

2023 – 2024

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

BOARD APPROVED – 9/20/2023

SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD BOARD OF EDUCATION

512 Cedar Street
Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM OF STUDIES

2023 - 2024

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The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools are committed to providing an equal opportunity for all students and employees, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, place of residence, social or economic condition, or handicap/disability in all school programs and vocational education opportunities. Consistent with the intent of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (racial/ethnic equity), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (non-discrimination on the basis of handicap/disability), the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools afford all students and employees equal opportunity.

The Mission of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools is to educate every student to become a confident and caring life-long learner who can communicate and contribute positively to the rapidly changing world. The district, in cooperation with the community, will provide an academic environment which values excellence, initiative and diversity.

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood curriculum is designed to offer every student in our district an excellent comprehensive education. This Program of Studies booklet provides an overview of the various curriculum components in each of the subject areas at the elementary level.

Review and revision of curriculum areas are conducted on a five-year cycle by committees of professional staff and parents. In order to meet state standards and keep pace with the changing needs of students in our increasingly interdependent world, curriculum revisions have emphasized the use of content to solve problems, higher-level thinking processes, and technology applications which foster and enhance learning. Through this systematic approach to curriculum renewal, the district also incorporates into our program the most current state and federal guidelines, findings from research of professional organizations and universities, and best approaches of informed practice.

If you have questions about any of the programs we offer, please contact your child's teacher. If further clarification is needed, building principals and subject supervisors would be pleased to assist you.

Sincerely,



Dr. Robert McGarry
Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum and
Instruction

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ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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PHILOSOPHY

Children are the focus of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools. We believe that each child is a unique and valued individual with varied abilities, aptitudes, interests, needs, and potential for growth.

All students need:

- the knowledge and skills necessary to function effectively in our changing world;
- an understanding of themselves and of the world around them;
- strong feelings of self-worth as well as respect for others;
- a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment;
- a supportive and stimulating learning environment.

Recognizing the above, the purpose of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools is to provide an education striving for excellence in realizing each student's potential for intellectual and personal growth.

OVERALL PROGRAM

The district is firmly committed to having children achieve a mastery of basic communication and computation skills. The elementary program of studies is designed to assure the development of these fundamental skills to the highest degree possible for each child.

Intrinsic to the program is the provision of sequential opportunities for the development of basic skills in the core content areas of language arts, social studies, science, mathematics, fine arts, and world languages. The program also includes skill development aimed at helping children to mature physically, emotionally, and socially.

Thus, the elementary curriculum aims to provide a broad and varied educational program in which the basic skills are embedded.

ELEMENTARY TIME ALLOTMENTS

Teachers assure adequate attention to the various subject fields throughout the year, taking advantage of opportunities to meet the needs of a particular learning situation or to address special interests of the children. Inter-disciplinary approaches to enhance learning are utilized whenever appropriate.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The Intervention and Referral Service (I&RS), a committee comprised of the student assistant specialist, school nurse and selected teachers, assists the principal with the identification of students who are in need of services above and beyond that which may be offered through the regular instructional program.

As vital members of the school leadership team, Student Assistance Specialists work to maximize student success by promoting equity and inclusion for all students. This includes identifying and removing barriers to education, whether it be individual, familial, school or community based. Student Assistance Specialists work cooperatively with parents, staff members, and other involved persons to create an environment best suited for the success of every student. Student Assistance Specialists utilize knowledge from their specific mental health discipline to recommend appropriate plans for students with physical, social, educational, or emotional needs, or some combination of the above. Students can be referred to the Student Assistance Specialist if there are concerns that are impacting their learning such as: social/emotional concerns, behavioral difficulties, conflict with peers, and/or school avoidance. Student Assistance Specialists gather information about students from a variety of sources (classroom observation, teacher input, parent input, etc.) to determine if school based counseling is appropriate and if so, what services are needed. Services offered by Student Assistance Specialists include, but are not limited to:

- individual student academic planning and goal setting
- group counseling
- school counseling classroom lessons based on student success standards
- short-term counseling to students
- referrals for long-term support
- collaboration with families/teachers/administrators/community for student success
- advocacy for students at individual education plan meetings, I&RS and other student-focused meetings
- data analysis to identify student issues, needs and challenges
- acting as a systems change agent to improve equity, access, achievement and opportunities for all students

Students who work with the Student Assistance Specialist can gain improved communication and interpersonal skills, greater self-acceptance and self-esteem, ability to change self-defeating behaviors/habits, better expression and management of emotions, increased confidence and decision-making skills, ability to manage stress effectively, and improved problem-solving and conflict resolution abilities.

The counseling program assist 4th grade students with the transition to middle school:

The middle school counselors organize an orientation program for 4th grade students in the spring to provide them with information about middle school to prepare them for the move to the 5th grade. Part of this orientation includes a morning visit to the middle school during which students meet with the principal and tour the building. It also includes an evening orientation meeting for the parents of the 4th graders.

In addition, the district's Elementary Social Emotional Learning Curriculum for Grades 1 through 4 is designed to provide developmentally appropriate information and strategies on the themes of Bullying and Conflict Resolution, Empathy and Kindness, Problem Solving, Emotion Management, Growth Mindset and Goal Setting. These themes are addressed through lessons at each grade level.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY PROGRAM

The K-4 elementary language arts program integrates reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing and is, therefore, aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy, History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. These elements are integrated with the **Heinemann Units of Study in Reading and Writing (2015)**, **Wilson's Foundations (2018)**, and **Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction (2008)**.

READING

Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools' language arts literacy program supports a comprehensive approach to literacy through its use of the Heinemann's *Units of Study in Reading*. Students consistently participate in both whole class (Shared Reading (grades K-2) and minilessons) and small group (Guided Reading or Strategy Groups) instruction, as well as individual reading conferences. Through Shared Reading, minilessons, and Interactive Read Alouds students are introduced to key reading strategies and skills that help them utilize specific actions while they read. This occurs when teachers model the habits, skills, and strategies proficient readers use to understand and enjoy reading. During Guided Reading or Strategy Groups, students receive follow-up instruction targeted to specific developmental stages. Through reading conferences, teachers can tailor instruction based on each student's individual strengths and areas for growth. The elementary reading program is designed to foster a love of reading and to develop the skills essential to students becoming effective, lifelong readers. The program provides opportunities for learning experiences in listening and speaking, phonemic awareness, phonics, word identification, word analysis, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension strategies. As students read a variety of selections, they learn appropriate strategies to optimize their comprehension. These strategies include previewing and predicting, confirming predictions, using prior or background knowledge, self-questioning, adjusting reading rate, using typographic clues, visualizing, rereading, and using text features and illustrations to facilitate comprehension. As a result of students' focus on comprehension, students develop into readers who learn how to relate the text to themselves, the world, and other texts. They learn to be critical and active readers who know that reading equates with getting meaning from text.

Students are offered multiple opportunities for practice and application of these essential skills. They may engage in independent and partner reading, while graphic organizers, retellings, and group discussions are also used to explore students' understanding of textual content and ideas. Further, written responses are used to encourage students' self-reflection and meta-cognition.

Heinemann's *Units of Study in Reading* and selected trade books provide the basic materials to support the reading program K-4. Students are exposed to a variety of genres to enrich their reading experiences. Teachers also work with the media specialist in the selection and use of additional appropriate print materials and technology to support the program.

WORD STUDY

Kindergarten and first grade students will use Wilson's *Foundations* program to begin to build phonemic and phonological awareness. Through a systematic, multisensory approach, students will gain an understanding of foundational reading and writing skills including phonological awareness, fluency, letter formation and automaticity, encoding, and sentence composition, which will lead to increased independence in Reading and Writing Workshops. Beginning in second grade, students use the *Words Their Way* program to expand on the phonological awareness skills developed in earlier grades. *Words Their Way* is a developmentally driven instructional approach providing an integrated way to teach phonics, vocabulary, and spelling to improve literacy skills. Using a systematic approach to word study, guided by an informed interpretation of spelling errors and other literacy behaviors, *Words Their Way* offers a teacher-directed, child-centered plan for vocabulary growth and spelling development. The main purpose of word study is to examine words in order to reveal consistencies within our written language system and to help students master the recognition, spelling, and meaning of specific words. Becoming fully literate is absolutely dependent on fast, accurate recognition of words and their meanings in texts, and fast, accurate production of words in writing so that readers and writers can focus their attention on making meaning.

WRITING

The *Heinemann's Unit of Study in Writing* provides students with genre-based, authentic writing instruction. The writing program relies on real literature to model writing and highlight techniques used by published authors in a workshop setting. Students are encouraged to see themselves as writers as they begin to develop the skills and knowledge required to be good writers. Through writing both fiction and nonfiction, students are introduced to the important aspects of writing. Students are guided through the writing process and deepen their understanding of the process as they continue through the program.

The writing process includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Students learn their responsibilities in each of those areas. For example, when prewriting, students learn various strategies, which include graphic organizers, outlining, clustering ideas, and note taking. Students learn that drafts need revision. As students revise, they focus on specific areas that include content, organization, descriptive words, figurative language, effective beginnings and endings, and appropriate use of language. When editing, students focus on usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Through the use of models provided by trade books, benchmark papers, sample writing pieces, and teachers' writings, students develop awareness of the characteristics of good writing. Student progress is assessed through conferencing, journals, written self-reflections, rubrics, writing samples, benchmarks, and portfolios.

Specific types of writing in the elementary program are varied and many of them spiral through the grades, thereby fostering skill reinforcement for each type. Students at each grade level are responsible for writing in five general areas that include: narrative writing, informational writing, persuasive writing, functional writing, and writing in response to literature. The integration of writing across the curriculum areas enables students to write for varied audiences, "publishing" works proudly on the bulletin boards and in class books to share with others.

The oral expression component develops students' abilities to express information, thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Activities range from conversation, discussion, and dramatizations to formal oral reports using multimedia. The listening component refines students' awareness as they attend to spoken language for various purposes such as gaining information, understanding directions, increasing word meaning and knowledge, determining shades of meaning and feelings, enjoyment, and evaluating the ideas of the text. The focus of the viewing component is to make students critical viewers, interpreters, and assessors of visual media.

MATHEMATICS PROGRAM

KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 2

Mathematics learning in the primary grades builds on the curiosity and enthusiasm of children and grows naturally from their experiences. Mathematical experiences challenge young children to explore ideas related to patterns, shapes, numbers, and space with increasing sophistication. Because young children develop a disposition for mathematics from their early experiences, opportunities for learning should be positive and supportive.

The primary grades mathematics program encourages children to be actively involved in mathematics skills through measuring, observing, data handling, sorting, counting, and graphing. These experiences are linked to reading, language arts, science, and social studies. Activities develop a strong conceptual framework while encouraging and developing students' skills and their natural inclination to solve problems.

Knowing how young children acquire skills, the curriculum supports their learning with the use of a wide variety of materials including: rulers, tape measures, geometry templates, money, and calculators. When appropriate, children also use pattern blocks, scales, and number blocks. Number activities oriented toward problem solving develop not only counting and number abilities but also such reasoning abilities as classifying and ordering. Activities encourage students' strategies and build on them as ways of developing more general ideas and systematic approaches.

The concepts and skills related to number and operations are a major emphasis of mathematics instruction. Children are supported in learning basic facts through a variety of practice activities with the goal of producing efficient "number fact reflexes." Their "Fact Power" is developed in association with real life uses of numbers. In their work with numbers, students develop efficient and accurate strategies that they understand. Guided work with calculators enables students to explore number and pattern, focus on problem solving processes, and investigate realistic applications.

Fluency with basic addition and subtraction number combinations is an important goal for the K–2 years. When students notice that operations seem to have particular properties, they are beginning to think algebraically. Students also become familiar with shape, structure, location, and transformations, laying the foundation for understanding not only their spatial world but also other topics in mathematics and in art, science, and social studies.

Students in grades K-2 study mathematics using *Everyday Mathematics* developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project. Teachers stimulate mathematical conversations each day through asking questions that lead students to clarifications, extensions, and enrichment activities.

GRADE 3 AND GRADE 4

As students enter grade 3, their prior experiences have shown them that mathematics is useful, practical and have led them to believe that what they are learning is important. Activities in grades 3 and 4 are designed to be interesting and understandable so that the students develop systematic understandings while maintaining their engagement and enthusiasm. Students use physical models to support and extend their thinking, and investigate real life situations to expand their problem-solving abilities.

In grades three and four, materials from the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project, *Everyday Mathematics*, are used as the primary source for classroom learning activities. Students work independently and in small groups to confirm their knowledge and to develop ideas through projects that extend over many days. On-going practice maintains and extends skills for using number facts and basic operations. Students' understanding of the base-ten number system is deepened as they come to understand its multiplicative structure.

Equivalence is another central idea: students extend their use of equivalent forms of numbers as they develop new strategies for computing and develop efficient and accurate methods (algorithms) for computing that are based on well-understood properties and number relationships. For example, 8×25 can be thought of as $8 \times 5 \times 5$ or as 4×50 . Some of these methods are performed mentally, and others are carried out using paper and pencil to facilitate the recording of thinking. Students use algorithms as tools for solving problems and creating the different representations of numbers that are helpful for different purposes.

Students' ability to recognize, create, and use equivalent representations of numbers and geometric objects also expands. For example, $\frac{3}{4}$ can be thought of as a half and a fourth, as $\frac{6}{8}$, as 75%, or as 0.75; a parallelogram can be transformed into a rectangle with equal area by cutting and pasting; and three feet is the same as thirty-six inches, or one yard.

In activities that connect with language arts, science, art, and social studies, students develop and apply an understanding of geometry and spatial relationships. They explore data and use patterns and sequences. In grades 3 and 4, calculators create opportunities to stimulate students' curiosity about the patterns and functions they may find in mathematics and other content areas.

SCIENCE PROGRAM

The elementary science program has been designed to provide all students with an exciting “minds on” experience which emphasizes higher-level thinking skills. Classroom activities involve students in the process of using an inquiry approach to science. An emphasis on experimentation, observation, and analysis sharpens students’ critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Use of technology, including the Internet, and writing are integral parts of the students’ science experience. In grades Kindergarten through four, students explore the Full Option Science System (FOSS), which continues the balanced approach to physical science, earth science, life science, as well as engineering, technology, and the application of science. The K-4 science curriculum offers students challenging opportunities to practice science and build confidence in both individual and cooperative abilities.

The following provides an overview of the Science program.

	<u>Life Science</u>	<u>Earth Science</u>	<u>Physical Science</u>
Kindergarten	– Animals Two by Two (FOSS)	– Trees and Weather (FOSS)	– Materials and Motion (FOSS)
Grade 1	– Plants and Animals (FOSS)	Air and Weather (FOSS)	– Sound and Light (FOSS)
Grade 2	– Insects and Plants (FOSS)	– Pebbles, Sand and Silt (FOSS)	Solids and Liquids (FOSS)
Grade 3	Structures of Life (FOSS)	– Water and Climate (FOSS)	– Motion and Matter (FOSS)
Grade 4	– Structures of Life (FOSS)	– Soils, Rocks, and Landforms (FOSS)	– Energy (FOSS)

SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM

The elementary social studies program is designed to provide students with foundational understandings of core social studies concepts in civics, history, geography, economics and cultural diversity. Students explore who they are as individuals and how they function as members of various communities including the classroom, school, family, town, nation and world. At each grade level, students also begin to develop an awareness of the wider world; the study of global cultures not only fosters an appreciation for diversity, but it also promotes the perspective-taking that is critical for conflict resolution and democratic citizenship. The social studies program assists children in acquiring essential knowledge of who they are within various communities, in appreciating their heritage, and in valuing responsible citizenship in a multicultural, democratic society.

The *Social Studies Alive!* program from Teachers Curriculum Institute serves as the primary resource for elementary social studies but additional resources are incorporated throughout the year. Primary and secondary sources are utilized both to learn content and skills in social studies, and students utilize literature, maps and globes, charts and graphs and other multimedia sources to explore relevant content.

The following is an overview of the units addressed in each grade through the social studies program.

KINDERGARTEN

- Me and My Class
- My Family
- My Neighborhood
- My World

GRADE 1

- Our Classroom Community
- Families and Traditions
- People Can Make a Difference
- Maps and Globes
- Being an American
- Making Economic Choices

GRADE 2

- Being Good Citizens in our Community
- Geography and Culture
- Global Connections

GRADE 3

- Being an Active Citizen
- Diversity and Innovation: A History of Where We Live
- Being a Global Citizen

GRADE 4

- US History and Government: The American Revolution and the Constitution
- Geography: New Jersey and the United States
- Civic Action and the Environment

WORLD LANGUAGES

GRADE 2 TO GRADE 4

The elementary school world languages program begins with the study of Spanish in grade two and continues in sequence in grades three and four. This early beginning is designed to take advantage of the natural language learning ability and interest of the young learner. Research has shown that the early beginning provides for a longer sequence of practice and experience with the language, thus leading ultimately to greater fluency and effectiveness in the language studied. In addition, research has also shown that the earlier children study another language, the better their native-like pronunciation will be. Furthermore, the language learning skills the students acquire at the elementary level will be transferable in the continuation of the study of Spanish or in the learning of another language at the middle school level or the high school level. Through the study of a world language at the elementary level, students also have a formal avenue in which to learn about and experience cultural diversity in the rapidly changing world.

Twice each week the language specialist, who has experience teaching young students and is a fluent speaker of Spanish, will provide direct instruction in Spanish for 40 minutes. The teacher will deliver instruction in Spanish using puppets, storybooks, songs, videos, etc. Students will be involved in communicative games, language experience activities, cultural fantasies, songs, rhymes, children's literature, physical activity, manipulation of props, role plays, dialogues, small group work, paired work, and listening activities. Emphasis will be on communication and students will be graded on the basis of their efforts in comprehending and speaking the Spanish language.

Topics of Study include:

Grade 2

- A. La Oruga Muy Hambrienta
- B. El Loro Tico Tango

Greetings and leave taking
Classroom objects
Numbers
Colors
Dates
Body parts
Animals

Cultural Units

Grade 3

Thematic focus:
Cuadros de Familia

Reinforcement of topics
from grade 2
Weather
Seasons
Clothing
Numbers
Feelings
Cultural Units
Family Members
Art

Grade 4

Sube y Baja por los Andes

Reinforcement of topics
from grades 2 and 3
Map Skills
Cardinal Directions
Continents
Oceans
21 Spanish-speaking Countries
Transportation
Geography
Integrated Thematic Units:

- Mexico and The Marketplace – Money and Bargaining
- The Past and Present

After the culmination of the elementary program, students will have the opportunity to experience French, and Italian during the exploratory cycle in fifth grade. The Spanish segment of the exploratory cycle in fifth grade is dedicated to the maintenance of students' Spanish language skills developed in grades 2 – 4. At the end of that experience, students will have the opportunity in sixth grade to choose to continue with Spanish or select the study of one of the other languages offered at the middle school and high school levels.

LIBRARY/MEDIA PROGRAM

The goal of the library/media program is to foster the love of reading and to promote information literacy. The program is based on the premise that students should be empowered to become independent life-long learners, collaborative problem solvers, and creative thinkers.

Skills are developmentally appropriate to a child's grade and spiral along a continuum resulting in frequent reinforcement and refinement of student knowledge and understanding. Some of the skills include:

- Students' ability to select materials that are appropriate to their interest and purpose.
- Students' ability to locate, select, analyze, synthesize, and apply information for research purposes through both paper and electronic means.
- Students' ability to grow in appreciation for a wide range of books, authors, and illustrators for both pleasure and information retrieval.

The library/media program is fully integrated with all curricular areas and provides a variety of both print (books, magazines, encyclopedia, etc.) and electronic materials (databases, Internet).

STUDY SKILLS PROGRAM

The process of learning how to study, in order to be effective, must meet two criteria: (1) that it is sequentially ordered in the instructional programs and (2) that it is learned through direct application to a formal body of knowledge. Study skills, once learned, enable the student to learn efficiently and effectively. At the elementary school level, study skills do not require a separate course treatment; they are the enabling processes by which students become lovers of learning, develop inquiring minds, and are able to seek higher levels of inquiry and interests beyond the school curriculum. Additionally, study skills are the means through which independence in learning is achieved.

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public School District recognizes the importance of this process goal and makes provision within the curricular disciplines for students to receive instruction in these skills in all areas of the program of studies. These and additional skills are taught and enhanced through specialized application in the library/media program of the elementary schools in the district.

ART PROGRAM

The K-4 art program is designed to provide children with the opportunity to create, build fine motor skills and background knowledge through the exploration of materials and discover master artists. The art program is offered as a means of self-expression which provides for an outlet of ideas, emotion, and creative energy. It develops a perceptual awareness and discrimination, helping our students to gain an appreciation of the power of art and its relation to the world around them.

Students in grades 1-4 participate in weekly lessons that are a minimum of 40 minutes in duration. Kindergarten students participate in weekly lessons of 40 minutes per session. Art education is comprised of two aspects -- encouraging appreciation and developing skills. Lessons introduce students to new motor skills and build upon the *Elements and Principles of Art*; color, line, shape, form, texture. Many lessons also expose students to master artists, teaching students how to view, analyze and discuss what they observe. Each art lesson is designed to expose students to an element of art and encourages higher thinking skills.

Reinforcement of skills takes place in the general classrooms through interest corners at the primary level and special projects for older students. Such projects include dioramas, models, scenic design, posters, etc. The regular and changing displays of student work within the school building provides a vehicle for communicating individual and collective talents.

MUSIC PROGRAM

The K-4 music program provides opportunities for students to develop skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and appreciation for their personal enjoyment, expression, and musical growth in contemporary society. The basic elements of music -- rhythm, melody, harmony, form, tone color, dynamics, and tempo -- are presented through various kinds of experiences involving singing, playing instruments, critical listening, movement, creative expression, and music reading.

Musical activities are planned as episodes in a process of musical growth. Singing songs, engaging in rhythmic activities, enjoying singing games, studying notation, listening, practicing, singing in a choir, and playing in instrumental ensembles are a few of the more important examples that help children grow in the field of music. In the process of providing musical growth, a sequence of aesthetic and social experiences are planned to help children find an outlet for their emotions and creative feelings.

The music program is comprised of two major components: vocal and instrumental.

Vocal music is offered to all children once per week in grades PreK-4 and includes exploratory experiences in singing, listening, performing, reading, creating rhythm, theater and dance. Fourth grade students have the opportunity to participate in a choir that meets weekly and presents performances throughout the year. Classroom teachers, particularly at the primary level, provide program supplements. Keyboards, melodic percussion, rhythm instruments, and recorders are used to enhance the skill of musical notation.

The instrumental program is offered to children at grade 4 on an elective basis. Weekly lessons are approximately 40 minutes in duration and reflect a wide range of instrumentation. Each school has a band that meets weekly when students are ready. Baritones and french horns are provided by the Board of Education, while others are rented or purchased.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The physical education curriculum in the elementary school provides children of all abilities and interests with a foundation of movement experiences that will eventually lead to an active and healthy lifestyle. Developmentally appropriate physical education programs are designed for every child, from the physically gifted to the physically challenged.

Research has proven that habits taught at an early age are more apt to continue throughout a lifetime. Therefore, our health and physical education programs have been structured on a developmental continuum Preschool-12.

Students in Preschool through grade four participate in weekly lessons with a physical education specialist. In addition, reinforcement of physical education activities occurs within the general classroom setting to address the state mandate for health, physical education, and safety. The elementary physical education curriculum emphasizes the development of basic movement awareness, fundamental motor skills, manipulative skills, and fitness, as applied to educational games and sports, cooperative learning experiences, rhythmic, dance, and gymnastics.

HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM

The K-4 health education program is designed to develop the skills necessary to evaluate and improve a student's personal wellness. Throughout the course of study, students will make positive decisions concerning their personal wellness. Through skills-based activities, students will develop an understanding of how to make healthy choices and prevent diseases. Students will gain an understanding of injury prevention and the effects of drugs and alcohol. Students will work on developing character traits and socio-emotional learning. Students will understand the importance of service activities and the role of community health professionals. Students will understand how stress management and conflict resolution are important in maintaining an overall wellness. Students will analyze the roles of family and the influence that family has on the individual. In order to achieve these goals, this course will be guided by both the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education and the National Standards for Health Education.

The K-4 health program is broad in its scope and utilizes a comprehensive education approach. Designated lessons have been identified from the major components of health education including: Personal Growth and Development, Pregnancy and Parenting, Emotional Health, Social and Sexual Health, Community Health Services and Support, Nutrition, Personal Safety, Health Conditions, Diseases, and Medicines, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs, and Dependency, Substances Disorder, and Treatment.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A: 35-4.7, any child whose parent or guardian presents to the school a signed statement that any part of instruction in Health, Family Life or Sexual Health Education is in conflict with their conscience or sincerely-held moral or religious beliefs shall be excused from this portion of the course.

DISTRICT-WIDE TESTING

The Measures of Academic Progress is used to measure individual student growth and to adapt instruction to meet students' needs in grades 1-4. This assessment is given three times a year in Reading and Mathematics. The district also implements all state assessments required by the New Jersey Department of Education.

A cognitive ability test will also be administered to students in grade 3. Individual student performance profiles are distributed to parents for these assessments. Student results may be discussed in the regularly scheduled parent/teacher conference or, by appointment, with the principal.

Assessment results provide information to:

1. parents for understanding the achievement levels of their children,
2. teachers for planning instructional programs for both total classes and for individual students within their classes,
3. administrators and supervisors for analyzing, evaluating, and revising district-wide curricula and in planning instructional programs to comply with the state requirements, and
4. the Board of Education and community members to remain informed of the achievement levels of elementary school students.

SPECIAL EDUCATION - RESOURCE PROGRAM

All special education resource students have been identified and classified by the child study team as having specific disabilities which interfere with their learning. Individualized Educational Programs (IEP) have been developed for such learners. This IEP document determines which resource setting is appropriate for the student and what accommodations and/or modifications are necessary to assist learning.

The Resource Program offers services in the general education classroom or in a small group separate special education classroom for ELA and Math. Services in the general education classroom are called In-Class Resource (ICR). Both general and special education teachers deliver the general education curriculum in a general education classroom, using a team-teaching approach with accommodations implemented to accompany learning.

Services in the small group special education classroom are called Pull Out Supplemental (POS) or Pull-Out Replacement (POR). POS services are generally extra support in addition to the general education instruction for ELA or Math. POR services replace the general education instruction. A special education teacher provides instruction using a modified general education and/or supplemental curriculum and materials to meet the students' needs.

SPECIAL EDUCATION - SELF-CONTAINED PROGRAM

Classified students who require a more specialized education program than the Resource Program receive services in the self-contained program. Instruction in the self-contained classes addresses the academic, emotional, and social needs of students whose disabilities require the integration of significantly modified content area proficiencies. As needed, the self-contained program incorporates instruction in the areas of daily living and functional life skills. Students are included in typical academic and non-academic classes when deemed appropriate according to individual student IEPs.

SPEECH/LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Speech/language specialists examine, appraise, diagnose, and remediate the speech, voice, and language of children who experience difficulty with these functions. Students may be referred by parents, teachers, and/or a member of the child study team. The presenting speech/language problem must interfere with the educational process in order for the student to be eligible for in school services. Services are offered in accordance with the identified individual needs of the children being served as delineated in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). It is also the responsibility of the speech/language specialist to serve as a consultant for the entire staff and to provide materials and suggestions to any teacher who is working with a communication challenged child in the classroom situation. Referrals are made to other specialists (medical, dental) when appropriate.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Children who do not speak English as a primary language are assessed to determine their level of English proficiency. State criteria are used to determine eligibility for assistance. All services are provided in one “magnet” elementary school; therefore, any student who falls below the cut-off score is automatically transferred to the magnet school for his/her total instructional program. Direct instruction in English is provided by a certified English Language Learning teacher for a minimum of 30 minutes per student per day. It is the responsibility of the E.S.L. teacher to serve as a resource person for the entire staff and to provide materials and suggestions to classroom teachers who have non-English speaking students in their classes.

GIFTED/TALENTED PROGRAM

(QUEST – Question, Understand, Explore, Seek, Think)

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public School District is committed to the identification of academically talented children within the district and the development of an instructional program designed to meet their needs.

The QUEST program (Question, Understand, Explore, Seek and Think) is a pullout program for academically talented students, beginning in grade 4. Multiple criteria are used to identify academically talented students for this program. These include a parent questionnaire, teacher checklist, cognitive ability test results, achievement test results and student performance on three benchmark tasks.

The goals of the QUEST program are to promote creative thinking skills, higher cognitive operations, problem solving skills as well as to increase knowledge, comprehension and application in content areas. To achieve these goals, students meet for 90 minutes one time per week to engage in a unit based on the concepts of innovation and change. This unit integrates multiple disciplines and is structured to provide opportunities for student choice and collaboration. In order to meet the needs of other talented students who excel in written language and/or mathematics, enrichment units are also scheduled in each elementary school for students in grades three and four.

SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Preschool Program provides a foundation of readiness skills for three- and four-year-old children. The program is a 2.5 hour program with integrated classes that include some classified student participation. Enrollment is tuition-based and is limited to Scotch Plains and Fanwood residents. There is a teacher and an aide in each classroom setting as well as appropriate supports and services. All district preschool teachers are certified and have met the highly qualified standards set forth by the state.

The Creative Curriculum is used in the district's comprehensive preschool program. It is one of the research-based curricula promoted by the New Jersey Department of Education. The curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Preschool Program recognizes and values parental input and strives to establish a positive home-school relationship. Newsletters are sent home weekly and teachers schedule parent conferences twice a year. Progress reports are disseminated after the first semester and at the end of the school year. A portfolio of student work is collected on each preschooler and serves as an indicator of student progress.

In addition to the 2.5 hour regular education program for typical and disabled students, self-contained programs for classified students with pervasive developmental disorders are also provided, as determined by the IEP team. Self-contained programs provide a base for core content instruction with the understanding that students are provided every opportunity to participate in a less restrictive environment whenever the student will receive educational/social/emotional benefit.

BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

The Scotch Plains – Fanwood Public Schools offers supplemental support programs for literacy and mathematics in grades 1-4 at the elementary schools. Information is gathered from multiple sources at each grade level, such as district assessments, standardized tests and teacher checklists, for placement into a literacy support and/or mathematics support program. The Basic Skills programs utilize small group instruction and/or in-class support, depending on the needs of the students. Teachers meet with the students a minimum of two periods per week and monitor the progress of the students in the program. Pre- and post-test information is collected on the students and used to assess both student and program gains.

READING RECOVERY

Reading Recovery is an early intervention program provided for first grade students in reading and writing. Students are selected for the program based on classroom teacher recommendation and the results of the Reading Recovery Observational Survey.

The Reading Recovery teacher works individually with a student for a 30- minute period, five days a week, for 12 to 20 weeks. This program is supplemental to the students' regular classroom instruction. Reading Recovery aims to support students at an early age with developing effective reading and writing strategies. When intervention is discontinued, another student is given an opportunity to participate.

The instructors monitor the progress of the students who have participated in Reading Recovery. The reading achievement of former Reading Recovery students is assessed annually. Additionally, information about program participants is forwarded each year to the Reading Recovery National Data Evaluation Center at Ohio State University.

LITERACY GROUPS

Literacy Groups provide small group instruction in reading and writing to first and second grade students. Literacy Groups offer reading and writing support for a group of students at a critical time in their development of literacy competence. Students are selected to participate in a Literacy Group based on multiple assessment measures, including the DRA and MAP Growth Reading, as well as teacher recommendation.

Literacy Groups are available in each elementary school. Lessons include reading familiar books, letter and journal writing, diagnostic reading assessments and the introduction and the reading of a new book. In both the Reading Recovery Program and the Literacy Group Program, the home is encouraged to work with the school to aid in the promotion of reading progress.

COMPUTER LITERACY

In today's changing technological world, an awareness and understanding of the impact of computers in daily living is essential. Students from kindergarten through grade four use computers within the curriculum. Supervised use of the Internet is employed for research and to enhance the curriculum. Students practice and reinforce curricular concepts as well as creativity in their mastery of available software. Computers are used to enhance the learning of content in all curriculum areas. Each elementary school supports wireless technology, which allows teachers to be flexible when creating opportunities for students to explore their interests and do research. Students in grades K-4 have access to the Type to Learn Program to develop their keyboarding skills.

In addition to classroom computers, laptop computer carts are available at each elementary school for use within the classroom on a sign-up basis. These skills are reinforced in the fifth grade curriculum.

Computer Literacy is the ability to use computers in appropriate ways to aid in accomplishing tasks, solving problems, and making decisions.

By the completion of fourth grade, the student will be able to:

- Use appropriate keyboarding techniques to input and access text and data
- Utilize software made available as support materials for the various curricula
- Use a computer and software for basic word processing to produce a simple finished document, basic spreadsheet applications such as entering/editing data and producing/interpreting simple graphs, creating and presenting a multimedia presentation
- Use a computer in a knowledgeable way, including skills such as accessing programs, identifying/selecting a printer, finding help, using basic computer icons, creating and maintaining files and folders.
- Use web browsers, search engines, and directories to obtain information and evaluate this information for accuracy and/or bias
- Recognize and practice responsible social and ethical behaviors when using technology