

**2015-2016**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**PROGRAM OF STUDIES**

**BOARD APPROVED – 8/27/2015**

# SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Evergreen Avenue and Cedar Street  
Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076

## ELEMENTARY PROGRAM OF STUDIES 2015-2016

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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 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. Be sure to watch Channel 34 and attend Educational Forums and Board of Education meetings to learn more about our schools and programs. We encourage your involvement.

Sincerely,



Dr. Joan V. Mast  
Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction  
& Technology

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**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

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**SUGGESTED ELEMENTARY TIME ALLOTMENTS**

Time allotments are established as a guide to assure adequate attention to the various subject fields. Teachers are expected to make a genuine commitment to these time allocations, but may deviate from the guide in order to meet the needs of a particular learning situation or to address special interests of the children. Teachers are also encouraged to use inter-disciplinary approaches to enhance learning whenever appropriate.

<b><u>SUBJECT AREA</u></b>	<b>GRADE 1</b> (minutes)	<b>GRADE 2</b> (minutes)	<b>GRADE 3</b> (minutes)	<b>GRADE 4</b> (minutes)
Language Arts Literacy	990	910	745	650
Mathematics	300	300	320	325
Science	70	70	150	150
Social Studies	85	85	150	200
Music (PreK-4)	40	40	40	40
Choral Music				40
Art	40	40	40	40
Phys. Ed., Health & Safety**	150	150	150	150
Spanish *		80	80	80
<b>TOTAL MINUTES</b>	<b>1675</b>	<b>1675</b>	<b>1675</b>	<b>1675</b>

There are 335 minutes of instructional time daily or 1675 minutes total instruction time per week in grades 1 through 4. Language Arts Literacy includes reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and listening skills based on the requirements outlined in the NJ Department of Education Core Curriculum Content Standards.

On shortened days or days when there is a program in school, instructional schedules are to be so arranged as to include language arts literacy and math instruction.

The Preschool Programs offer 165 minutes of integrated instruction daily.

\* In grades 2, 3, and 4, formal Spanish instruction will be held for 80 minutes per week. The 80 minutes of formal instruction in Spanish will be evenly distributed among the core content subject areas.

\*\* Some health and safety instruction has been integrated into science and social studies.

## **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.

## COUNSELING SERVICES

1. The Intervention and Referral Service (I&RS), a committee comprised of the 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.
2. To 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 Guidance Curriculum for Grades 1 through 4 is designed to provide developmentally appropriate information and strategies on the themes of Positive Peer Relationships, Personal Safety, Self-Esteem and Bullying. These themes are addressed through lessons at each grade level.





## LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY PROGRAM

The K-4 elementary language arts program is based on a balanced literacy approach, which integrates reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing and is, therefore, aligned with the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects . These elements are integrated through the use of the **Good Habits, Great Readers** program materials from Pearson Education, Inc. (2009) and **Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction** program materials from Pearson Education, Inc. (2008)

### **READING**

The *Good Habits, Great Readers* program supports a balanced and comprehensive approach to literacy. Students consistently participate in both whole class (Shared Reading) and small group (Guided Reading) instruction. Through Shared Reading lessons, students are introduced to key reading strategies and skills that help them utilize specific actions (good habits) while they read. This occurs when teachers model the habits, skills, and strategies proficient readers use to understand and enjoy reading. During Guided Reading, students receive follow-up instruction targeted to specific developmental stages. 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.

Pearson's *Good Habits, Great Readers*, Big Books, Guided Reading books, 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**

*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**

As a part of balanced literacy, the writing curriculum for the district follows the model that reading and writing should be integrated. To that end, *The Good Habits, Great Readers Writing* component provides focused writing instruction with connections to reading strategies taught in the *Good Habits, Great Readers* Shared Reading lessons. 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 writings in five general areas that include: narrative writing, informational writing, persuasive writing, functional writing, and writing in response to literature. The integrating 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 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.

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. 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.

Equivalence is another central idea; students' ability to recognize, create, and use equivalent representations of numbers and geometric objects 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; 8 times 25 can be thought of as 8 times 5 times 5 or as 4 times 50; 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 “hands 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’ problem-solving skills. Use of technology, including the Internet, is an integral part of the students’ science experience. The program uses Kendall Hunt Publishing and Great Explorations in Mathematics and Science (GEMS) at the kindergarten level. In grades one through four students explore the Full Option Science System (FOSS), which continues the balanced approach to physical, earth, life, and technology. Writing is an integral part of each FOSS unit. 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*	– All About Me – (Kendall Hunt) * General Exposure	– Treasure Boxes – (GEMS)	– Balls and Ramps (Kendall Hunt)
Grade 1	– New Plants (FOSS)		– Solids and Liquids (FOSS)
Grade 2	– Insects (FOSS)	– Air and Weather (FOSS)	
Grade 3		– Water (FOSS)	– Magnetism and Electricity (FOSS)  Technology: Ideas and Invention (FOSS)
Grade 4	– The Human Body (FOSS)	– Earth Materials (FOSS)	– Physics of Sound (FOSS) Technology: Measurement (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 K-2 social studies program utilizes a variety of resources to engage students in hands-on social studies, often including role-playing, group discussion and problem solving. In Kindergarten and second grade, the *Social Studies Alive!* program has been adopted as the core resource, and in first grade, the Nystrom *Exploring Where and Why* program supports the focus on geography and community. Literature is the basis for many lessons, as fiction and non-fiction texts can illustrate important themes and concepts in engaging ways.
- In grade three, the *Social Studies Alive!* has been adopted as students first begin a study of various aspects of the United States. Other resources, including children's literature and the Houghton Mifflin Social Studies textbook, *Communities*, are also used to support and enrich the district curriculum .
- In grade four, students also use *Social Studies Alive!* in conjunction with the *States and Regions* textbook published by *Harcourt Brace*. The materials are used to design a survey of the regions of the United States from a geographical, cultural and economic perspective. The book *From Sea to Shining Sea* has been adopted to provide a specific focus on New Jersey.

The following is an overview of the social studies program.

### **KINDERGARTEN**

The kindergarten program is activity-based, centered on the study of self, classroom, school, and home, with many connections to the wider world. Students explore their personal identity, their family and cultural heritage, and how they can positively interact with others in social settings.

### **GRADE 1**

Building on concepts introduced in Kindergarten, students explore how one can be a good citizen in the classroom and school community. The study of family and neighborhood provides an avenue for exploring diversity, specifically focusing on what people have in common and the unique aspects that make them special. Children learn that the family is the primary support group for people everywhere, and through the study of basic economic concepts, they begin to understand how families secure their wants and needs in different ways. Historical thinking is

introduced as students begin to understand how their family has changed over time, and that families and schools of the past were different than they are today. Students are also introduced to the ways that individuals – including young children – can solve problems in their communities. Finally students are introduced to basic geographic skills and concepts as they begin exploring the wider world.

## **GRADE 2**

Themes introduced in first grade are further explored as students study the types of communities that exist locally and globally. Students begin to understand basic civics, geographic and economic concepts within the context of communities. Understanding one's own culture in order to engage in the study of other cultures is a recurring theme in second grade as students discover how and why cultures are similar and different, and how cultural understanding promotes peace and cooperation. Students also explore how individuals and groups can make positive changes in their communities, through the study of both historical and contemporary figures.

## **GRADE 3**

Students engage in in-depth studies of each aspect of social studies to further enhance their understanding of their place in the world. In the study of communities, students become more aware the impact of geography and environment in communities. Government structures and processes at various levels are studied to foster an appreciation for active citizenship, and students become aware of their role as a consumer through the study of economic concepts. Geographic and cultural concepts provide a framework for studying the diverse cultures that first inhabited North America. Historical thinking is further developed as students explore how and why communities (especially our local community) have changed over time.

## **GRADE 4**

Students learn about the physical and human geography, cultures and economies of each region in the United States. Students apply a variety of social studies concepts and tools to their investigation of contemporary issues and historical events of each region of the United States to better understand how geography, economics, civics, and culture intersect to create regional identities and experiences. The study of New Jersey is integrated throughout each unit, as students explore various concepts in geography, because New Jersey is a microcosm of our nation and allows students to recognize the rich cultural, economic, and geographic diversity of their own state.

Throughout the elementary social studies program, students develop skills in critical thinking, as well as how to locate, organize, interpret and use information effectively. Students also learn to use map, globes, charts and graphs, in addition to honing their communication skills through frequent reading, writing, speaking and listening activities.



## 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 25 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.

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 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 and Mental Health, Family Life, Character Education including lessons on Bullying, Community and Environmental Health, Safety, Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Drugs, Nutrition and Fitness, and Disease Prevention. Within each of these main topics there is a focus upon life skills that emphasize building self esteem, assertiveness, personal responsibility, interpersonal relationships, decision-making, refusal, conflict resolution, bonding and resistance. The program recognizes that a truly healthy person is not only sound in body but also must be sound emotionally and have an awareness of safety for self as well as others. The grade 1 through 4 program may be delivered by the health and physical education specialists, school nurse, or classroom teacher, each utilizing portions of *Healthwave Promotions Curriculum, 2006*, as a resource.

In addition, the health education program includes a comprehensive alcohol and drug education program for students in grades 1 through 4. The philosophy of the curriculum is that the incidence of alcohol and drug abuse problems among young people will decrease if youth have greater self-esteem; are better able to cope with life's problems; have current facts about alcohol and other drug and chemical dependency; and are more skilled at making decisions and handling interpersonal relationships. The premise is reflected through the four main components upon which the curriculum was built: information, decision-making, coping, and self-concept.

## **FAMILY LIFE PROGRAM**

The Family Life Education curriculum is an important component to the health program, which was introduced in January 1984. The state-mandated K-12 curriculum utilizes a guide prepared through the cooperative efforts of teachers, school administrators, parents and guardians, students, the clergy, and community members.

This program is designed to enhance one's self-concept and to resist peer pressure that affects behavior, particularly in the area of human sexuality and substance use and abuse. By providing this information, we are hopeful that young people will be able to clarify their own attitudes and values which will enable them to make intelligent decisions.

As mandated by the State Department of Education, AIDS/HIV education is introduced into the Family Life program. This program is delivered by our school nurses and addresses the body's immune system, how it fights off diseases, and how HIV affects the body's defense system.

## DISTRICT-WIDE TESTING

Each year a district-wide testing program, including measures of readiness for learning, academic achievement and aptitudes, is administered at appropriate grade levels.

A district-wide evaluation tool developed by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood elementary school teachers is used to measure progress in language arts and mathematics in first and second grade. The Partnership for Assessment Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment will be administered in grades 3 and 4. An ability test will also be administered to students in grade 3 and fourth grade students will take the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK) for Science. 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.

## **RESOURCE CENTER PROGRAM**

The Resource Center program provides students with small group instruction by a special education teacher in a special education pull-out replacement (POR) classroom and/or team teaching support in the general education classroom with in-class resource (ICR), as indicated in a student's Individual Education Program (IEP). The Resource Center program enables students to develop skills, learning strategies and/or attitudes that will enable them to develop and improve their educational competencies. Although all children learn by individual styles and at widely varying rates, all resource center students have been identified and classified by the child study team as having specific disabilities which interfere with their learning.

Instructional responsibility for a resource center student is shared between the resource center and the general education teachers. If a resource center student is having difficulty achieving success in a general education class, the resource center and the regular class teacher collaborate to implement the appropriate curricular or instructional accommodations and/or modifications.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SELF-CONTAINED CLASSES**

Classified students who require a more specialized education program than the resource center receive services in the self-contained program. Instruction in the self-contained classes address the academic, emotional, and social needs of students whose disabilities require subjects replaced in special education classes via IEP goals and objectives, and 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 whenever they can demonstrate possible success in such a placement. All special education students are included in as many aspects of elementary school life as possible.

## **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.

Multiple criteria are used to identify students entering grade four. These include a parent questionnaire, teacher checklist, cognitive ability test results and student performance on three benchmark activities.

The QUEST Program is a pull-out program for academically talented students in the district elementary schools. The goals directing the QUEST Program include: to promote creative thinking skills, higher cognitive operations, problem solving skills and to increase knowledge, comprehension and application in content areas. There are four units offered each year to the QUEST students. 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.

Throughout the school year, students are involved in special activities that enable them to interact with other identified students in our district and in neighboring districts.

The QUEST staff is also available to meet with the teachers of academically talented children in grades K-3 to share classroom strategies and effective teaching techniques for the exceptional student. All K-3 teachers have access to instructional ideas to be used within the classroom for enrichment.



## **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 regular education 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**

### **“Students Obtaining Success”**

The Students Obtaining Success (SOS) program is a supplemental support program provided to first through fourth grade students in reading, writing, and mathematics. Information is gathered from multiple sources at each grade level, such as district assessments, standardized tests and teacher checklists, for placement into the program.

The SOS program utilizes 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.

The SOS instructors monitor the progress of the students in the program. An ISIP (Individual Student Improvement Plan) is developed for each student and serves as the instructional guide. Pre- and post-test information is collected on the students and used to assess both student and program gains.

Additionally, special events will be offered throughout the year to encourage students and their families to engage in math and literacy learning together in an enjoyable, non-threatening atmosphere. District teachers and/or consultants will provide engaging activities and suggestions for supporting student learning at home.

### **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 staff works individually with students for a 30- minute period, five days a week. This program is supplemental to the students' regular classroom instruction. Students participate in Reading Recovery an average of 16 weeks or until the student develops effective strategies for independent learning and can function successfully without support in classroom reading. 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 has been 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 daily small group instruction in reading and writing to first and second grade students utilizing the training, knowledge, and expertise of the Reading Recovery Program. Literacy Groups offer the same type of reading and writing support for a group of students at a critical time in their development of reading competence. Students are selected to participate in a Literacy Group based on the results of the Reading Recovery Observational Survey, district assessments and/or teacher recommendation. It is expected that students would exit the program as they progress and other at-risk students would enter.

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. Classroom laptops are available in each general education classroom, Grades 1-4. Additionally, there is a laptop cart available in each media center providing additional computers when needed. 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