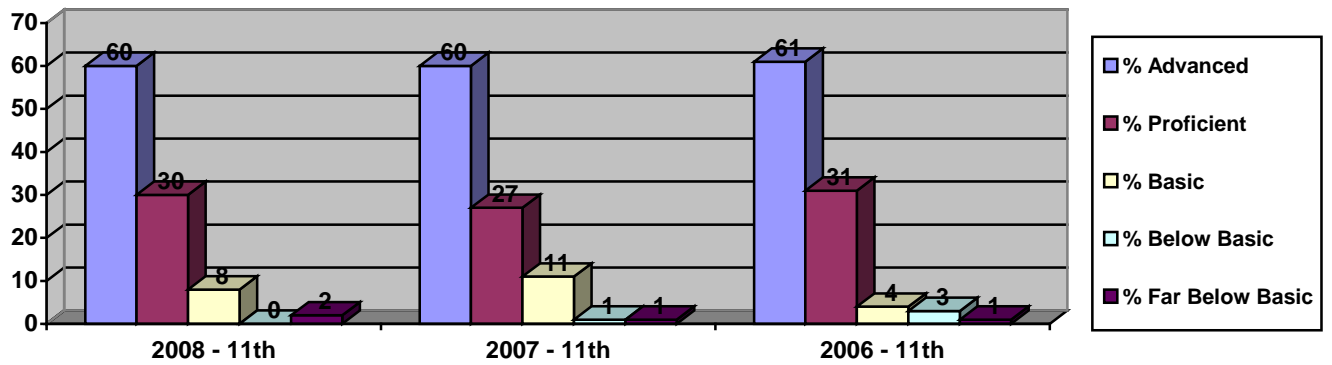
Physics

For 2008 STAR, 85% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in Physics.



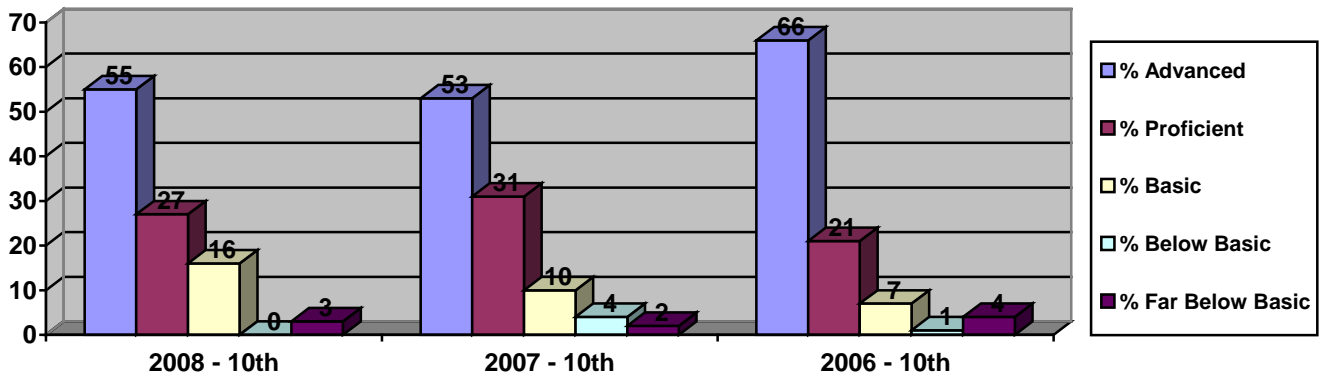
CST – U.S. History

For 2008, 2007, and 2006 STAR, 86% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in U.S. History.



CST – World History

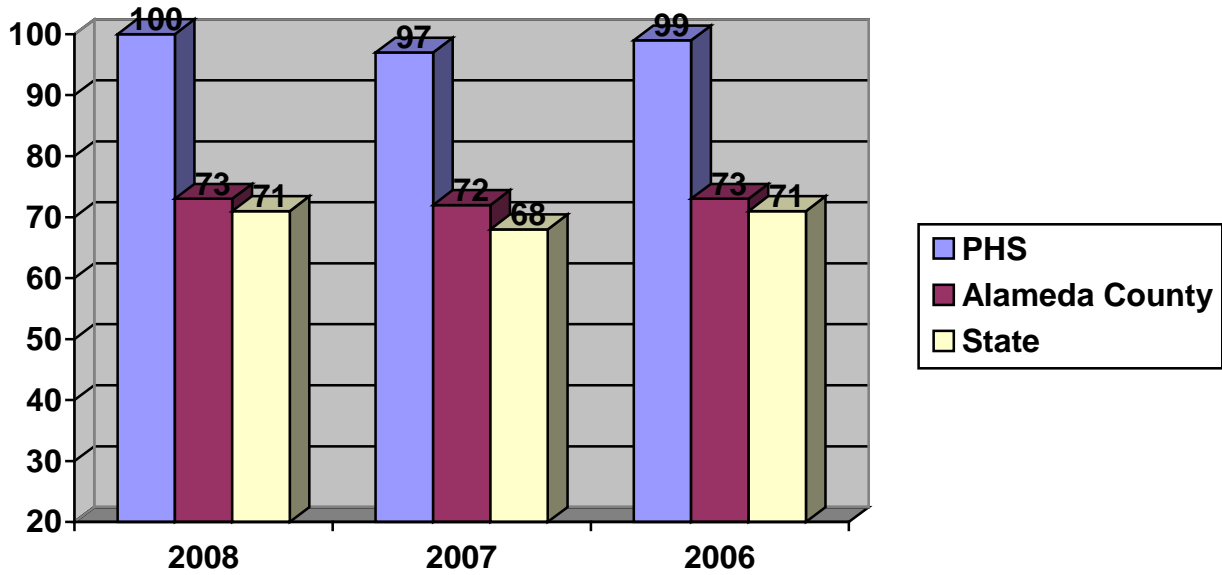
For 2008, 2007, and 2006 STAR, 84% of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students scored proficient or advanced in World History.



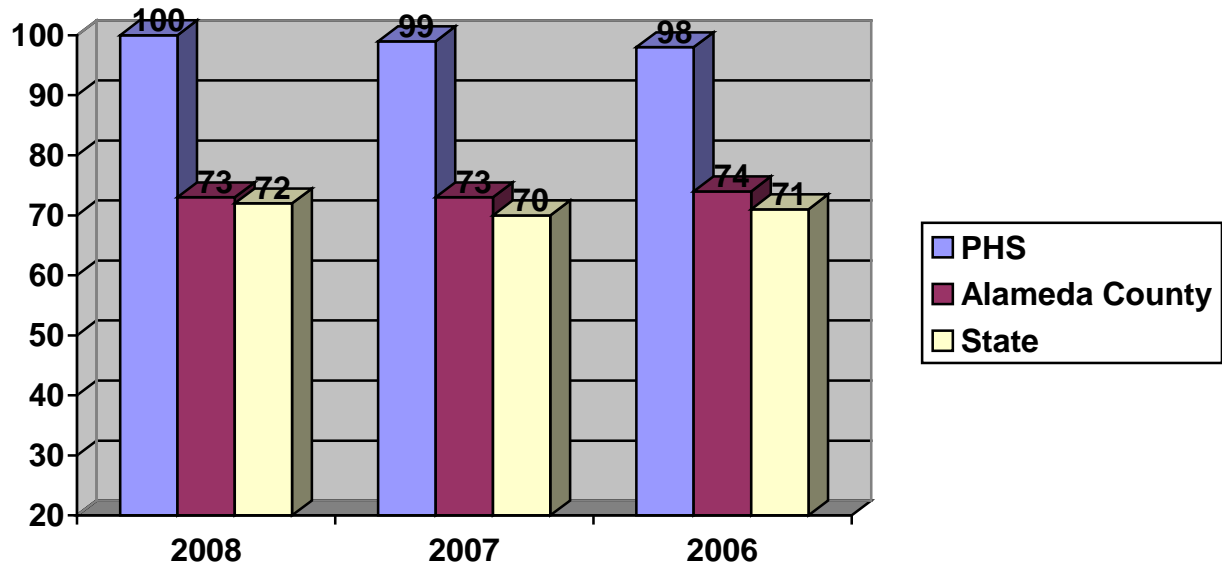
**(c) California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)**

For the 2008, 2007, and 2006 CAHSEE, 98% of PHS students passed.

**Percentage of Students Passing (CAHSEE)  
Mathematics**



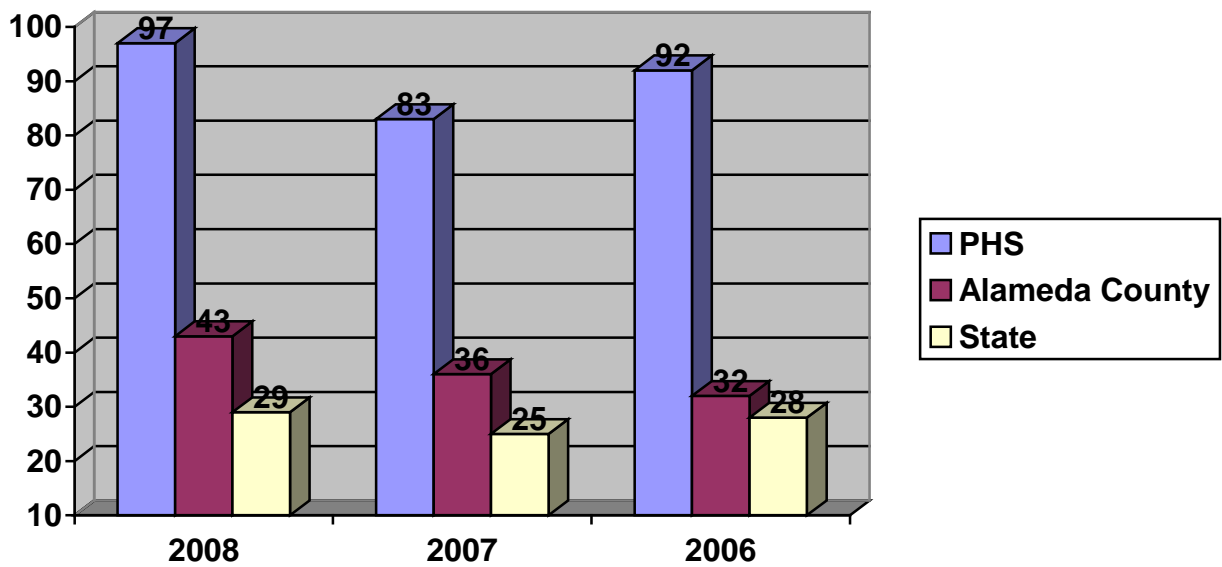
**Percentage of Students Passing (CAHSEE)  
English Language Arts**



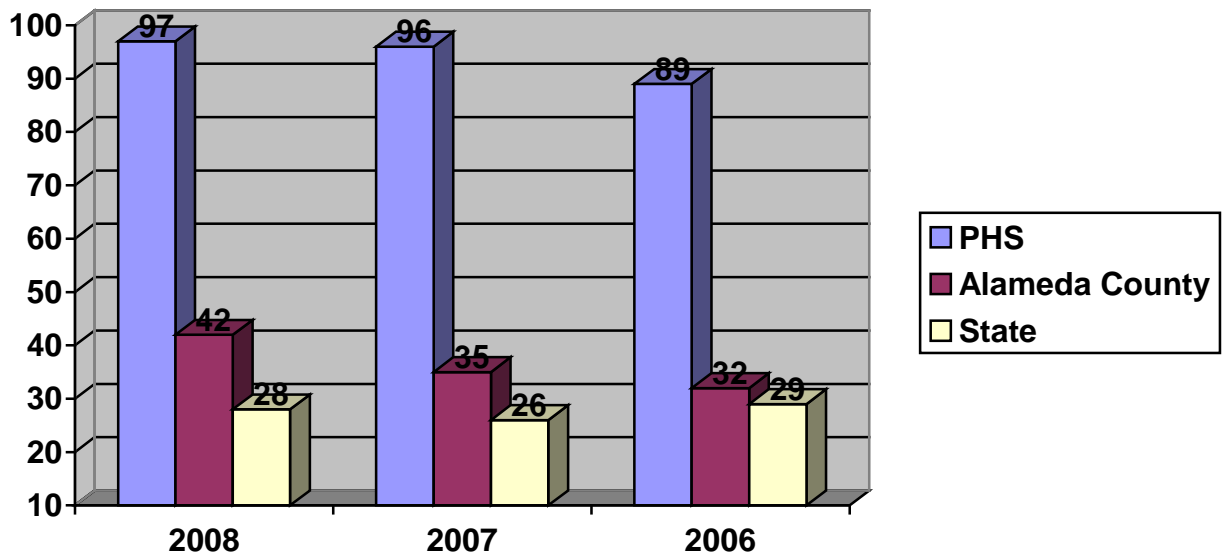
## California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) – Special Education Students

For the 2008, 2007, and 2006 CAHSEE, 92% of PHS students designated as Special Education passed.

**Percentage of SPED Students Passing (CAHSEE)  
Mathematics**



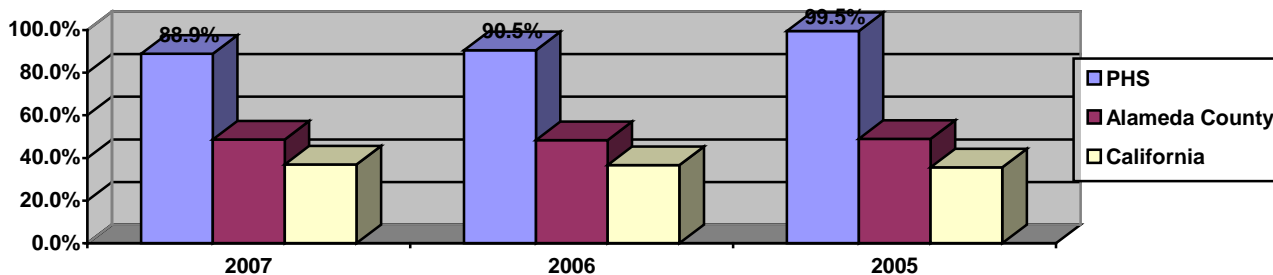
**Percentage of SPED Students Passing (CAHSEE)  
English Language Arts**



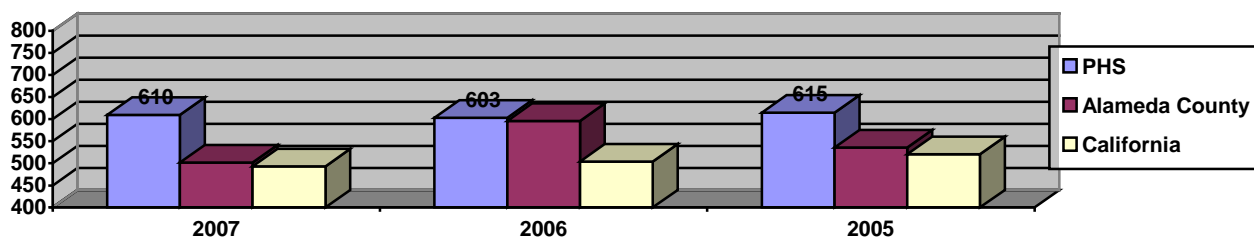
### (e) Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

Generally 90% or above of the graduating seniors take the SAT; the number of students taking the SAT has increased in a pattern consistent with the increase in school-wide enrollment. Performance in the Verbal and Math categories has consistently advanced; scores remain well above Alameda County and California performance rates as shown by the following charts:

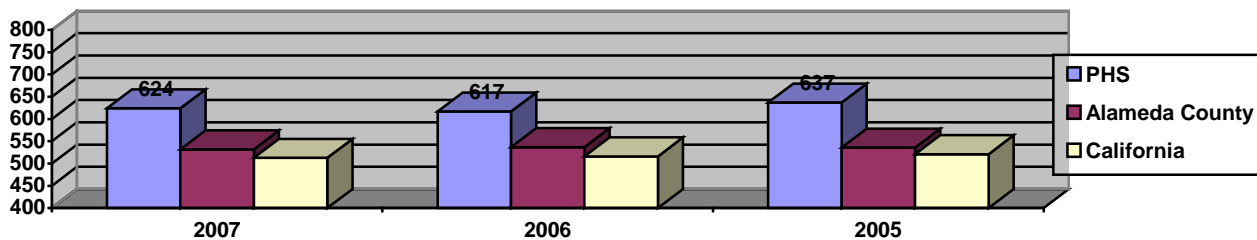
#### Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Tested



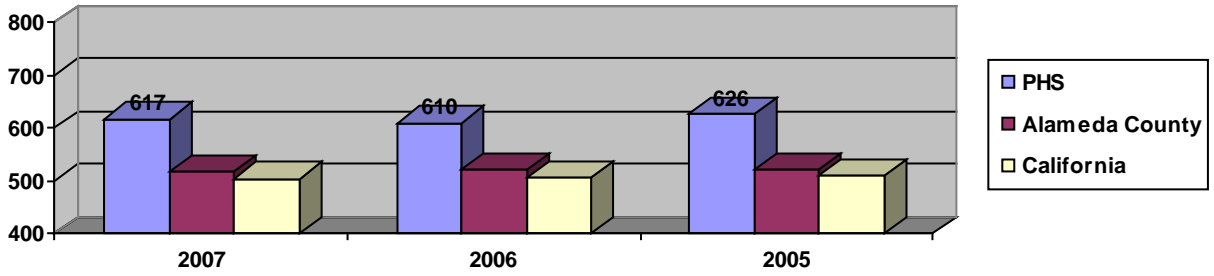
#### Average Verbal Scores



#### Average Math Scores



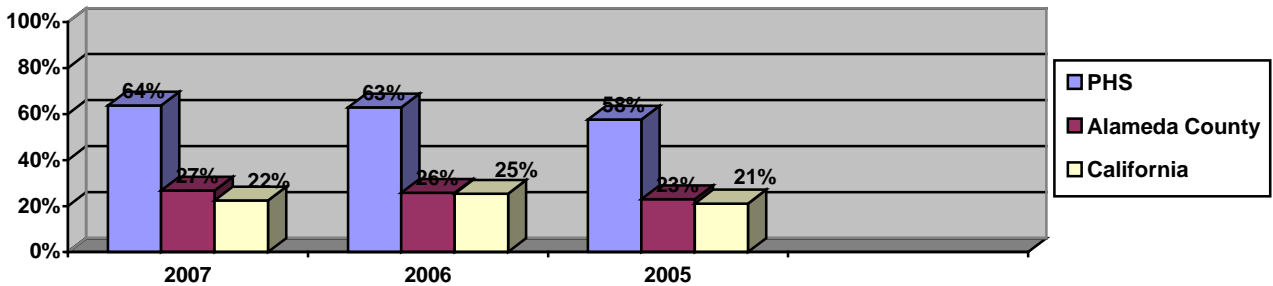
### Average Verbal/Math Scores



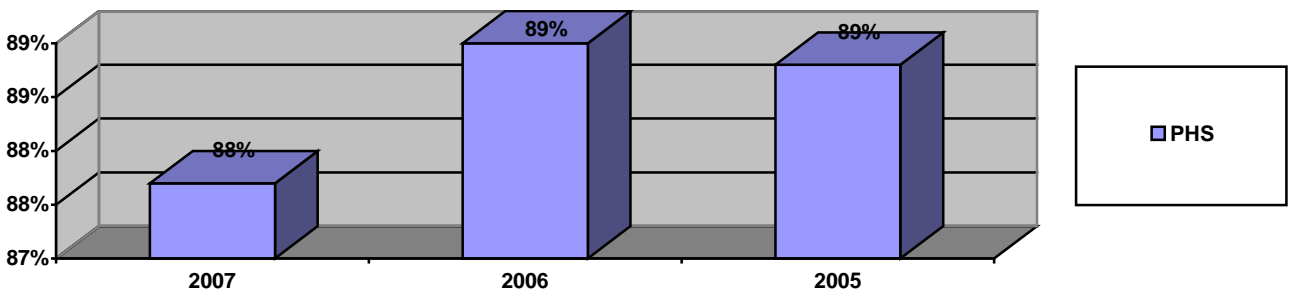
### (f) Advanced Placement Exams

As part of the college preparatory course offerings, students have the opportunity to select from seventeen (17) Advanced Placement and Honors courses: AP Art 2D-Design, AP Art 3-D Design, AP Biology, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP English Literature, AP French Language, AP Computer Science, AP Music Theory, AP Spanish Language, AP United States History, AP European History, AP Environmental Science, AP Mandarin, Physics Honors, Chemistry Honors, Statistics Honors.

### AP Exam Percentage of 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Tested



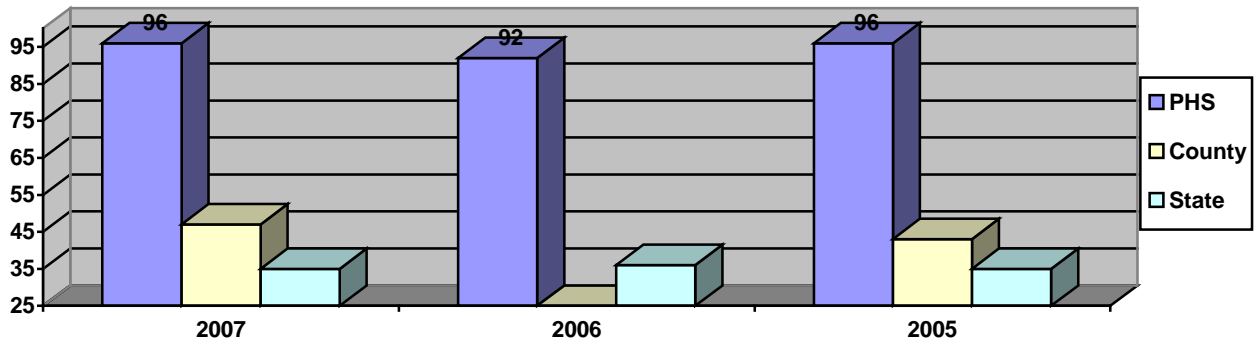
### AP Exam Percentage of 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Who Scored 3 or greater on their Exam(s)



**(g) Meeting U.C. Requirements**

Approximately 95% of PHS graduates complete the necessary courses to meet and exceed the University of California and the California State University entrance requirements.

**Percentage of Graduates Completing all Courses Required for U.C. / C.S.U. Entrance**



**(j) Completion rate**

Piedmont High School Students graduate at a rate of almost 99% since 2000. PHSs dropout rate is below 1% on average per year. The district's alternative high school is Millennium High School.

## Significant Changes or Developments

On August 12, 2005, the principal published the year's first *Tales from 800 Magnolia Ave* (a weekly Principal's Newsletter to Faculty and Staff) wherein he outlined his Educational Aims for the year:

*As a community of faculty, staff, administrators, and parents, we will continue to be a school rich in both academics and extra-curricular activities.*

*As a community of faculty, staff, administrators, and parents, we will aim to develop additional academic opportunities that exhibit breadth and depth in core and elective offerings.*

*As a community of faculty, staff, administrators, and parents, we will aim to serve and nurture Piedmont's students.*

The positive response, level of commitment, professionalism, and dedication from faculty and staff causes him to believe strongly that the staff and community will continue to perform in a manner that will ensure a quality and productive WASC process.

In examining the Educational Aims, it is not difficult to see that the school is traveling a path toward nurturing students, developing additional academic opportunities, and upholding a rich academic and extra-curricular program. Below are the many developments at PHS since 2005:

1. PHS has partnered with ROP to provide additional funding and equipment to support the following courses:
  - a. AP Environmental Science
  - b. Journalism
  - c. Biotechnology
  - d. Sports Medicine
2. PHS has secured over \$210,000 to support technology for teachers, staff, and students. This allowed us the administration to purchase and implement the following:
  - a. Laptops for over 70 staff members
  - b. LCD projectors (ceiling mounted for 95% of the classrooms)
  - c. ELMO Document Cameras for each department
  - d. Wireless internet access
  - e. Electronic classroom attendance
3. PHS adopted the following new courses:
  - a. AP European History
  - b. AP Calculus BC
  - c. AP Mandarin
  - d. ROP Biotechnology
  - e. ROP Sports Medicine
  - f. ROP Journalism
  - g. Introduction to Publications
  - h. Website Design
  - i. Honors Statistics
  - j. Biology

- k. Physical Science
  - l. Home Base Special Education Classes
4. PHS continues to offer 15 sections of performing arts, 3 dramatic productions, 3 music productions, 3 a cappella productions, 1 dance production, a musical, and a bird-calling contest.
  5. Installed a new sound system and speakers in the dance studio.
  6. Developed and/or actively participates in the following new committees, forums and task forces to support collaboration and increased communication/transparency with the greater Piedmont Community:
    - a. Curriculum Forum
    - b. GATE Council
    - c. Site Council
    - d. Green Committee
    - e. Diversity Committee
    - f. Bell Schedule Task Force
    - g. Academic Integrity Task Force
    - h. Coaches' Stipend Task Force
  7. Faculty utilizes Mygradebook.com or Easy Grade Pro as a means to communicate effectively student progress to parents and students.
  8. The PHS Counseling Office moved to room #18 to provide a more central and convenient location for students, parents, and faculty.
  9. The Science Department completed a thorough review of their curriculum and made significant changes:
    - a. Adopted Physical Science, Biology, Biotechnology, Physics, and Sports Medicine
    - b. Developed increased pathways for student progress
      - i. 9<sup>th</sup> grade students now choose between Physical Science or Biology
      - ii. 10<sup>th</sup> grade students now can enroll in Chemistry or Honors Chemistry
      - iii. 11<sup>th</sup> grade students now have the option of enrolling in Physics or Honors Physics
  10. The Math Department is currently reviewing their curriculum and has already made significant changes:
    - a. The addition of Honors Statistics and AP Calculus BC for advanced students
    - b. Additional sections of Geometry due to class-size reduction categorical funding.
  11. The development and implementation of the After School Study Support Program. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons (3:15pm-4:45pm) students can receive free tutoring from general education teachers, special education teachers, and/or para-educators or utilize the program as a quiet place to study after school.

12. Developed the Senior Institute as a support for those seniors who are transitioning from high school to college or university.
13. Developed the reinvented Highland Piper Magazine.
14. Created the first-ever full-color Clan-O-Log (yearbook)
15. Won numerous awards for the Piedmont Highlander (student newspaper)
16. Developed and implemented a new school nutrition program (The Piper Café) that now serves healthier choices, has eliminated soda and candy, and uses a “fast pay” system in order for students to use their student ID as a debit card.
17. Initiated the PHS Wellness Center. Staffed by a licensed therapist, therapeutic interns, health educators, and school counselors, the Wellness Center now hosts nearly 2000 visits per year.
18. A new synthetic field and track was installed at the Witter Sports Complex
19. The baseball Field was named *Coach Humphries Diamond*, in honor of Mike Humphries’ years of dedication and effort
20. New scoreboards were installed in the Binks Gymnasium
21. The Music Classrooms on the first floor of the Morrison Gym were named *Gillard Hall*, in honor of retired music teacher Leonora Sleeter Gillard.
22. The PHS Academic Integrity Task Force redeveloped the Academic Integrity Policies at Piedmont High School.
23. Developed the new Piedmont High School Honors Society.
24. With support from various members of the teaching faculty, a MLA Style Guide was authored for use by all students and faculty members across departments at Piedmont High School.
25. The Piedmont High School Website was re-engineered for the benefit of students, faculty, staff, and the parent community.
26. Reorganized district administration and improved support in curriculum development.
27. After seismic review, it was determined that two of the high school buildings (Student Center and the 30’s Building) are in need of significant seismic retrofitting. Everyone will be required to vacate these two facilities and utilize temporary housing on the Haven’s Elementary School site.

28. Professional Development opportunities that focus on writing across the curriculum and differentiated instruction techniques.
29. A section of Study Hall was added to the Master Schedule to support students.
30. A voluntary athletic participation fee was developed in order to raise coaches' stipends to competitive levels.
31. The 1st Annual English Awards Night was established to highlight those students who excel in the language arts.
32. The PHS Mock Trial Team captured 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the State of California and have once again earned the right to represent Alameda County at the State Competition.

## ***II. Follow-up Process***

### Report on Schoolwide Action Plan Progress

- 1. Piedmont High school needs to promote school-wide consistency in the area of student assessment. This critical academic need addresses types of assessments (i.e. multiple-choice, essay, portfolio, and notebook) and rubrics (i.e. ability benchmarks, content vs. effort, and assigning of value).**

*Task #1: Teachers of like courses will collaborate to ensure that the student workload, rigor, and method of assessment will be comparable. For example: sharing course outlines, rubrics, final exams, and grading policies.*

Growth Target: Department or like courses come to a consensus of grading percentage categories and general course expectations in order to have consistency, fairness and equality for the student body.

Over the past three years, departments across the board have met to discuss and develop common requirements, expectations, assessments, and learning goals. As a result, the science department has revised the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade course sequence and has recommended the adoption of additional courses. The math department has developed first semester common assessments in Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II as well as added Honors Statistics and AP Calculus BC. The English department has collaborated on the English 1-2 writing project: I-Search, has developed common writing assessments, has begun participation in the Early Assessment Program (EAP) writing assessment, and has worked with the entire faculty to develop agreed upon common, school-wide writing expectations for all students and classes. The social studies department developed and assigned a like-essay prompt for all U.S. History students. The World Language department has developed common grading categories, percentages, and assessments. In addition to their work within the school, departments meet regularly with the Piedmont Parent Community to provide greater transparency to the curriculum review process and textbook adoption cycle.

*Task #2: The administration and the teaching staff need to systematically study, disaggregate, and use academic performance data to identify areas for improvement with regard to grade calibration on major assignments on test within departments of similar courses to better support all students.*

Growth Target: Teachers will come to a reasonable consensus on what are examples of "A" work, "B" work, "C" work, etc. in their subject matter.

The math, world language, social studies, and English departments have developed at least one common assessment over the past three years. However, all departments need to deepen their calibration of student work through Professional Learning Communities, which focus on an on-going cycle of inquiry, which looks at disaggregated data, determines and implements areas of change and then evaluates student outcomes. Administrative support can provide professional development in areas such as the analysis of data, the cycle of inquiry and targeted peer observations.

- 2. Piedmont High school needs to promote school-wide consistency in the area of student behavior expectations. This critical academic need also addresses consistency in behavior expectations and consequences in the classroom (amongst departments and grade levels) and throughout the school.**

*Task #1: Revisit issues and policies regarding academic integrity, including plagiarism.*

Growth Target: Cause a shift in the PHS culture so the school community has a clear concept of academic integrity and individual and collective roles in demonstrating and modeling ethical behaviors.

The Piedmont High School Academic Integrity Task Force, consisting of faculty and administration, developed a new PHS Academic Integrity Policy. Parent Education Nights involved and educated the parent community about the issues surrounding academic integrity at Piedmont High School. The new policy was presented to students on the first day of school. The policy includes a philosophy, definition, responsibilities of the student, teacher, parent and administration, and clearly delineated procedures and consequences.

- 3. Piedmont High school needs to evaluate the identification procedures being used for students who are performing below average. This need addresses how and when we identify students who are performing below average. Piedmont High school also needs to evaluate the support services being used for students who are earning below average grades. This need addresses the success and areas of improvement needed for the current internal classroom support by teachers, as well as external intervention by teachers, counselors, resource specialists, administrators, and outside agencies.**

*Task #1: The administration and the teaching staff need to systematically study, disaggregate, and use academic performance data to identify students who are performing below average. The ineligible list and exemption report ("D" and "F" list) should be systematically reviewed by departments and administration to obtain more specific information about students who are performing below average. STAR and Exit Exam data should be systematically reviewed by departments and administration to obtain more specific information about student academic weaknesses.*

Growth Target: Increase in students identified as students of concern, and improved support structures.

Piedmont High School now reviews STAR exam cluster results as a way to better align curriculum, pacing and assessment benchmarks to support student achievement. Parents and students have the opportunity to access a student's academic progress via teachers' use of online grading programs.

*Task #2: More effective use of Student Study Team process is needed to address the underachievement of those students who are performing below average.*

Growth Target: Improved support services to students of concern and increased use of other interventions.

Student Study Teams or other forms of RTI can now be initiated in a timelier manner. The SST process has been redesigned to serve as a legitimate form of RTI for the support of students performing below average. A comprehensive Directed Studies Program has been developed to support students in need of remediation at all grade levels.

*Task #3: Designated staff will routinely provide information about accommodations and modifications to support resource students, 504 students, and students who have repeatedly been performing below average.*

Growth Target: Increase staff understanding of instruction with accommodations and curriculum with modification

Working closely with the counseling staff and faculty, SST meetings occur regularly, usually with the involvement of the parents, the student, teachers, a counselor, and an administrator. For special cases, a resource specialist, a school psychologist, and/or a Wellness Center representative are included. SST protocols are outlined for staff and reviewed annually. An After School Study Support Program provides free, voluntary tutoring for any PHS student. In addition, the PHS Wellness Center was developed to provide coordinated school health services. It is grounded in the logic that **health is academic**. Students who are unhealthy are less likely to be able to learn or succeed in school.

#### **4. The PHS community will systematically investigate and adopt a program for improving student writing.**

*Task #1: PHS will adopt a school-wide program for expository and analytical writing, with attention to curriculum, instruction, and assessment.*

Growth Target: The Piedmont educational community will report greater satisfaction with the quality of student writing at PHS, and departmental writing assessments reflect improvement by all students in expository and analytical writing skills.

The PHS Writing and Research Methods Task Force was formed to facilitate the development of a style guide, investigate the types of research projects that are assigned at PHS, and investigate how technology is incorporated to further students research methods. The result was the participation of 10 teachers in the Bay Area Writing Project on instructional strategies, methods of assessment, critique and feedback, and lesson plan development in the area of writing. The PHS Style Guide supports consistency in writing and research across all departments. The PHS Parents' Club funded a 0.2 fte Writing Coordinator position. English teachers are piloting the "Grademark" feature of Turnitin.com. *The Highland Piper*, Piedmont High School's literary magazine, was revived.

5. **PHS staff believes that more time for communication within departments, between departments, and between teachers at the high school and the middle school would enhance the staff's ability to collaborate about good teaching ideas, and effective instructional strategies and alignment of curriculum goals within departments and with state standards.**

*Task #1: Collaboration time will be set aside to promote the faculty collaboration on instructional strategies.*

At the beginning of the school year, the principal publishes the F-Day Staff Collaboration /Calendar in the first Principal's Newsletter. This allows department chairpersons and the PHS Faculty to plan their department meetings well in advance. During SAC (School Advisory Council) Meetings, topics are often developed for further discussion with their respective departments.

With the funding from the School Site Council, the administration and faculty were able to develop Faculty Peer Observations opportunities that allowed for each faculty member two peer observations. These peer observations could be accomplished across any department. Funding allowed for a one period substitute for a class or, if a teacher chose to visit during their prep, 1.5 hours at \$30.00 per hour. The Peer Observations were to foster and support collegiality and to provide learning opportunities as teaching techniques and strategies were improved.

*Task #2: Collaboration time will be set aside to promote the faculty time to update curriculum alignment to standards.*

The intent was to eliminate any curriculum gaps with regard to state standards in the teaching of state standards and in the content transition from middle school to high school.

Beginning in 2005, the PHS Science Faculty worked closely with the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade science teachers, the administrative team, and members of the PUSD Curriculum Forum to develop significant changes to the scope and sequence of the PHS Science Curriculum.

The PUSD Curriculum Forum, under the leadership of Curriculum Director and Millennium High School Principal Jamie Adams, serves as a forum for K-12 curriculum articulation. While the goal of the Curriculum Council is for parents, teachers, and administrators to effectively communicate with each other about curriculum, it is not a decision-making body. It is a place for all voices to be heard in a community-based school like Piedmont. They gather to learn from one another and take a research-based approach (quantitative and qualitative) when framing their discussions. Information shared and learned at the council meetings are processed throughout the articulation systems within all school sites.

By surveying student needs concerning the breadth and accessibility of the science curriculum, it was evident that more could be done to support student learning. To summarize the principal's recommendations:

- a. Shift away from the Integrated Science program to a traditional sequence of Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

- b. Offer additional options for students (i.e. 9th grade students may enroll in 10th grade Biology, skipping Physical Science, 10th grade may enroll concurrently in Biology and Honors Chemistry, 11th grade students may enroll in Physics).
- c. Develop a college prep Physics class to complement the current Honors Physics.
- d. Offer ROP Sports Medicine and ROP Biotechnology for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

With the beginning of the 2007 school year, the faculty used the same collaboration model to address the Math Curriculum at Piedmont High School. Because of the necessity to complete a thorough textbook adoption review, the faculty is still meeting as a group to conclude their findings for any needed changes in the Math scope and sequence.

**6. Development and implementation of a single schoolwide action plan will better ensure a unified vision for supporting growth for the benefit of all students.**

During the 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 Piedmont High School developed the PHS Site Council in order to author the Single Plan for Student Achievement. The goals for the 2008-09 Single Plan for Student Achievement are as follows:

Goal #1:

Increase proficiency levels in Algebra I by 5% on the 2009 CST – STAR Exam.

Goal #2

Increase proficiency levels in Geometry by 5% on the 2009 CST – STAR Exam.

Goal #3

Increase proficiency levels in Algebra II by 10% on the 2009 CST – STAR Exam.

The Visiting Team has discussed thoroughly with the administration and Site Council the Single Plan for Student Achievement and their reasoning for focusing on mathematics only for 2008-2009. Their reasoning is plausible, as it aligns with textbook adoption, and will serve them well as they continue their efforts to serve ALL students well.

Lastly, the Visiting Team, owing to the meetings we conducted during the visit would suggest that the district, administration and faculty find ways to expand upon their efforts in three areas, i.e., professional learning communities/teams, data analysis, and professional development. Those are areas that seem to complement the work you are doing; however, they could help facilitate more focus.

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Samuel Johnson, Jr., Chair  
Piedmont High School Visiting Committee

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Mrs. Jeanie L. Kwong, Member  
Piedmont High School Visiting Committee