



S.T.R.I.D.E. News

Welcome to S.T.R.I.D.E.

Congratulations! Your child has been identified to be in the PCS Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) program called STRIDE.

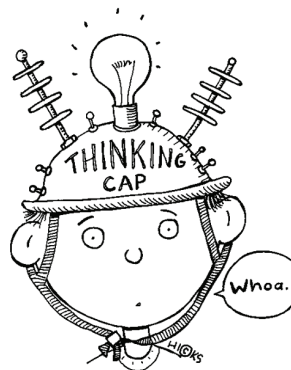
STRIDE is a county-wide, highly comprehensive enrichment program. One day per week (Wednesdays) your child will leave their regular classroom and spend the day in the STRIDE Center at Pactolus from 8:30 am - 2:00 pm when they will then return to their classroom for dismissal.

We are very proud of our AIG students. The STRIDE program challenges them, motivates their learning, they do a lot of work, and have a

lot of fun! You are welcome to join us any Wednesday to see what we are doing in STRIDE, just know, we will be putting you to work!

STRIDE is a program separate from their regular classroom activities. STRIDE students need a three-ring binder dedicated to STRIDE. There is no textbook so their STRIDE notebook is essential to their success in STRIDE.

The STRIDE program is very interactive, engaging and promotes higher level thinking. Students will build, experiment and question various topics in Economics, Math, Science and Com-



munications. The curriculum provides rigor and relevance while challenging your student beyond the regular classroom instruction.

Please feel free to contact the AIG Teacher throughout the year with questions, concerns and comments via email or phone.

My Child Likes to Eat!

Every growing child likes to eat, even the ones who are picky eaters. How does my child get to eat while at STRIDE.

STRIDE students eat with the AIG students on Wednesdays. Once they leave the classroom to travel to the STRIDE Center, whether on a bus from another school or by foot leaving their classroom, we con-

sider them on the STRIDE University campus. So please remember to bring your lunch box or lunch money with you.

Money in your Home school lunch account DOES NOT transfer to Pactolus. If your child receives free or reduced lunch, that DOES transfer but money should be put into an account at the STRIDE Center School for

your child. Microwaves are available for student use depending on the school. They often take up more lunch time than budgeted.

We work hard and our brains need fuel to keep functioning at a high level. We have snack at 10:00 AM so please send a healthy snack on STRIDE days. Students are allowed to keep a water bottle at their desks as long as it is sealed and does not become a distraction.

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Things to remember for STRIDE

- Your AIG Notebook
- Lunch or Lunch Money
- Signed Boomerang folder
- 3 sharpened pencils
- Completed homework
- Snack
- Sealable water bottle
- Signed paperwork

STRIDE Technology! Welcome to 21st Century Learning!

The 21st century is here! We will be using the following technology to enhance learning and communication!

Website:

Please check the AIG teacher's website often for updates, information, pictures and a general idea of what your child is doing in the various AIG programs. There are specific pages for the STRIDE program based on where your child attends STRIDE.

Email:

Your child's AIG teacher at their home school will provide an email and password to use school based emails. These emails can be checked

at home via their school's website. Be sure your child is using their email. We will be expecting proper email etiquette with all correspondence.

Edmodo:

Edmodo is a **secure** interactive learning environment that will allow our students to communicate about lessons, activities, experiments, etc. Looking a lot like Facebook, Edmodo is a **secure** experience where students and parents must have a pass code to join a particular group and then be accepted by the moderating teacher. To participate with Edmodo, students will follow these directions.

Visit
www.Edmodo.com



Click on I'm a student

Enter the code provided by the STRIDE teacher.

If parents would like to join, you may as a student and enter your name, the center your child attends and the provided code!! Keep up with what is going on, interact with students and learn the 21 century way!

PARENTS: Check out Pitt County Schools AIG on Facebook.

Wish List: Materials Students Use in STRIDE

The STRIDE program is very interactive, engaging and promotes higher level thinking. Since this is a very hands-on, minds-on program the activities requires various supplies. If you are willing and able to contribute, anything would be greatly appreciated!

- Ziploc bags (all sizes)
- flat toothpicks
- Colored construction paper
- 1 bottle Citric acid (found at local pharmacy)
- Wood glue (several bottles)
- Iodine
- 1 candle lighter (long)
- Heavy aluminum foil
- Alka-Seltzer
- Aspirin
- Paper clips-regular and jumbo
- 10 Boxes of unbendable straws (General Cash & Carry on 14th street)
- Fishing weights (1 – 6 ounces)
- Colored pencils
- Colored tempera paints (black, white, red, blue and yellow - liquid)
- Paint brushes
- 3 hole punched copy paper
- #2 pencils
- Hand held pencil sharpeners
- Smarties candy
- Clorox wipes

Communication is Key!

There are many ways to stay abreast of what is happening in STRIDE and AIG.

Boomerang folders will bring home hard copies of information and completed student units with evaluations. The Boomerang folders may not go home every STRIDE day so if you ask for it and your child says, "The AIG Teacher did not give it to us" they probably didn't.

Email is the quickest and most efficient way of communicating with the AIG

Teacher. Also, look for an email each STRIDE day recapping what was accomplished that day. This way, you don't have to ask your kids how their day was to receive a brief, "fine". You will know and be able to ask specific questions. AIG Teachers email pictures sometimes too!

Join Edmodo, the secure online educational networking sight we use in the AIG programs.

Check out the Website! See above tech-

nology article for the URL address.

Of course you can call. We are really busy so please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Lastly, please visit the center anytime!



Look for "Today in STRIDE" email each STRIDE day to stay informed.

What Will We Learn in S.T.R.I.D.E ?

The theme this year is **STRUCTURES**.

The year starts in communications by looking at **Adornment** and moving into **Architecture**! Week by week students become more and more familiar with their surroundings and the design aspects incorporated into various structures. We look forward to finishing up the year with a communication study of **Creative Expression**. Here we focus on 4 creative people who are well known for their unique contribu-



Paint like Vincent Van Gogh

through the **History of Math** beginning with ancient numbers, various

tions. We will paint like Van Gogh, be thespians of Shakespeare's work and more!

In math, we will take a detailed tour

cultures and their number systems and meet many mathematicians learning about their contributions. The students will learn about the structure of number systems and contributions that have changed mathematics. Knowing the architecture of buildings sets a good foundation for another math unit called **From the Ground Up**. In this unit, we will integrate subjects such as math, communications and economics to build a scale model home and figure the cost for building it.

In science, we study **Construction Concepts** which looks at structures and the forces that act upon them. Understanding these structures and what makes them strong is important to know when designing a bridge that must be tested by bearing weight in the economics unit called **Bridges**. The students' investigative skills in science are challenged to determine the chemistry of 6

A challenging and fun year learning about Structures in STRIDE

Mystery Powders.

We add a subject area this year, Economics. We begin the year with an investigative unit called **Money**,

what it is, how it has evolved over time and the security of our current currency. Economics is integrated into our math and science. We will apply what we learn about

money, business and construction concepts in our unit called **Bridges** by working in companies, utilizing the division of labor and constructing a toothpick bridge. Those skills are extended as we finish the year with a unit called **Mini Society** where students work independently or together to create and sell a product.

Our units are very hands-on, team building through cooperative learning and offer rigor and relevance to students' learning. We hope you can come in and visit. You definitely do not want to miss the Bridge Break off!

More Success! Less Stress! Strategies to survive STRIDE

As a STRIDE student, it is important to participate in and complete the following strategies to assure more success and less stress in STRIDE:

Read all directions.

Listen to all instructions/discussions from both teacher and students.

No Side Comments: They are distracting, confuse people and often rude.

Use "K" rules. You know, the rules we learned in Kindergarten and have stayed with us... don't talk when others are talking, raise your hand, keep hands and feet to yourself, respect yourself, re-

spect your school, respect others... we have known them for years.

Be Prepared! Making sure I have the following every STRIDE day:

notebook, homework, pencil, and lunch money.

STRIDE is important to my education. Please understand that the STRIDE day is **not** a day out of school or a day that students can miss. Your STRIDE day is an academic school day.

STRIDE is very different from what is happening in the classroom. You

may hear your child say, "It is too hard." I tell them it just requires more effort. From Kindergarten to now, they have blown through school with little effort required. Students often tell me they do not have to read the directions to know how to complete a task or listen to all the instructions but still know what is going on in the lesson. STRIDE requires more effort. We move at a fast pace, require reflection on how an answer was acquired, as well as evidence to back up that answer. It is not hard, it just requires more effort.

Students Learn a Dead Language

Learning to speak Latin, a dead language, does not mean you're trying to speak to ghosts. Learning a dead language means that the language is not spoken much any more. Latin is taught to A.I.G students during STRIDE, the elementary academically gifted program for 4th and 5th graders and to middle school students identified academically gifted and participating in the A.I.G. Middle School Curriculum program. It seems that all academically gifted students have an interest in learning Latin since this is the first year it has been taught. By the time the 4th graders in A.I.G have completed 2 years of STRIDE and 3 years of the Middle School curriculum, they will have had 5 years of Latin and be well prepared for Latin in high school and ready to take their SAT tests for college.

Did you know that a lot of English words come from Latin? Actually Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and other languages that are called the "Romance Languages" all derive from Latin. Why did the A.I.G program decide to teach Latin? It actually came from parents, says Suzanne Hachmeister, Lead AIG Teacher for Pitt County Schools. "The parents wanted the students to learn a new language, so that's where we got the idea to teach Latin in STRIDE and middle school AIG."

Latin is not only appropriate but a fun language to learn. Since grammar is not a focus of our Elementary language arts programs anymore, these students are getting concentrated instruction on prefixes, root words and

suffixes. Learning Latin has also helped students decode words in their reading making them stronger readers. Mrs. Hachmeister also says, "Latin is helpful especially when learning vocabulary or trying to determine the meaning of an unknown word." Latin helps students understand their own language even better! Grace Herbert, former STRIDE student says, "Learning Latin is fun because we learn where a lot of words we use now actually come from." Ashley King, STRIDE student says, "It's full of unique sayings that we say today even though it's a dead language." When asked why Latin was called a "dead language" Lauren Boucher, AIG teacher and coordinator of the Latin units said, "Latin is called a dead language because it is not a language that is spoken in everyday life now. We still use it in religious ceremonies, medicine, law, and science; however, it is not used as a means of primary communication anymore." Even though Latin is no longer a spoken language, you can hear students speaking Latin and they may not even know it. Phrases like "ad nauseam" (repeatedly to the point of boredom) are common and might be said in this manner. "We went over EOG practice ad nauseam." "de facto" (as a matter of fact) or "vice versa" (the other way around) are also said today. Even the word "verses" like when two teams are playing against each other is a Latin word! And "Bona Fide" (for real) is too! So, go ahead, say, "Valeo, quid agis? (Hello, how are you?) because as they say in Latin, "Carpe Diem!" (Seize the day)

Can You Volunteer?

Throughout the year, STRIDE has events, activities and subjects where parent volunteers make the learning more meaningful!

Can you chaperone a county wide STRIDE event?

Can you help in the classroom with the many interactive tasks in which students participate?

Do you have a job, hobby or experience that would make you a great guest speaker? This makes the children's learning relevant.

Volunteering also allows you to share in the unique experience that is STRIDE.



I Know My Kid is in AIG but How Did He Get There? What Now?

So your child was identified Academically Gifted and you are wondering, "how did that happen?" Presently in Pitt County Schools, AIG identification is based on standardized test scores. Third grade students are screened using a nationally-normed standardized aptitude test called the TCS2 during the second semester. Students scoring at or above the 86th percentile or above on this test will be reviewed for differentiated services each year and be placed on a "Watch List".

Students scoring at or above the 93% qualify for the STRIDE program. If a student's TCS and EOG scores average a 93 or above, they too then qualify for STRIDE.

The PCS AIG Document outlines STRIDE service on page 53 as follows:

Elementary AIG Curriculum Guidelines (STRIDE): STRIDE is the Pitt County Schools' Elementary AIG Curriculum and an acronym for

"Striving Towards Responsible and Intellectual Development in Education."



AIG identification, at this time, is based on standardized test scores.

1. STRIDE is a 5 ½ hour uninterrupted instructional day.
2. A STRIDE Class will be a blend of 4th and 5th graders.
3. A STRIDE Class will not exceed more than 20 students per 1 AIG teacher and 30 students per 2 AIG teachers.
4. A STRIDE Classroom will not exceed more than 30 students regardless of number of AIG

teachers.

5. Students will not be required to make up regular classroom assignments missed during the STRIDE day.
6. Students will not be required to complete regular classroom homework

that is assigned on the STRIDE day.

7. In the interest of fostering academic risk taking, STRIDE students' performance will be evaluated, but not graded.
8. STRIDE will begin the week of Labor Day and end the week before End of Grade Testing.

9. STRIDE will be held on either Tuesday, Wednesday, and/or Thursday. (AIG Staff

Development will alternate on Monday and Friday each month.)

10. Any STRIDE day missed will be made up, preferably the same week if possible.

11. STRIDE make up days are built into the schedule and will be done the weeks of Thanksgiving and/or the Martin Luther

Waiver of AIG Service

Once a student is identified AIG, that identification remains, even if the parents/guardians or student opt out of the program. Parents/guardians who wish to waive AIG services for their AIG student should complete the "AIG Waiver of Service" form. This form should be filed in the student's yellow identification folder. A PCS AIG Exit Survey will be made available to the parent/guardian and student by the AIG Coordinator.

For additional information, please see the PCS website www.pitt.k12.nc.us. The AIG document is located at the Academically and Intellectually Gifted link the "Departments" section.

Performance Expectations

In addition to maintaining performance in the regular classroom, AIG students are expected to

- Be attentive and prepared in class, attending AIG class regularly.
- Finish AIG and classroom assignments
- Take AIG goals and curriculum activities seriously.

Challenge is what our AIG students need and what the AIG service provides but also in an enriching way. Students often say it is the best part of their day. If performance decreases in the classroom, a

team will meet to determine changes or discontinuation of AIG service; determine what is best for the student.

Discontinuation of AIG Service

Direct service in MATH and/or READING will be discontinued if:

- The score in identified area falls below level 4 on EOG testing for 2 consecutive years.

o At the end of the first year, the AIG teacher will meet with the parent and the student to discuss strategies for improving performance.

This meeting should be documented.

- The score in identified area falls below level 3 on EOG testing.

AIG Elementary or Middle School Curriculum service will be discontinued if:

- Student does not maintain yearly average of "B" in **each** of the 4 core curriculum subjects. (math, reading, science, social studies) each = Yearly average of each separate subject, not a combined average of all 4 subjects total together.
- Student does not score a level 3 on both the EOG reading and math tests.

Pitt County Schools

STRIDE Center

► It's not hard, it just requires more effort!

We are on the web

Pitt County PAGE

Partners for the Advancement of Gifted Education

What: PAGE organization in support of Gifted Education in Pitt County

Where: Typically meets at Eppes Middle School Media Center other locations TBA

When: General Meetings held the 4th Tuesday of each month, 7:00 PM

Who: All parents, teachers, & community partners wanting to create a unified voice to advocate for academically gifted students in our schools.

Why: PAGE is a nonprofit volunteer run organization of parents, teachers and others interested in supporting and encouraging the development of gifted students by:

- Promoting an understanding of the characteristics and needs of gifted students
- Fostering appropriate educational opportunities for them at home, school and in the larger community.

For more information about Pitt County PAGE please visit
www.pcspage.weebly.com

Many voices joined together can make a difference & improve educational opportunities for Academically Gifted children!

Homework and Grades

Often gifted students will say, "Is this right? Do I get a grade on this?" Although we are proud of the good grades they earn, STRIDE is a safe place to step out on a limb, take some risks and move out of the comfort zone with no repercussion of a "bad grade" - I know, to some of them that is a B. Grades are not given in STRIDE but an end of the unit evaluation is completed to inform parents of the objectives that were covered and the work ethics and effort put forward by their student.

Homework is another really popular question. If there is homework from STRIDE, it is either something that was not finished in class and will be needed for the next weeks lesson or a project that is assigned and you will have a minimum of two weeks to complete it. Emails about projects as well

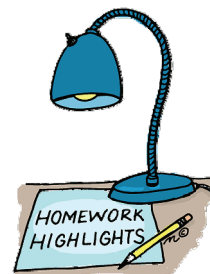
as hard copy guidelines will go home to keep parents informed. Although a grade is not given, it is important for students to complete assigned projects and homework to get the most benefit out of the STRIDE experience.

I often receive emails during the week asking for further instruction on STRIDE homework as parents need assistance to assist their child. Please ask!

Homework that is assigned in the classroom on a STRIDE day that is due to the classroom teacher the next day, is NOT a requirement for STRIDE students. They ARE required to know the information and their classroom teacher will help them stay informed but that nights homework they STRIDE students are NOT responsible for completing. If a contract

is assigned on Monday, due Friday and there is a Wednesday assignment, STRIDE students ARE responsible for completing the Wednesday homework on the contract. Generally

test are not given on STRIDE days, but if by chance one is, the classroom teacher and STRIDE student will work out a time to complete the test with no penalty. Projects assigned ahead of time and due on STRIDE days, the STRIDE student is responsible for turning the project in on time before leaving for STRIDE. If issues arise about homework with your student, please contact me. This is a PCS policy, not an AIG teacher request.



Know the PCS policy on homework assigned on