



# Neshaminy School District

## *Office of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment*

Elementary Academic Enrichment Program Changes Meeting  
August 18, 2015  
6:00 p.m. District Administrative Offices, Board Room at Maple Point

In attendance were seven parents of academic enrichment (AE) elementary students (5 Heckman, 2 Ferderbar), six elementary school principals, and five District level administrators.

This was a follow-up meeting to the June 24, 2015 meeting. Its purpose was to provide a status update on the ten issues of concern raised at that time as follows:

**Issue #1: Provide AE resource person to support librarians in transition**

**Status:** Mr. David Geanette is the person who is currently supporting the librarians.

**Issue #2: Hire expert consultants to provide teacher training**

**Status:** Dr. Lindsey Sides (Coordinator of Teaching and Learning and Nonpublic Services, Gifted Liaison, Bucks County IU) and Ms. Cheryl Everett (Curriculum and Instruction Professional Development Coordinator, Science Consultant and Gifted Liaison, Chester County IU) will provide professional development for AE teachers. Current schedule of professional development by topical area is listed below:

*August 27 and September 2 – Facilitators: Dr. Sides and Ms. Everett*

- Characteristics of the gifted learner
- Chapter 16 – Comprehensive Overview
- Screening and Evaluation
- Legally Defensible GIEPs
- Best Instructional Practices for Advanced Learners (including, but not limited to, Project-Based Learning)

*September 16 and September 18: Gifted Boot Camp at BCIU*

*Facilitators: Dr. Sides and Ms. Everett*

- PA definition of gifted
- Review of Chapter 16
- Procedural requirements for screening, evaluation, planning for the instruction of gifted students
- Effective tools for collaboration among gifted and content area teachers
- Tools to support differentiation instruction
- Environment Content Process Product
- Resources to support goal setting and individualized instruction

*November 18: Challenging the Gifted Conference at BCIU#22*

*Facilitator: Dr. Bryan Wallace*

- How STEM education can support the realization of the potential of gifted learners
- How to prepare students to participate in a fast changing world that will require interdisciplinary expertise, creativity, collaboration critical thinking and identity as a global citizen

*Half day sessions support teachers as they implement the AE curriculum*

- October 12
- December 2
- January 20
- February 16
- March 15
- April 26

*General Education Teachers:*

- Building level professional development focusing on the academic and developmental needs of AE students

*K-4 Administrators:*

*Follow up discussions beginning August 26, 2015 and bimonthly meetings to discuss AE program topics include:*

- Chapter 16
- Characteristics of the gifted learner
- The roles of the regular education teacher and the teacher of the gifted
- Best instructional practices for advanced learners

**Issue #3: Identify and implement best instructional practices/heightened sensitive to social, emotional needs of gifted students**

**Status:** Professional development for AE and general education teachers will support teachers in implementing best practices; meeting the social emotional needs of students, curriculum maps will guide teachers in making instructional decisions.

**Issue #4: Ensure equity across the District in regards to resource allocation**

**Status:** Library aides will be hired to support library management and each principal will ensure 120 minutes of cluster likeability grouping of instruction weekly.

**Issue #5: Hire/assign math coach**

**Status:** Job was posted until August 21; a total of 15 applications were received. Interviews will commence the week of September 8, 2015. A large part of the math coach's responsibility will be to work with AE students and teachers in conjunction with the math advocates and general education teachers.

**Issue #6: Post updates on the status of our efforts on the District website**

**Status:** District website will continue to be updated with summary notes and the current AE web page will be expanded to feature student projects, activities, etc.

**Issue #7: Improve communications via updates, emails, monthly meetings**

**Status:** District website and monthly Educational Development meetings (generally the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6:30) will have standing agenda item and will be the means of ongoing face-to-face communication. Please note: Due to the upcoming Jewish holidays, Back-to-School nights, etc., the first Educational Development Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, September 21, 2015 at 6:30 p.m., Maple Point, Board Room.

**Issue #8: Explore the feasibility of reinstating a PAGE chapter at Neshaminy School District**

**Status:** Neshaminy School District will support parents in establishing a PAGE chapter.

**Issue #9: Heighten sensitivity to the social, emotional needs of the gifted**

**Status:** See Issue/Status #3

**Issue #10: Dedicated web page for AE**

**Status:** A web page is dedicated. However, we will expand it as well as make it readily accessible in less number of clicks.

Parents in attendance expressed their appreciation to the staff for their due diligence in attending to these matters.

Discussion then focused on the development of a curriculum framework and corresponding curriculum maps that were recently developed. A review of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Unit Two in Science was provided and is noted in its entirety below:

**Curriculum Framework:****2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Unit Two****Science****Title: Insects****Skill Focus: Research****Enduring Understandings:**

- There are many kinds of insects in the world.
- Insects go through life stages as they grow and mature.
- Insects have physical structures that affect their behavior.

**Essential Questions:**

- What do insects need for survival?
- What are the structures of insects and how do they affect the insect's behavior?
- How do different insects grow and change?
- How are adult insects alike and different?
- How can we determine healthy habitats for different insects?
- How can we organize insect growth data to look for change?

**Background:** In this unit, students will read a variety of informational scientific texts and interpret diagrams while exploring the life cycle of insects. When reading scientific texts, students need to be able to gain content knowledge from challenging texts that often make extensive use of elaborate diagrams and data to convey information and illustrate concepts. Students read purposefully and listen attentively to gain scientific expertise. The interdisciplinary approach to literacy is backed by extensive research establishing the need for students to be proficient in reading complex informational text in a variety of content areas. Reading for understanding is an important skill for students to become successful readers and researchers. In this unit students will read scientific and other technical texts. Students will collaboratively discuss these texts through shared inquiry and Socratic seminars. Writing is a key means for a student to show what they know about a subject and thus students will write a report on their findings. It is also essential for students to be able to speak to an audience, so students will also provide a presentation on their findings to their peers.

Curriculum Map:

**2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Unit Two**

**Title: Insects**

**Timeline: One Marking Period**

<p><b>Pennsylvania State Standards:</b> What standards will be met?</p>	<p><b>Content:</b> What will be taught?</p>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> What will students know &amp; be able to do as a result of this instruction?</p>	<p><b>Assessments:</b> What evidence will I collect that demonstrates that students have achieved the objectives?</p>	<p><b>Resources:</b> What materials will I use to achieve the objectives?</p>
<p><b>ELA Standards:</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Reading Informational Text</b> Students read, understand, and respond to informational text—with an emphasis on comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and making connections among ideas and between texts with a focus on textual evidence.</p> <p><b>1.3 Reading Literature</b> Students read and respond to works of literature—with emphasis on comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence.</p> <p><b>1.4 Writing</b> Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content.</p> <p><b>1.5 Speaking and Listening</b> Students present appropriately in formal speaking situations, listen critically, and respond intelligently as individuals or in group discussions</p> <p><b>Science Standards</b> 3.1. Biological Sciences 3.1.B. Genetics 3.1.C. Evolution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research skills</li> <li>• The life cycle of an insect</li> <li>• Parts of an insect</li> <li>• Impact environment has on an insect and vice versa</li> <li>• How to read scientific and other technical texts</li> <li>• How illustrations in scientific and technical texts can be used to broaden an understanding of key ideas</li> <li>• How to use writing to inform</li> <li>• Presentation techniques</li> </ul>	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the life cycle of an insect</li> <li>• Describe how insects survive in different habitats</li> <li>• Use texts and other resources to identify and describe several different insects and how they use color to protect them in their environment</li> <li>• Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by visuals in a text – use the glossary as well as stories</li> <li>• Use the illustrations and details in a science text and other text sources to describe key ideas</li> <li>• Read functional texts including history/social studies, science, and technical texts</li> <li>• Explain through writing and scientific illustrations how insects grow and develop</li> <li>• Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g. gather and record information about how insects are beneficial to humans).Using pictures and captions compare and contrast the life cycles of different insects.</li> <li>• Construct a model of an insect from recycled materials. Identify structures and their functions and write a description of how the insect survives in certain habitats. Include possible adaptations for predator/prey relationships. Include details of the life cycle in the description and model.</li> </ul>	<p>Formative/Performance Assessment Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick writes and drawings in notebooks (e.g. details of an insect’s structure and how it moves)</li> <li>• Use scientific vocabulary and explain what insects need to survive.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast insects and their habitats.</li> <li>• Design and conduct an experiment and report the results (e.g., what is the preferred environment for an ant).</li> <li>• Students may choose their favorite format of writing (informational, opinion/argumentative, narrative) to demonstrate their knowledge of structure/function, habitat needs, growth</li> <li>• Create 3-D Insect Models</li> <li>• Provide presentation on insect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research materials: articles, summaries, other science and technical texts on insects</li> <li>• Means of research: iPads, laptops, library books/ resources</li> <li>• Smart projector/ regular projector</li> <li>• Document camera</li> <li>• Teacher made assessments</li> <li>• Writing and presentation rubrics</li> </ul>

The same framework and maps are used for the remaining grade levels and disciplines and are posted on-line under Departments, under the Curriculum and Instruction banner.

The ST Math handout was provided. This on-line enrichment math program will be rigorous and highly engaging as students solve problems so that Jiji, a penguin, can move across the screen. The link to ST Math is <http://www.mindresearch.org/stmath/elementary/> for parents to check out some samples

On the evening of September 16, we are convening an Academic Enrichment Task Force to address the AE Program Quality Review (PQR) findings, recommendations and objectives and the District's response to the PQR for the following six areas:

Area 1: Goals, Objectives, Philosophy & Vision

Area 2: Screening, Identification, and Placement

Area 3: Communication

Area 4: Resources & Technology

Area 5: Staff Development

Area 6: Curriculum/Integration

- Up to 10 people can join each of the six action teams to review the recommendations in their area and develop an action plan to correct/improve the gifted services for this area.
- This will include reviewing/researching service delivery models from regional and state level school districts.
- Take the entire 2015-16 school year to develop an updated and improved K-12 Academic Enrichment/Gifted Services delivery model for the 2016-17 school year by June 30, 2016.
- Open Discussion

There was a question about GIEP completion over the summer. As the AE teachers transition into their new roles, they will be equipped to handle the GIEPs throughout the year and into next summer as needed.

A question was also posed about how the librarians are feeling. The librarians are becoming more comfortable in the lead role in meeting the needs of gifted students, and they met on their own last week to do some preparation for the start of school.