

***PENNRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Middle School Gifted Education Program***

Spring 2023

Dear Families,

We wanted to take a moment to introduce ourselves and our services. We, Mr. DeCaro, Mr. Dillingham, & Mrs. Draper, will be your child's gifted teacher and/or case manager. We all have been teachers here at Pennridge for several years and are looking forward to help make your child's middle school years the best they can be. Included in this packet is information about the different aspects of our services and resources about the choices you and your child have for next year. Please review this packet and/or watch our videos to learn more about what we offer.

**Video links:**

[Middle school gifted services](#)

[Progress Monitoring](#)

[Individualized Learning](#)

[Differences between grades](#)

[When does class occur?](#)

[Questions](#)

[Chorus](#)

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us according to your child's upcoming middle school.

Central: [ldillingham@pennridge.org](mailto:ldillingham@pennridge.org)

North: [mdecaro@pennridge.org](mailto:mdecaro@pennridge.org)

South: [ldraper@pennridge.org](mailto:ldraper@pennridge.org)

We look forward to contributing to your child's middle school success. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact one of us or check out our website, listed below. We look forward to a great year in the 2023-2024 school year.

Sincerely,

*Mr. Mike DeCaro, Mr. Lee Dillingham & Mrs. Lauren Draper*

Middle School Gifted Teachers/ Case Managers

<https://pennridgemsgifted.weebly.com>



## Introduction to the Pennridge Middle School Gifted Program

Welcome. It is our desire to help you have a greater understanding of the various components of the middle school gifted program, the program goals, parent and student choices and options, and the individualization for student learning for appropriate levels of challenge.

The middle school gifted program has 2 pieces—one that takes place in the regular classroom setting and the other which occurs in a separate classroom where students are grouped together with other peers who are intellectually gifted. The specific objectives for each part, as well as the setting/location, student and parent choices, and individualization, are explained below.

**Part 1 (in the regular classroom setting):** Each student will develop and enhance his or her abilities on some or all of the six skills of the Middle school gifted program in the following subjects: Language arts, math, science, and/or social studies. *(You/ your child have a choice here.)*



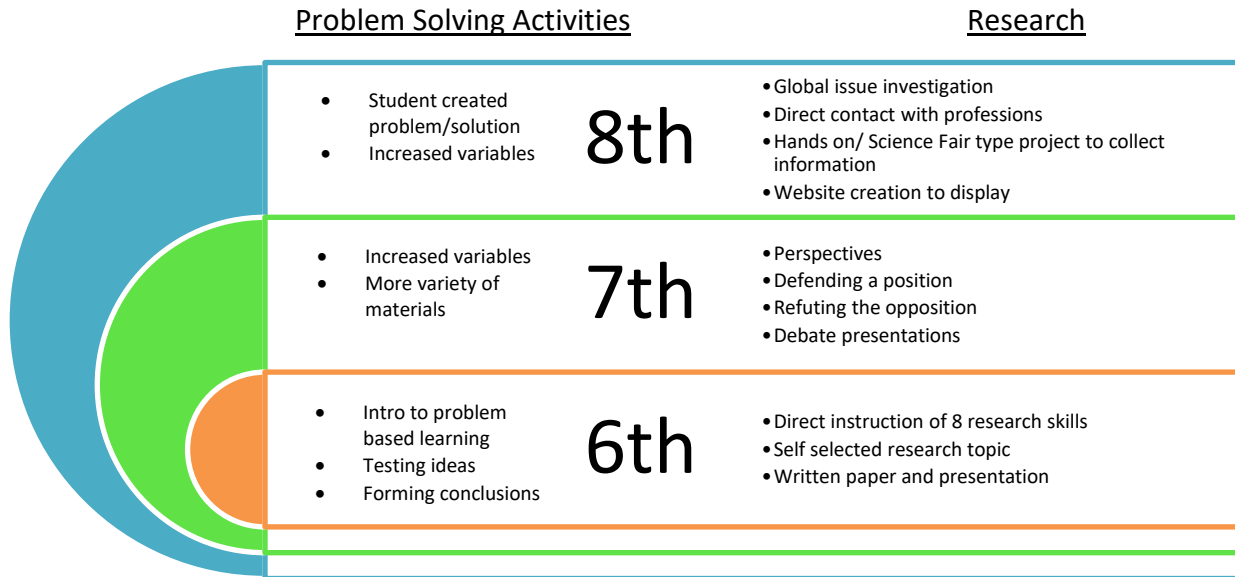
For this part, the individualization that supports each child comes from the interest and abilities in the core subjects. Students are encouraged to select only the subjects that they want to see further enrichment and extension activities provided to them. Based on the strengths listed in their GIEP, teachers use that information to provide appropriate levels of challenge (including content, learning activities, materials, and assessment tasks) in subject areas of interest chosen by the parent and student.

During the year, teachers in those selected subjects assess how each student is performing on each of the skills in their goal using a five- point scoring guide. Scores are reported on a “progress monitoring report” which is distributed to parents quarterly along with the student’s regular academic report card.

Location to assess:	Regular classroom
Duration:	Throughout the school year
Individualization:	Core subject areas selected by the parent and student Skill enrichment selected by case manager based on student strength’s Assignments chosen by level of appropriation based on teacher discretion
Progress Documentation:	Reported quarterly on the “Progress Monitoring Report”

**Part 2 (in the gifted education classroom):** Each student will develop and enhance his or her critical thinking skills, divergent thinking skills, problem-solving skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills as well as demonstrate various skills pertaining to the research process including planning, choosing a topic, investigating resources, selecting a focus, collecting information, drawing conclusions, communicating findings, and assessing the product & process.

The level of problem solving and research will continue to build each year and is demonstrated in the chart below.



For this piece, students learn about and demonstrate each skill of the research process through various types of lessons including problem-based learning activities. Students apply their learning to investigate a variety of sources on a self-selected topic and communicate their findings through a variety of applications (such as a student created display, presentation, scholarly research report, video, debate, web page, etc.). Students complete a self-reflection / analysis on each skill throughout the research process and progress is reported on the quarterly progress report.

- Location to assess: Gifted education classroom
- Duration: During the time students are scheduled for the gifted class  
 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>: every day for one semester  
 8<sup>th</sup>: every day for one quarter
- Individualization: 1. Self- selected topic  
 2. Content / resources appropriate to the topic  
 3. Self-selected presentation format
- Progress Documentation: Grade is given on the report card.  
 Standards are reported (similar to other subjects)



*The graphic on the left illustrates a key concept of the gifted program. Students learn and demonstrate various skills with the intent to continually grow, develop, enhance, and refine those skills throughout their middle school experience on topics of their choosing.*

# PENNRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Middle School Gifted Education Sample Progress Report



**Student:** Sample Student **Grade:** 7 **School:** North Case **manager:** Draper **Quarter:** Q2

CRITICAL THINKING				
<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE LEVELS</b>			
How well does the student... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...assess the quality and relevance of evidence?</li> <li>...analyze, synthesize, and draw conclusions from data and information?</li> <li>...support and defend an argument or position?</li> <li>...acknowledge and/or integrate alternative or contradictory perspectives, ideas, or explanations?</li> </ul>	<b>5 – EXTENDED:</b> Exceeds grade level expectations <u>AND</u> evidences a surprising, unique, insightful, and/or extended response or level of performance <b>4 – ADVANCED:</b> With depth and quality that exceeds grade level expectations <b>3 – PROFICIENT:</b> Meets grade level expectations <b>2 – BASIC:</b> Approaches, but does not meet grade level expectations <b>1 – BELOW BASIC:</b> Significantly below grade level expectations			
	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER
<b>LANGUAGE ARTS</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>MATH</b>	4	N/A		
<b>SCIENCE</b>	3	N/A		
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>	X	X	X	X

DIVERGENT THINKING				
<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE LEVELS</b>			
How well does the student... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...develop unique and/or multiple ideas, products, approaches, and/or solutions and answers to open-ended questions or tasks?</li> <li>...seek out and follow through on untested and potentially risky directions or approaches to the assignment in the final product?</li> </ul>	<b>5 – EXTENDED:</b> Exceeds grade level expectations <u>AND</u> evidences a surprising, unique, insightful, and/or extended response or level of performance <b>4 – ADVANCED:</b> With depth and quality that exceeds grade level expectations <b>3 – PROFICIENT:</b> Meets grade level expectations <b>2 – BASIC:</b> Approaches, but does not meet grade level expectations <b>1 – BELOW BASIC:</b> Significantly below grade level expectations			
	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER
<b>LANGUAGE ARTS</b>	3	N/A		
<b>MATH</b>	4	N/A		
<b>SCIENCE</b>	N/A	3		
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>	3	N/A		

PROBLEM-SOLVING				
<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE LEVELS</b>			
How well does the student... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...use an organizational approach to investigate a problem that includes asking questions, making observations, and recording and interpreting evidence?</li> <li>...apply previous knowledge to current problem and integrates it with new information to assist problem solving process?</li> </ul>	<b>5 – EXTENDED:</b> Exceeds grade level expectations <u>AND</u> evidences a surprising, unique, insightful, and/or extended response or level of performance <b>4 – ADVANCED:</b> With depth and quality that exceeds grade level expectations <b>3 – PROFICIENT:</b> Meets grade level expectations <b>2 – BASIC:</b> Approaches, but does not meet grade level expectations <b>1 – BELOW BASIC:</b> Significantly below grade level expectations			
	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER
<b>LANGUAGE ARTS</b>	N/A	3		
<b>MATH</b>	N/A	4		
<b>SCIENCE</b>	4	N/A		
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>	N/A	3		

COMMUNICATION				
	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		PERFORMANCE LEVELS	
	How well does the student... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...practice and apply effective communication skills via appropriate techniques, materials, and formats (written, oral or visual) in products and through presentations shared with an audience?</li> </ul>		<b>5 – EXTENDED:</b> Exceeds grade level expectations <u>AND</u> evidences a surprising, unique, insightful, and/or extended response or level of performance <b>4 – ADVANCED:</b> With depth and quality that exceeds grade level expectations <b>3 – PROFICIENT:</b> Meets grade level expectations <b>2 – BASIC:</b> Approaches, but does not meet grade level expectations <b>1 – BELOW BASIC:</b> Significantly below grade level expectations	
	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER
LANGUAGE ARTS	N/A	3		
MATH	N/A	3		
SCIENCE	N/A	3		
SOCIAL STUDIES	4	N/A		

## Teacher feedback from selected subjects

**Language Arts:** When writing in the second quarter, *student* communicated their ideas very effectively on their science fiction writing piece.

**Math:** When solving math problems in the second quarter, *student* explored multiple possible answers to build their conclusions on the correct answer.

**Science:** *Student* collaborates well with group members and shows initiative in completing work.

**Social Studies:** During the second quarter, *student* met the grade level expectation for Social studies, however they could improve their divergent thinking score by working to think outside the box and explore other answers for class discussions.

## Feedback from Gifted Seminar:

RESEARCH & INDEPENDENT STUDY				
	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		PERFORMANCE LEVELS	
	Does the student... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...utilize appropriate skills and processes to conduct research and/or pursue independent study?</li> <li>...pursue research/study opportunities offered by the teacher?</li> <li>...independently pursue/advocate self-selected topics for research/independent study?</li> </ul>		<b>5 – EXTENDED:</b> Exceeds grade level expectations <u>AND</u> evidences a surprising, unique, insightful, and/or extended response or level of performance <b>4 – ADVANCED:</b> With depth and quality that exceeds grade level expectations <b>3 – PROFICIENT:</b> Meets grade level expectations <b>2 – BASIC:</b> Approaches, but does not meet grade level expectations <b>1 – BELOW BASIC:</b> Significantly below grade level expectations	
	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER
GIFTED SEMINAR	N/A	N/A		

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS				
	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		PERFORMANCE LEVELS	
	How well is the student able to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...self-reflect and examine his/her own strengths and weaknesses?</li> <li>...give and accept constructive criticism?</li> <li>...demonstrate leadership skills?</li> <li>...interact effectively within a group?</li> </ul>		<b>5 – EXTENDED:</b> Exceeds grade level expectations <u>AND</u> evidences a surprising, unique, insightful, and/or extended response or level of performance <b>4 – ADVANCED:</b> With depth and quality that exceeds grade level expectations <b>3 – PROFICIENT:</b> Meets grade level expectations <b>2 – BASIC:</b> Approaches, but does not meet grade level expectations <b>1 – BELOW BASIC:</b> Significantly below grade level expectations	
	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER
GIFTED SEMINAR	N/A	N/A		

Gifted Seminar: Gifted Seminar will occur in the second semester.

*Note: "N/A" signifies that the goal was not assessed during that quarter. "X" indicates the subject was not selected by the parent and student for progress monitoring. A "\*\*\*" means that the student chose not to complete the activity.*

## FAQ:

### **When will my child's class meet?**

6<sup>th</sup> grade: fall or spring every day for a semester *(other encore course options are decided based on choices between music and chorus- please see initial email for more information)*

7<sup>th</sup> grade: fall or spring every day for a semester *(replaces choice of a few semester long courses)*

8<sup>th</sup> grade: quarter long *(currently, replaces part of wellness course)*

### **Why the difference in length?**

As students' progress through middle school, there are more and more 21<sup>st</sup> century related classes that students need to experience. Their participation in these classes promotes their understanding and provides building blocks to classes they will take in the HS. We have tried our best to find an optimal balance that will appeal to all.

### **Are there any changes from the elementary school?**

From 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, there is no longer a pull-out class. Gifted class is part of your child's daily schedule.

### **What goes into my child's middle school GIEP?**

1. We will compile data from your child's current teachers, you, your child, standardized tests, report card grades, and gifted progress reports to create your child's GIEP. Each one is written to highlight your child's academic strengths and show their interests in terms of progress monitoring for their classroom teachers.
2. Students, with the help of their parents, select core subject(s) for enrichment/ extension and progress monitoring.

**Penridge Middle School Gifted Program  
Progress Monitoring & Class Selection  
Selection Form**



At your convenience, please complete the questions online at the address below.

Progress Monitoring and Class Replacement Selection: <https://forms.office.com/r/xNgdncPAFY>

*Questions you will be answering are about the following:*

**GIFTED PROGRESS MONITORING OPTIONS:** One of the goals of the middle school gifted program is for each student to enhance and develop his or her abilities in the 6 skill areas of the Penridge Gifted Program. To promote student growth in these areas, regular classroom teachers in the subject areas of strength selected below provide differentiated instructional activities, assignments, materials, and assessments to provide enriched experiences and extensions beyond the regular curriculum. The student's selection will be incorporated in his/her GIEP (annual goals, short term learning outcomes, and specially designed instruction) and student progress monitoring achievement scores, using established rubrics, are recorded for the selected subjects and reported to parents quarterly on a progress monitoring report.

***English/Language Arts, Math, Science, OR Social Studies***

**AND**

**ENCORE COURSE SELECTION OPTIONS:** Our middle school courses are designed as a separate class on your child's schedule. Therefore, it will need to replace other available courses in a child's schedule.

Choice of Chorus or Music: **CHORUS (semester long)** OR **MUSIC (quarter long)**

Based on that selection, students will be asked to choose between selecting one or two of the following:

***Art, Digital Literacy, Family and Consumer Science (FCS), OR Exploring Language Connections***

(A description of the courses can be found here: [Encore course descriptions pdf](#))