

Pemberton Township School District

**Student/Parent Handbook
Gifted & Talented Program
K-5**



“Pursuing excellence, one child at a time.”

Pemberton, New Jersey

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EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Pemberton Township Board of Education believes that education is best achieved when students become involved in experiences meaningful to their lives in today's world. We believe that the educational process should develop a feeling of self-worth and accomplishment.

We believe that equal educational opportunity is the right of all children without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin and that all laws to this end should be followed promptly and effectively.

We further believe education should develop habits, attitudes, understanding, and skills necessary for a productive, satisfying life in civilized society. Each child should be helped to understand the duties and privileges of responsible citizenship as it relates to him or her as an individual and to the world community. We recognize the vast changes brought by increasing technology, population, and urbanization. We request the advice and support of the citizens of the community and the professional staff as we endeavor to develop the attitudes and abilities demanded in this rapidly changing world.

Gifted & Talented Staff

Adelina Giannetti, *Assistant Superintendent*
Dan Nale & Maureen DiBella, *Supervisors of GATE program*
Wendy LaRue, *GATE Enrichment teacher, K-5*
Rebecca Gudknecht, *GATE Enrichment teacher, K-5*

PTSD Gifted and Talented Program Overview

Mission

The mission of the Gifted and Talented Program is to provide challenging and engaging learning experiences and opportunities for growth that enable students with high potential, talent, and exceptional capacity to develop their potential.

Purpose

Pemberton Township School District encourages gifted students to excel through the Gifted and Talented Program. The purpose of the program is to make available challenging content matter, provide opportunities for the gifted learner to reach his/her potential, and to nurture self-esteem and confidence in special students. According to the US Department of Education, a student who is gifted and talented is: one who gives evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who requires services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities.

The thrust of the Gifted and Talented Program is to develop critical thinkers. To achieve this end, we have developed a program that expands on subject areas in the regular classroom curriculum. Problem-solving and decision making skills are incorporated into a variety of curriculum experiences. Students will be required to utilize the highest level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation and application. Research indicates that achievement rates are higher when students are more actively involved in the learning process. Gifted and Talented students will be exposed to a variety of learning modes emphasizing: reading/research, exploration, instruction/clarification and analysis of content, guided group discussions, practice by demonstration, and technology.

Goals

The Gifted and Talented program will:

- * increase opportunity for academic growth
- * provide the opportunity to pursue independent research
- * develop critical thinking skills
- * allow the ability and desire for the student to express self creatively
- * help the student develop an understanding of his/her worth, abilities, potentials, and limitations
- * provide instruction that bears meaningful relationship to the needs and interests of the pupil
- * promote enjoyment of the learning process and the acquisition of skills necessary for a lifetime of continuous learning and adaptations to change

Program Eligibility

In the Pemberton Township Schools, efforts are made to identify gifted and talented students in Kindergarten through fifth grade, and to provide enrichment classes and acceleration in appropriate areas. Student eligibility for Pemberton Township Schools' Gifted and Talented Program is determined through the use of multiple criteria. All students are reevaluated at the end of their second grade year. Additionally, students must demonstrate the potential for exceptional performance and advanced academic ability.

Identification Process

Kindergarten:

- SAGES 2
- Enrichment Characteristic Checklist
- Teacher Recommendation
- Writing Sample
- MAP Test Scores
- Report Card

First Grade:

- SAGES 2
- HOPE Teacher Rating Scale
- Teacher Recommendation
- Writing Sample
- MAP Test Scores
- Report Card

Second Grade:

- SAGES 2
- HOPE Teacher Rating Scale
- Teacher Recommendation
- Writing Sample
- MAP Test Scores
- Report Card

Third Grade:

- SAGES 3
- HOPE Teacher Rating Scale
- Teacher Recommendation
- Writing Sample
- MAP Test Scores
- Report Card

Fourth and Fifth Grade:

- SAGES 3
- HOPE Teacher Rating Scale
- Teacher Recommendation
- Writing Sample
- MAP Test Scores
- Report Card

Appeal Process

Parents, teachers, and/or administration that challenge the identification process with warranted concerns may request that the individual child be re-tested using a Cognitive Skills Test. The re-test will be administered by the gifted and talented teacher and hand scored by a certified teacher and/or administration. Students that are ineligible due to academic grades may be re-evaluated, upon request, at the end of each marking period.

Implementation

Kindergarten, First, and Second Grades

All students in Kindergarten receive a bi-monthly whole group enrichment lesson for a 40-minute period for half of the school year. First and second graders are exposed to enrichment activities once every six day cycle through small group classes provided throughout the year. Students are identified for the program in the Spring of the previous school year.

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

In order to qualify for the third through fifth grade program, students must have the highest number of accumulated points on the Gifted and Talented Matrix. Placement in the third through fifth grade identified group is a more permanent placement than in the kindergarten through second grade groupings. Students meet for two 40-minute periods per the six day cycle.

Program Format:

- Students will participate in Project/Problem Based Learning, contingent on student interest and giftedness with the teacher acting as the facilitator.
- All units of study will be based on a variety of Next Generation Science Standards, National Association for Gifted Children Standards and the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in various subject areas.
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of selected topics through any of the following assessments: writing reports, completed projects, portfolios, presentations, and /or teacher conferencing.

Continuation in Program after Selection

Continuation in the Gifted and Talented Program after selection is a privilege. Students must meet each challenge to the best of their ability. They must maintain their academic standing by earning A's and B's in all subject areas. Students receiving anything lower than a B in a subject area will be placed on probation for one marking period. Any student who fails to maintain grade averages for two consecutive marking periods will not be permitted to continue in the Gifted and Talented program. Gifted and Talented students on probation or removed from the program will be reviewed at the end of the marking period for reinstatement. Gifted and talented students must maintain good conduct according to the Student Discipline Code of Conduct in order to enter or remain in the program.

Student Code of Conduct

The district's Student Code of Conduct provides minimum standards for acceptable pupil behavior. All district elementary schools use the guidelines contained in the Code of Conduct to ensure a uniformity and consistency of treatment from school to school.

Standards for pupil conduct include respect to teachers, other students and school personnel; maintaining a clean, inoffensive appearance, respecting school property, authority, the personal safety of others; and attending school on a regular basis.

The intent of the Code of Conduct is to identify commonly recognized student behaviors that are unacceptable in the education setting and to be a general guide for students, teachers and administrators. As a listing, this manual is not intended to be all-inclusive. Certain situations may warrant measures different than those prescribed herein. In such instances, administrative discretion will prevail.

Pemberton Township School district is committed to providing all scholars with educational opportunities designed to prepare them to be productive members of a democratic society by developing each individual's ability to use higher thinking skills,

logically solve problems and make rational, responsible decisions. It is the specific responsibility of the school instructional staff and administration to provide an environment in which that education can take place. To that end, these guidelines seek to list those behaviors, and the consequences of those behaviors, that may impede or disrupt the educational program of the school and the safety and well-being of our students. It is our hope that these guidelines will assist parents, students, and teachers in the identification of unacceptable behaviors and provide a clear and consistent explanation of consequences such behavior will merit. It should be noted that these procedures also apply to those school sponsored events that may take place beyond the regular school day and away from the school building. We want to be proud of our students, but more importantly, we want them to have pride in themselves. To that end, we are committed to providing the best possible learning environment.

Major violations of conduct include the following: continued, willful, and open defiance to school authority; assault on school personnel or other students; defacing or damaging school property; threats, extortion, or use of profanity; theft, truancy, smoking on school property; possession, use, sale or distribution of drugs or alcohol; possession or concealment of weapons.

Minor violations constitute negative behaviors at the lower level of seriousness or at a first stage of incidence. Some examples include name-calling, distractive or disruptive behavior, violating classroom rules.

Pupil suspension will be utilized as follows: for major violations; as a last alternative when other less severe measures have been tried; or when necessary to ensure the immediate maintenance of good order and to protect a student's physical or emotional safety or well-being. When a pupil's suspension from school becomes necessary, the parents will be notified by telephone, if possible, and by letter within 24 hours of the suspension notice to the pupil.

A parent conference shall be offered and so stated on the suspension letter. The school district strongly encourages parents to take advantage of this conference opportunity, which is so important in preventing future negative conduct by the students.

Administrative Procedures

The following administrative behaviors will be included as standard guidelines in addressing major violations:

1. Student/administrator conference
2. Parent notification (phone and/or written notice)
3. Parent/administrator conference

Other, additional steps may be used by the administrator in dealing with major violations. These options will vary as to where and how often they are used, according to the problem situation. **The administrator will use his/her judgment on an individual case basis.** These options are:

1. A student/administrator/teachers conference

2. A student/guidance counselor conference
3. A student/guidance/parent conference

Standards for Student Conduct

Our elementary school has minimum standards for acceptable pupil behavior. Our school attempts to promote those positive behaviors and relationships among students. The cooperative efforts of school personnel and parents are critical in articulating, developing, and enforcing these expectations, toward a total positive school environment. The guidance counselor and Intervention and Referral Services Team play a major role in discipline matters and are used to bring about positive behavior changes.

Minimally, therefore, all students will be expected to:

1. Accord the proper respect to teachers, other students, and school personnel
2. Adhere to classroom, school, and bus rules and regulations
3. Maintain a clean, neat, inoffensive personal appearance
4. Respect school property and the property of others
5. Respect the physical safety of others
6. Respect the authority of any teacher or person who is in a position of authority
7. Refrain from inciting other pupils toward misbehavior
8. Be in daily attendance and punctual to class
9. Be prepared for class assignments and activities as required

Minor Violations

A sequential procedure for dealing with minor violations will include:

First - A direct pupil warning

Second - A private teacher/pupil conference/possible Intervention and Referral Services Team intervention

If the problem persists or reoccurs:

First - Teacher/parent contact by phone or letter

and/or

Second - Teacher/parent meeting (with or without the pupil)

Lack of improvement after these efforts would then require the assistance of other resources.

--Exclusion from special events or special privileges

--Referral to the guidance counselor*

--Referral to the principal

** The guidance counselor will work to help the child change his/her behavior(s) and work toward eliminating the root causes for misbehaviors.*

Major Violations

A. Violation shall be considered of major seriousness based on the level of effect that the behavior has on the pupil himself/herself, other pupils, school personnel, or property.

B. Examples:

1. Continued and willful disobedience.
2. Open defiance to school authority

3. Assault on school personnel
4. Assault on other students
5. Continued use of profanity/gestures
6. Defacing or damaging school property
7. Possession, use, sale, or distribution of drugs or alcohol on school property
8. Leaving school premises without permission
9. Chronic misbehavior or classroom disruption
10. Use of threats or extortion
11. Theft on school property
12. Truancy and/or chronic tardiness
13. Transportation misbehavior
14. Possession and/or concealment of weapons
15. Possession and/or use of tobacco products on school property

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Character Education is an instructional approach that is used to enhance learning and make school more meaningful for students. Today, the vast majority of Americans share a respect for fundamental traits of character: honesty, compassion, justice, courage, and perseverance. Yet, in today's world, all children face great uncertainties in a complex and sometimes troubled society. These traits are not always readily apparent and easy to grasp or learn. Therefore our challenge is to provide youth with the self-esteem, stamina, and support they need to survive, be successful, and develop into strong, competent, caring, and responsible citizens.

With input from the Pemberton students, staff, and community, our core values were formalized in 2016. The core values will be taught through monthly lessons and are as follows: **SERVICE, PERSEVERANCE, INTEGRITY, RESPECT, and RESPONSIBILITY.**

I
Need
Service
Perseverance
Integrity
Respect & Responsibility
Every
Day

**GATE Program,
Student/Parent acknowledgement of conduct expectations**

I, _____, (student) understand that in order to continue in the GATE program for Pemberton Township, I am expected to uphold all school and classroom rules. I will abide by all standards in the student code of conduct.

Student Signature

Date

I, _____, (parent/guardian) understand that in order for my child to continue in the GATE program for Pemberton Township, He/She is expected to uphold all school and classroom rules. He/She will be expected to abide by all standards in the student code of conduct.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date