

# **CRANFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



## **INTERMEDIATE GRADES (3-5) HANDBOOK**

**2011-2012**

## **INTERMEDIATE GRADES (3 – 5) MISSION STATEMENT**

Students in grades 3 – 5 are unique in their approach to learning, and the intermediate grades provide educational experiences designed to meet these students' particular needs. The Cranford Public Schools will strive to provide these students with a safe and meaningful learning environment characterized by opportunities for understanding, problem solving, and critical thinking. The reinforcement of previously taught skills and abilities, coupled with the introduction of new concepts, processes, and technologies, will help to foster positive growth and development in children who are becoming increasingly independent learners.

In addition, the Cranford Public Schools will provide all of our students with the intellectual, emotional, physical, and social skills they will need to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We will employ positive approaches that encourage cooperation, creative thinking, respect for others, and a life-long love of learning.

## **THE 3 – 5 CURRICULUM AND THE NEW JERSEY CORE CURRICULUM CONTENT STANDARDS**

The State of New Jersey has developed a set of standards to ensure that all students, regardless of their environment, will be ready for their post-high school life. Fifty-six standards outline the specific expected results in nine major academic areas:

- Visual and Performing Arts
- Comprehensive Health and Physical Education
- Language Arts Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- World Languages
- Technological Literacy
- Career Education and Consumer, Family, and Life Skills

Complete copies of these standards are available in the school offices and at the public library. All of the standards can also be found on the Department of Education's website: [www.state.nj.us/education](http://www.state.nj.us/education). All districts in New Jersey are expected to address all of these standards through their curricula. Each student's progress toward achieving these standards is measured by statewide assessment tests administered in grades 3-8 and grade 11.

The Cranford Public Schools are committed to ensuring that all district curricula meet and exceed the state standards. A plan is in place to ensure that all district curricula are aligned with the Core Standards and that staff members receive ongoing support and guidance in implementing the standards through an ambitious program of professional development. All district curricula are routinely assessed for effectiveness and relevancy, and are revised to reflect the best educational practices and strategies as prescribed by current educational research.

The students in grades 3 – 5 are exposed to the different standards throughout their daily activities, both formally and informally. Cranford’s commitment to providing a well-rounded, multi-modal approach to learning incorporates all of the standards to help our students become valuable contributors to society in the future.

## **LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY**

The language arts program encompasses *reading*, *writing* (spelling, grammar, and handwriting), *listening*, *speaking*, and *viewing*. The understandings and skills of each element of the language arts program are not isolated, but integrated, interactive, and embedded in all subject areas across the curriculum.

Our elementary literacy instruction is literature based and follows a balanced approach through a number of strategies and techniques including, but not limited to, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, and process writing. This approach provides students with the necessary tools to communicate orally, read and comprehend print, and write with clarity and purpose, and for a variety of audiences.

Our language arts goals are tied to the N.J. Core Curriculum Content Standards. They include:

Goal 1: Students will become confident and effective readers.

- NJCCC Standard 3.1 Students will understand and apply the knowledge of sounds, letters, and words in written English to become independent and fluent readers, and will read a variety of materials and texts with fluency and comprehension.

Goal 2: Students will become confident and effective writers.

- NJCCC Standard 3.2 Students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

Goal 3: Students will develop effective oral language skills.

- NJCCC Standard 3.3 Students will speak in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

Goal 4: Students will develop effective listening skills.

- NJCCC Standard 3.4 Students will listen actively to information from a variety of sources in a variety of situations.

Goal 5: Students will view and understand text and nontext information.

- NJCCC Standard 3.5 Students will access, view, evaluate, and respond to print, nonprint, and electronic texts and resources (viewing and media literacy).

## **Grade 3-5 Language Arts Literacy Proficiencies**

### **Reading**

- Reads for comprehension
- Reads with fluency
- Expands vocabulary
- Identifies story elements (character, setting, plot, problem, solution)
- Identifies different genres (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, folktale, etc.)
- Determines the author's purpose for writing (to persuade, entertain, inform, etc.)
- Identifies various literary devices (use of metaphors, similes, alliteration, etc.)
- Utilizes visualization, questioning, and prediction skills to increase comprehension
- Makes meaningful connections among prior knowledge, and personal experiences, and other areas of the curriculum

### **Writing**

- Writes for a variety of purposes both independently and collaboratively
- Communicates experiences, thoughts, and feelings
- Employs various literary devices
- Utilizes the five-stage process for writing: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, publishing/sharing
- Writes a story with a beginning, middle and end
- Stays on topic
- Models various genres in own writing
- Uses appropriate grammar and sentence structure
- Uses appropriate punctuation
- Spells grade-level words accurately using standard spelling
- Uses subject-verb agreement
- Identifies the parts of speech
- Develops appropriate cursive handwriting skills
- Uses reference skills effectively

### **Listening, Speaking and Viewing**

- Repeats and follows multi-step directions
- Maintains eye contact
- Asks relevant questions
- Uses speaking strategies (volume, tone of voice)
- Stays on topic

### **General Guidelines for Handwriting**

#### **Grade 3**

- By mid-October, review all cursive letters with an emphasis on linking them together.
- Teach and practice two-four letters per week.
- Focus on connecting lines.

- ❑ By January, cursive writing should be used for spelling words, spelling sentences, and selected writing.
- ❑ Use paper with a red margin line.

#### **Grade 4**

- ❑ Cursive writing is used for spelling tests and final published pieces.
- ❑ By January, introduce pens (*erasable please*) for students who have demonstrated neat writing.
- ❑ Cursive writing is used for most assignments.
- ❑ Focus on neatness and legibility.

#### **Grade 5**

- ❑ In September, review all cursive letters; provide practice sheets for students who need them.
- ❑ Cursive writing should be used generally except for projects, such as posters. The use of cursive writing is at the discretion of the teacher.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The mathematics program in the intermediate grades focuses on the district's goals of understanding mathematical concepts and the development of critical thinking skills. As the students progress through the grades, the skills they have learned in grades K – 2 are reinforced and new concepts are introduced.

Students learn mathematics through a problem solving, inquiry, and discovery based approach. They use communication to organize and clarify their mathematical thinking and recognize that mathematical facts, procedures, and claims must be justified. Students create and use representations to organize, record, and communicate mathematical ideas.

The core areas of the math program in the intermediate grades are multiplication, division, measurement, and a more structured introduction to algebra and geometry. Other areas of instruction include further development of fractions, time, currency, and graphing. These topics are introduced in the primary grades and are reinforced in the intermediate grades.

As in the early elementary grades, students are provided with a variety of learning experiences that vary from individual to group activities. The use of hands-on learning tools is emphasized to enhance the students' interest. Computers and calculators are used to enhance and reinforce concepts and skills learned.

Students are encouraged to explore math concepts in a learning environment that allows for investigation and problem solving. Understanding is considered critical. Incorporating math as part of everyday activities and enabling students to develop higher-level thinking and reasoning skills allow students to apply their knowledge and gain confidence in their ability to reason mathematically.

## **SCIENCE**

The achievement of scientific literacy for all students is the goal of the Cranford Public Schools' science program. All students engage in science experiences that promote the ability to ask, find, or determine answers to questions derived from natural curiosity about everyday things and occurrences. Through problem solving, decision making, and critical thinking, students gain the knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and processes necessary for that literacy.

The program focuses on the four major strands of science: physical, life, earth, and health. These strands are vertically articulated throughout the grade levels to help students build upon concepts and processes previously learned. Further embedded in the program are the belief and practice that students must experience science and scientific processes, such as planning, predicting, observing, classifying, measuring, comparing, interpreting, analyzing, and communicating their ideas. Students explore the scientific process through the scientific method and the experience of conducting experiments and investigations. The premise being that science is experienced as an active process in which inquiry is central to learning and in which students engage in observation, inference, and experimentation on an ongoing basis, rather than as an isolated a process. This experience is enhanced by providing a strong contextual background to the experiments, complete with appropriate content delivered in a multimedia fashion through the use of textbooks, equipment kits, videos, and DVD's, CD-ROMS, interactive web sites, graphic organizers, transparencies, and timelines.

In keeping with a focus on context, science is presented in connection to other subject disciplines and in an authentic environment. Research shows that it is beneficial to utilize authentic pieces of literature to integrate science and literacy instruction. Students will be led to examine the world around them and to come to understand how science is an active part of that world, including the prevalence of scientific careers that will be open to them in the future.

It is our belief that as students explore, discover, and come to understand science fully, it becomes for them an exciting and engaging subject area relevant to all areas of their lives.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

The social studies curriculum is an integral part of the education of Cranford's children. Through it we will instill a sense of purpose for our children in their community and our world. It is comprised of various topics and concepts. The study of Native Americans and explorers guides students in understanding the relationship between the first groups of people to arrive in North America. The students explore their differences and similarities in various ways. The students will continue their study of communities and their relationship to the physical environment and that of the world.

To broaden the students' understanding of the American Revolution and the writing of our Constitution, they will identify the branches of government and how they work. The students also recognize famous men and women who have had an impact on our nation and world. They will also utilize map and globe skills to locate places both near and far. Current events will keep

students abreast of local, state, national, and international events happening throughout our world.

Educators will utilize a variety of resources to implement the social studies curriculum. The Lions-Quest program and the Holocaust/genocide course of studies are followed. Teachers also use the social studies text published by McGraw-Hill and Silver Burdett. Supplemental books, posters, technology, and related literature are used as well. Technology is used within the classroom to enhance and reinforce learning. Computer programs, CD-ROMS, videos, audiotapes, and other visual aids bring social studies topics to life for the children. In further creating curricular connections, materials from other curricular areas are often integrated into social studies lessons. In addition, readings from child-friendly periodicals and the local and county newspapers reinforce important social studies topics and current events.

For further enrichment, parents and guest speakers are invited to share their experiences with the children. Children also learn from a variety of class trips throughout the district.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND SAFETY**

A concern for all aspects of a child's development is an essential part of our philosophy. The responsibility for your child's physical education and health program is shared by the classroom teacher and physical education specialist who work with students for one period per week in the third grade and two periods per week in the fourth and fifth grades. Through the Lions-Quest program and the HIV/AIDS family life curriculum, the students develop interpersonal skills, which impart self-esteem, positive decision making, cooperation, and the development of a healthful life style.

In physical education, the students develop large and small muscles, coordination skills, and spatial relationships while exercising their bodies. Age-appropriate activities are carefully chosen to help students experience a sense of healthful competition and a sense of fair play. The children's safety is stressed at all times.

### **FAMILY LIVING (5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE)**

The fifth grade family living program was developed to provide age-appropriate, accurate information about physical growth, emotional maturity, and social development. The program's goals and objectives are designed to be flexible to meet the changing needs of each individual student and are as follows: (1) to develop an understanding of healthful behaviors and how to incorporate those behaviors into their existing lifestyle; (2) to increase awareness about different family types and the roles and responsibilities within their own family; (3) to promote an understanding of human growth and development during adolescence; (4) to create an understanding of how to prevent illness and disease related to the immune system, including HIV/AIDS prevention; and (5) to enhance understanding about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and their relationship to peer pressure situations.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

The Cranford School District is responsible for ensuring that technology for grades 3 – 5 reflects relevant content and instructional strategies that are consistent with the state’s Core Curriculum Content Standards. In support of these standards, key components have been developed to integrate the use of technology into the work of schools. They are as follows:

1. Development of Lifelong Learners:
  - Assures skillful use of technology to support the development of lifelong learning skills and process skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration, which are essential to success in our rapidly changing information age
  - Better serves the diverse learning styles of our students
  
2. Integration of Technology in the Classroom:
  - Expands classroom tools for teaching and learning and provides for the integration of multiple resources for existing and emerging curriculum
  - Enables members of the learning community to communicate more effectively, access and process information, and work productively
  - Links the classroom to educational resources within the school, community, and wider world
  - Creates a collaborative environment for project-oriented activities
  - Encourages the use of multimedia tools that enable students to become active and experiential learners
  - Enables learning to involve partnerships within the school, among schools, and with other organizations
  - Enables the teacher to be a facilitator of learning; The use of technology will be curriculum driven and infused into project-based, thematic units.
  - Promotes improved staff development and support; The technology plan will enable teachers and staff members to use technology to more efficiently manage the classroom or office.

### **Grades 3 – 5 Technology Initiatives**

In grades 3 – 5, technology is infused throughout the curriculum. Through the use of this technology, various computer peripherals, and other age-appropriate software, we hope to enhance the desire to learn by supporting active, independent, collaborative, and expressive learning. Additionally, supervised Internet access is available in all of our schools, permitting children and teachers to communicate locally, nationally, and globally.

## **WORLD LANGUAGES**

Years of research on the academic and attitudinal benefits of a second language provide an impressive rationale for world language instruction and acquisition. The Cranford Public Schools District provides elementary students from first through fifth grade with a well-articulated and comprehensive Spanish program. Program goals reflect the New Jersey Core Curriculum

Standard for World Languages which indicates that New Jersey students will be able to use a world language in addition to English to engage in meaningful conversation, to understand and interpret spoken and written language, and to present information, concepts, and ideas, while also gaining an understanding of the perspectives of other cultures.

As students continue to explore Spanish in grades three, four and five, the World Language specialists purposefully and increasingly establish an immersion experience where students are engaged in authentic communicative tasks that directly relate to their everyday lives. They are taught through a variety of methods that link communication, culture, connections and communities with the regular grade level curricula. Elementary Spanish teachers work collaboratively with their counterparts in each school to ensure that program goals and objectives consistently support differentiated and proficiency-based instructional practices.

The goal of the Spanish program in grades one through five is to lead the elementary child toward increased second language proficiency and enhanced cultural understanding while preparing each child for continued study at the middle school level.

## THE ARTS

We believe that an education in the arts (visual and performing) is an essential part of the intermediate grades curriculum. Through art and music activities, children develop and practice a wide range of skills significant to many aspects of life and work. Indeed, arts education has the potential to make an important contribution to a child's intellectual, social, and emotional development. In addition to reinforcing skills that enhance learning across all disciplines, the arts provide children with a powerful means to communicate ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Exposure to art and music enriches understanding of human experience across cultures and histories, and speaks positively about the accomplishments of men and women of different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds.

The responsibility for arts education in the intermediate grades is shared by the classroom teachers and a subject-area specialist (i.e., certified music and art teachers). Children in grades 3–5 receive art instruction for one period each week and music instruction for one period each week. In addition, children in grades 3-5 are invited to receive instruction on string instruments, and in grades 4–5 they have the opportunity to receive instruction on band instruments. Although teachers are responsible for addressing specific objectives and skills detailed in the district art and music curricula, they often seek to integrate visual and performing arts activities into other aspects of the curriculum, as well. For example, children may develop art projects as an outgrowth or extension of their science or math lessons. Similarly, music can be used to reinforce concepts developed in social studies or language arts.

Above all, the emphasis in arts education in the intermediate grades is on *active* learning. Children learn by *doing*. Through activities like singing, dancing, drawing, and painting, students practice important critical thinking and problem solving skills and gain self-confidence.

## **PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE**

### **Addressing the Needs of the Gifted and Talented**

Gifted students are those who demonstrate exceptional levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the Cranford schools and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities. They may display unique creativity, productive thinking and leadership traits or may exhibit exceptional talent in the visual or performing arts.

Suitable educational programs for all children are a right implicit in basic educational philosophy as well as the laws of New Jersey. The Cranford Board of Education is committed to providing sequential, differentiated and appropriate educational programs for all students, including the gifted and talented. Such programs must ensure that these students engage in learning opportunities that meet their identified needs, and that these opportunities include interaction with their gifted peers.

The district's **Pathways to Excellence Program** seeks to address the needs of Gifted Students by offering a continuum of services to children in grades K-8. The program consists of two major components for students in Grades 3 – 8: School Wide Enrichment Programs and the Pathways to Excellence Plus Program (P2E+).

A brief overview of these two components follows:

- **School Wide Enrichment**

Enrichment involves providing opportunities for students to learn by exploring their passions and interests. Flexible curricula, instructional methods and instructional materials and honoring student choice encourage discovery, active learning and engagement. Assessment methods must also be flexible and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge in multiple ways.

Enrichment can be accomplished in one-to-one, small group and whole class learning situations. Our T4U initiative supports the philosophy of enrichment through its focus on relevance and meaning. Project-based and problem-based learning also provide opportunities for students to assume a leadership role (control) in their learning by offering choice within the curricula, supporting active learning and engagement and encouraging motivation beyond passion and talent.

- **Pathway to Excellence Plus (P2E+) Program**

The school wide Enrichment Program recognizes that *all* children have unique talents and gifts and seeks to nurture and support these interests and abilities. At the same time, the district recognizes the need to provide specialized services for students who demonstrate exceptional levels of ability. The Pathways to Excellence Plus (P2E+) Program is an ongoing effort to identify students who demonstrate exceptional levels of intellectual/ academic ability and to provide each student with a differentiated educational plan (DEP). These plans will include a

pull-out program staffed by Pathways teachers and will specify modifications and adaptations to the regular education program to nurture and challenge eligible students. Utilizing multiple criteria that include standardized tests, teacher assessment and an I.Q. test, the P2E+ Program seeks to identify the top two to three percent (2-3 %) of our student population in Grades 3 – 8. Identification is ongoing throughout the grades and parents are notified annually of eligibility status and available services.

- **P2E+ Eligibility/ Transfers/ Appeals**

Eligibility for the P2E+ Program is determined through a careful and measured analysis of multiple measures and weighed against established district criteria that are annually reviewed and approved by the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction and the superintendent of schools.

Parents of students transferring into the district from other school systems or private schools can request to be considered for the program by contacting their child’s principal. Student records will be reviewed and compared to the district criteria when possible. State requirements specify that eligibility for gifted education services is based on comparison with a student’s *peers in the local school district* and prior participation in another district’s gifted education program does not automatically ensure eligibility for the Cranford Pathways to Excellence Plus (P2E+) Program.

Parents of Cranford students who have been found ineligible for the P2E+ Program may appeal for additional consideration. The first step in the appeal process is to write a letter to the school principal that states any extenuating circumstance that merits further consideration. The principal shall forward the letter to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, who shall provide the parent/guardian with detailed information regarding the appeal process and convene an appeal committee. Please note that the steps in the district’s appeal process must be followed. The appeal committee shall review each appeal on an individual case-by-case basis.

### **REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS**

Assessing and reporting a child’s social, emotional, and educational progress are very important processes. It is essential that all parents not only understand these processes, but also participate in them. Student progress in grades 3 – 5 is communicated through the following means:

- Report cards
- Progress reports
- Parent-teacher communication
- Student portfolios
- Standardized test scores

## ASSESSING STUDENT PROGRESS

A student's progress is assessed in various ways. Assessment includes but is not limited to the following:

- Tests and quizzes
- Participation
- Projects
- Classwork
- Self-evaluation (encouraged through the use of reflective tools; e.g., rubrics, pre-tests, conferences)
- Homework\*

### **\*Homework**

The Board of Education recognizes that homework is a vital part of the learning process in that it allows the student, while working independently, to use the concepts taught in the classroom, thereby reinforcing classroom instruction.

Intermediate School Guidelines:

- a. Grade 3: 30 minutes of homework (average)
- b. Grade 4: 40 minutes of homework (average)
- c. Grade 5: 50 minutes of homework (average)

*\*If your child consistently needs more time than the average to complete homework, please notify the teacher.*

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are distributed four times during the school year at the end of each quarter (marking period). Parents/guardians acknowledge receipt of report cards by signing and returning the report card envelope to the school.

### **Progress Reports**

Progress reports are used to communicate the areas of strength and concern for each student and are distributed four times during the school year in the middle of each quarter for Grade 3. Every parent/guardian is required to acknowledge receipt of the progress report by signing and returning it to the school. For Grades 4 and 5, parents can view student grades online through PowerSchool.

## PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

It is our belief that the highest form of communication with parents about the educational progress of their child is achieved through a parent-teacher conference. Parents should share important or influential ideas, situations, or experiences with the teacher that may affect the student's progress. Appointments are generally scheduled through a note or a phone call. Parents are encouraged to bring a list of any questions or concerns they may have about their child's program to the conferences. Teachers also utilize these conferences to communicate their

goals and expectations for students during the upcoming school year. Parental conferences are available upon request.

### **Open House/Back-to-School Night**

An Open House provides a specific time for dialogue between the teacher and the parent. Teachers communicate their classroom procedures, expectations, goals, assessment tools, curriculum guidelines, and focus for the year. Parent-teacher partnerships are also explored.

### **Student Portfolios**

Portfolios documenting student achievement/progress in writing are maintained for all students in grades 3 – 5. Some of the items gathered in these portfolios include K-2 materials and writing samples generated from grades 3 – 5. Although the contents of these portfolios are often shared during conferences, parents should feel free to request a review of the portfolio with their child's teacher any time they have a question or concern about their student's progress as documented in written materials.

### **Standardized Tests / State Assessment**

Each year students in grades 3 – 5 participate in a standardized testing program. The NJ Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) is given at each grade level. These tests are administered in the spring. The results of these tests are used to assess program effectiveness, and to identify students for basic skills instruction and participation in the Pathways to Excellence Plus program. The results of these tests are routinely mailed home to parents/guardians after the tests have been administered and the district has received the results. Parents may make an appointment with the teacher or principal to discuss the results if further explanation is needed.

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL GROWTH**

The Intermediate Grades (3-5) Task Force spent a great deal of time investigating the social and emotional issues unique to students at these ages. The following suggestions to foster positive growth and development in our children were written for parents.

In order to maintain and increase student motivation as children move through grades 3–5 and into the middle school:

- Encourage use and development of study groups at home and at school. Ensure there is a mix of gender and ability.
- Continue the use of cooperative learning opportunities, both in and out of school, that emphasize a fair sharing of responsibilities and tasks.
- Emphasize the life achievements of those who have succeeded through hard work and endurance as described and explained in various sources; e.g., magazines, newspapers, books, films, the Internet.
- Encourage motivation to succeed through a variety of rewards that provide recognition and indicate accomplishment.

- Attempt to instill confidence in students, especially around issues of gender and pre-adolescence.

To continually monitor and develop our children's sense of self and their awareness of their role in society:

- Utilize the Lions-Quest and DARE programs to demonstrate and discuss how the consequences of our actions affect others.
- Through family living and service-oriented programs, stress how as members of society we must take care of ourselves and others.
- Continue to encourage and participate in community service projects both in and out of school.
- Educate children as to how a successful school career will lead to a variety of life choices.

In order to continually ensure that students are achieving and enhancing their life skills, such as those of respect, conflict resolution, assertiveness, responsibility, independence, and ownership:

- Continually model respect for our children to be exhibited in their behavior toward each other.
- Encourage conflict resolution by keeping lines of communication open, both in school and at home, on issues that may affect a child's lifestyle and school performance.
- Student Assistance Counselors should be engaged whenever appropriate and necessary.
- Foster an environment in school and at home in which children can feel comfortable expressing their ideas appropriately.
- Require responsibility, independence, and ownership by helping children to become aware of their accountability for completion of homework, school work, group projects, behavior, etc.
- Help your child to take pride in work that is completed neatly and on time, and reflective of their own best efforts.

### **SPECIAL SERVICES**

The Cranford Public Schools offer a full range of services to meet the individual needs of students as described below.

#### **Health Services:**

Each school has access to a certified school nurse who provides preventative emergency and referral services; organizes dental, visual, and auditory exams and screenings; and acts as a resource to the classroom teachers. Physical exams are required for all students in second and fifth grades. The nurse maintains all records related to immunization, medication, and the health status of students. It is imperative that the nurse know if your child is taking or changing medication or has other health concerns. Parents are given a specific form to notify the school nurse of the need for medication and to inform the nurse of the procedures. The school nurse informs teachers of any pertinent health information.

**Student Assistance Counselor**

A Student Assistance Counselor provides aid to teachers, parents, and students as needed by providing information on appropriate resources within and outside the district, and acts as a liaison among the school, community agencies, parents, and children as the situation demands. Areas addressed might include, but are not limited to, school entry or separation issues, peer or school adjustment, grief, and loss.

**Achieve Program**

Children who demonstrate a need for additional help in reading, writing, or math may be referred to the Achieve Program. Referral may be based on recommendation by the classroom teacher or parent in grades K-5. Teacher recommendation, classroom performance, summative year-end assessments, report card grades and standardized tests (gr. 2-5) are reviewed for placement. Programming is developed with parental consent. A plan is developed and reviewed with parents at the start of its implementation. Students meet with the Achieve teacher in small groups for math, reading and/or writing instruction using the in-class or pull-out model. Parents receive formal updates on student progress in February and June.

**English as a Second Language**

An English as a Second Language (ESL) program is provided for those students whose first language is not English and who are identified as limited English proficient. The ESL teacher meets with the student, individually or in small groups, on a daily basis.

**Intervention and Referral Services**

In July 1994, the State Board of Education adopted rules to provide district boards of education with standards for the delivery of intervention and referral services for pupils in the general education program (N.J.A.C. 6:26, Intervention and Referral Services for General Education Pupils). These rules replaced the preceding regulations that required the establishment of Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) in all public schools. Under the current regulation, the Cranford Public Schools have established and implemented procedures for the delivery of intervention and referral services for pupils who are experiencing difficulties in their classes and who have not been identified for special education programs and services.

To this end, the Cranford Public Schools have established the I&RS Committee. The I&RS Committee is required to provide the following school-based functions in support of intervention and referral services for general education pupils:

1. Identify pupils in need and plan and provide for appropriate intervention and/or referral services to school and community resources based on desired outcomes.
2. Identify roles and responsibilities of the school staff who participate in planning and providing intervention and referral services.
3. Provide support, guidance and professional development to school staff who identify and refer pupils and who participate in planning and providing intervention and referral services.

4. Actively involve parents/guardians in the development and implementation of intervention and referral plans.
5. Coordinate access to and delivery of school services for identified pupils.
6. Coordinate the services of community-based social and health provider agencies.
7. Review and assess the effectiveness of the services provided in achieving the outcomes identified in the intervention and referral plan.

The Cranford Public Schools I&RS Committee in each school is comprised of the principal or a designee and teachers, and may also include any or all of the following members: school nurse, child study team members, student assistance counselors, speech/language specialists, parents and others as determined to be necessary by the Committee. Cranford Public Schools personnel participate as is necessary according to the particular need identified or the assistance requested.

In addition, programs of intervention and referral services may not be used to delay obvious and appropriate referrals to special education (N.J.A.C. 6:26 3.1). However, intervention and assistance plans may be developed to help students within the general education program who are experiencing problems in learning, behavior, or health that are not related to the educational process.

If a referral is required to be made to the child study team, the Cranford Public Schools follow the procedures as prescribed in N.J.A.C. 6A:14, subchapter 3, the procedural safeguards described in N.J.A.C. 6A:14, subchapter 2, and the official policies of the Cranford Public Schools adopted by the Board of Education. Further information may be obtained by contacting the school principal, the child study team, or Mrs. Debra Loprete, Supervisor of Special Services at 908-709-6219.

### **Child Study Teams**

The Child Study Team will review all referrals from I&RS, parents, and school personnel to determine the need for an evaluation. Parental consent is required for an evaluation to take place, as well as for the implementation of an individualized education plan (IEP). Parents, under both state and federal law, have certain rights regarding notification, evaluation, participation, consent, and other areas when a child is being considered for or receiving special education services. If you are interested in reviewing a detailed description of these rights, please contact the school principal or child study team to request the "Parental Rights in Special Education" booklet and addendum.

After an evaluation, parents will be invited to a meeting to have the evaluation explained. If the child is determined eligible for special education services, the individualized education plan (IEP) will be developed. A member of the child study team is designated to be the child's case manager, and is available to the parents, student, and teacher to monitor and assist in the implementation of the child's program.

### **Special Education and Related Services**

The Cranford Public Schools offer a continuum of placements to meet the needs of students with disabilities, ages three through twenty-one, for special education and related services. Educational program options in district may include placement in the following:

1. A regular class with in-class support, supplementary aids and services, and appropriate curricular and instructional modifications or related services, as required in each student's IEP
2. A resource program for support instruction in a subject or subjects outside the general education class, as required in each student's IEP
3. A resource program for replacement subject instruction outside the general education class, as required in each student's IEP
4. A self-contained class, as required in each student's IEP; Students who attend this special class program may also participate in mainstream classes, as prescribed in their individual IEP's.

### **504 Plans**

Under federal law, there exist reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Each school has a 504 Review Committee that can review any material provided by parents of school staff related to any physical and/or mental disabilities that substantially limit a child's learning. An evaluation is conducted (if a child study team evaluation is unnecessary) and information is gathered from a number of sources, including parents, teachers, and physicians. If determined eligible, a 504 Accommodation Plan is designed with parents to provide services, accommodations, or programming to address the child's needs. A child does not need to be classified under special education to be eligible for a Section 504 plan.

## **HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED: HELPFUL TIPS FOR PARENTS**

### **General Information**

- Make sure that your child is well rested and prepared for school.
- Provide your child with a healthful breakfast and nutritious lunch each day.
- Ask your child about his/her day and look at the school folder and homework together.
- Provide a quiet place and adequate time for homework to be completed.
- Allow time in your child's day for relaxation and quiet time.
- Afford your child the opportunity to participate in one or two extracurricular activities.
- Monitor the amount of time your child spends watching TV, playing video games, and playing on the computer.
- Continually nurture and reinforce a positive attitude toward school.
- As soon as you have a question or concern, be sure to seek out the classroom teacher. This can prevent small problems from growing and allow for parents and teachers to work together in the best interests of your child.
- Keep your child's classroom teacher informed. Alert the teacher to any changes in your family that might affect your child emotionally or academically.
- Enjoy spending time together.

## **Reading and Literacy**

- Read to or with your child daily. Bedtime is a great time to read to your child.
- Visit the library regularly. Give your child the opportunity to see you select books for a variety of purposes. Make sure your child has his/her own library card.
- There are several strategies from which you can choose to foster independent reading skills. These include, but are not limited to:
  1. As you read, move your finger under the words to reinforce left to right orientation.
  2. Pause at different parts of a story to encourage your child to predict what could happen next, express feelings, or express opinions about the story.
  3. At the end of the story, ask your child to retell the story in sequence.
  4. Discuss unfamiliar words.

There is no need to employ all of these strategies at one time, but rather frequently include and vary them in the time you spend reading with your child.

- To encourage writing at home:
  1. Always have lots of paper, both lined and unlined, and various writing utensils on hand for your child to engage in writing.
  2. As your child becomes more adept at script, encourage him/her to write in script as much as possible.
  3. Encourage writing for fun and emphasize that it has many purposes. Use the writing process in the following ways: story writing, poetry, illustrations, posters, notes, songs, lists, labels, invitations, and greeting cards.
  4. Keep a family or personal journal or diary.
  5. Encourage letter writing to family members or friends who live far away.
- To encourage effective listening:
  1. Model and remind your child to look at the speaker (make eye contact).
  2. Listen without interrupting the speaker.
  3. Give your child simple, sequential tasks to practice following multi-step directions.

## **Mathematics**

- Ask your child to help you use math in everyday activities at home.
- Play games that incorporate the use of numbers, counting, shapes, etc.
- Use math words and language (e.g. size, length, width, biggest, smallest, tallest, etc.).
- Promote problem-solving strategies rather than giving the answer to your child. Use language like, “How can we figure this out?” and help your child solve the problem.
- Allow your child to estimate or make guesses regarding amounts. Your child should be distinguishing between large and small groups of objects.

## **Succeeding with Homework**

- Make sure your child has a well-lighted place to work, basic supplies, and a regular time each day for doing homework.

- Ask your child what he/she has for homework. Determine if he/she understands the assignment and if assistance is necessary.
- Look over the assignment, give guidelines if needed, and let your child do his or her own work.
- Ask the classroom teacher early in the year about the homework policy.
- Review teacher comments on the homework with your child regularly.
- Contact your child's teacher if there is a homework problem you can't resolve.
- Congratulate your child on a job well done.

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**Cranford Public Schools**

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**CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**  
**GRADE THREE**

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**LANGUAGE ARTS**

1. Comprehension
2. Oral interpretation
3. Vocabulary development
4. Listening skills
5. Silent reading (pleasure reading)
6. Appreciation of literature
7. Process writing
8. Creative expression
9. Inquiry/resource skills
10. Phonetic applications in other areas
11. Handwriting/cursive writing
12. Spelling
13. Viewing/media

**MATH**

1. Problem solving – construct and solve
2. Estimation and mental math
3. Number theory and numeration: rounding, comparing, ordering
4. Addition and subtraction of 3-digit numbers
5. Multiplication of 2-digit numbers by 1-digit numbers
6. Application of commutative, associative, and identity properties of addition and multiplication
7. Time and money:
  - addition and subtraction with time
  - count and perform simple operations with money
8. Measurement: conversion from one unit to another in the same system
9. Decimals: addition and subtraction of decimals through hundredths
10. Use of calculators to assist in problem solving
11. Collect, display and interpret data using pictographs, bar graphs, tables, and Venn diagrams
12. Geometry - identify and classify two and three dimensional shapes, geometric transformations, spatial relationships, perimeter, area
13. Explore concepts of probability: like, unlikely, certain, impossible

## **Curriculum Overview: Grade Three (continued)**

### **SCIENCE**

1. Getting Ready for Science (inquiry skills, scientific method, scientific tools)
2. Types of Living Things
3. Living Things and their Dependence on One Another
4. The Water Cycle
5. Earth's Place in the Solar System
6. Forces and Motion
7. Work and Machines
8. Muscles and Bones Work Together
9. Nutrition

### **SOCIAL STUDIES**

1. The Cranford Community
2. Types of Communities/Movement and Change/Influences on Life Styles
3. Using Natural Resources
4. Why Explore the New World?
5. Early Settlements/Colonies of North America
6. Native Americans
7. Multicultural Diversity
8. Government/Our Nation's Capital
9. Map Skills and Geography
8. Introducing Research Skills
9. Current Events
10. Lions-Quest Skills for Growing

### **COMPUTER EDUCATION - INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

1. The student will be able to recognize, understand and use computer terms.
2. The student will become knowledgeable in the care and handling of the computer and computer-related material.
3. The student will be able to use the computer keyboard.
4. The student will be able to interact with the computer as a learning tool to meet a variety of needs.
5. The student will develop logical thinking and problem-solving strategies using the computer.
6. The student will recognize the impact of computer technology and the ethics of using technology as it relates to the individual.
7. The student will recognize that computer technology is used by individuals in various careers.

Students will use integrated technologies inherent to the curriculum.

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**CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**  
**GRADE FOUR**

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**LANGUAGE ARTS**

1. Comprehension skills
2. Oral interpretation
3. Vocabulary development
4. Listening skills
5. Sustained silent reading (pleasure reading)
6. Appreciation of literature
7. Process writing
8. Grammar and mechanics
9. Reference skills
10. Phonetic applications in other areas
11. Handwriting/cursive writing
12. Spelling skills
13. Viewing/media
14. Speaking/oral presentations

**MATH**

1. Problem solving
2. Estimation and mental math: rounding decimals and money; estimating sums and differences with money by front digits; estimating products by rounding
3. Number theory and numeration: rounding whole numbers to 1 million; prime numbers
4. Addition and subtraction of 3-digit numbers and decimals
5. Application of commutative, associative, and identity properties of addition and multiplication
6. Multiplication to 4 digits
7. Division of 1,2,3 and 4-digit numbers; division with and without remainders
8. Elapsed time
9. Recognize, describe, extend and create patterns
10. Measurement: length, area, volume, weight, and capacity; conversion from one unit to another in the same system
11. Understand and apply concepts involving lines, angles, and circles
12. Coordinate geometry
13. Collect, display, and interpret data using pictographs, bar graphs, tables, line plot, line graph, and Venn diagrams

## **Curriculum Overview: Grade Four (continued)**

14. Construct and solve simple open sentences involving any one operation.

### **SCIENCE**

1. Getting Ready for Science (inquiry skills, scientific method, scientific tools)
2. Matter and Its Properties
3. Physical Science: Energy, matter, light, heat and sound
4. Landforms
5. Earth's Changing Surface
6. Life Science: Ecosystems
7. Health: Skin

### **SOCIAL STUDIES**

1. Lenni-Lenape Indians/Native Americans
2. Explorers
3. Colonial America
4. New Jersey, Past and Present
5. Map skills
6. Research skills
7. Current events
8. Lions-Quest Skills for Growing

### **COMPUTER EDUCATION - INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

1. The student will be able to recognize, understand and use computer terms.
2. The student will become knowledgeable in the care and handling of the computer and computer-related material.
3. The student will be able to use the computer keyboard.
4. The student will be able to interact with the computer as a learning tool to meet a variety of needs.
5. The student will develop logical thinking and problem-solving strategies using the computer.
6. The student will recognize the impact of computer technology and the ethics of using technology as it relates to the individual.
7. The student will recognize that computer technology is used by individuals in various careers.

Students will use integrated technologies inherent to the curriculum.

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**CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**  
**GRADE FIVE**

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**LANGUAGE ARTS**

1. Vocabulary building
2. Word attack skills
3. Comprehension skills
4. Research skills
5. Pleasure reading/literature
6. Sustained silent reading
7. Journal writing
8. Written reactions to literature
9. Listening skills
10. Literature appreciation
11. Grammar/mechanics/sentence structure
12. Process writing
13. Writing with attention to organization and content
14. Structural analysis
15. Spelling of general use and subject-area words
16. Oral presentations
17. Viewing/media

**MATHEMATICS**

1. Problem solving: multi-step problems
2. Estimation and mental math: estimating with money, quotients, fractions; mental math: operations with whole numbers, fractions and decimals
3. Number theory and numeration: numerals through billions, prime and composite numbers, factorization
4. Fractions: addition, subtraction
5. Multiplication: multiply 4-digit numbers by a 3-digit number
6. Division: 3-digit dividend by a 2-digit divisor, averages
7. Use whole numbers, fractions, and decimals to represent equivalent forms of the same number.
8. Convert measurement units within a system
9. Identify, describe, compare, and classify polygons
10. Apply the concepts of congruence and symmetry (line and rotational)
11. Reading, analyzing, and constructing tables and graphs
12. Find range, median, and mean

13. Determine probabilities of events
14. Solve simple linear equations

### **SCIENCE/FAMILY LIVING**

1. Family Living (growth/development, endocrine system, reproductive system)
2. Getting Ready for Science (inquiry skills, scientific method, scientific tools)
3. Cells to Body Systems
4. Classifying Living Things
5. Plant Growth and Reproduction
6. Properties of Matter
7. Energy
8. Electricity
9. Forces
10. Motion

### **SOCIAL STUDIES**

1. French and Indian War
2. Road to Self-Government and Rebellion
3. Causes of the American Revolution
4. War for Independence
5. Development of a New Country
6. The Constitution
7. Reflections of our freedoms in society through past and current issues/laws
8. Geography Skills (through Battle over Territories)
9. Lions-Quest Skills for Growing (Compromise)

### **COMPUTER EDUCATION - INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

1. The student will be able to recognize, understand and use computer terms.
2. The student will become knowledgeable in the care and handling of the computer and computer-related material.
3. The student will be able to use the computer keyboard with correct finger placement.
4. The student will be able to interact with the computer as a learning tool to meet a variety of needs.
5. The student will develop logical thinking and problem-solving strategies using the computer.
6. The student will recognize the impact of computer technology and the ethics of using technology as it relates to the individual.
7. The student will recognize that computer technology is used by individuals in various careers.

Students will use integrated technologies inherent to the curriculum.

## GLOSSARY FOR PARENTS

**Cooperative learning:** Students of all abilities working together toward a common learning goal; teamwork that leads to independence

**Creative thinking:** The ability to come up with new ideas or combinations of ideas; the genius to be fostered in every student

**Critical thinking:** The act of analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information and ideas; the kind of thinking that helps students form ideas of their own

**Differentiated instruction:** This term is used to describe an approach to teaching that provides a variety of learning options to accommodate differences in how students learn

**Emergent literacy:** The reading and writing behaviors of young children that precede and develop into conventional literacy

**Guided reading:** An instructional technique designed to develop independent readers who question, consider alternatives, and make informed choices as they seek meaning. The teacher accomplishes these goals by using questions and comments to help children become aware of resources in the text and within themselves to create meaning from the text

**Home/school connection:** A positive partnership between home and school that can enhance the growth of each and every child in the classroom

**Integrated Language Arts:** Making connections among literature, language arts processes, and the content areas; showing students that reading and writing are not just for the language arts period

**Language experience:** A dynamic approach that makes use of students' own experiences, interests and natural language

**Learning styles:** The variety of ways in which students acquire knowledge; the different, distinct forms of intelligence that characterize learners

**Lifelong learners:** Individuals responsible for their own learning, skilled in accessing and processing information, confident in using technological tools, able to solve problems alone or collaboratively, capable of being creative and innovative, and able to communicate

**Modeling:** Showing or demonstrating a concept through concrete real life examples.

**Multiculturalism:** In the school setting, the practice of creating a learning environment that not only addresses the diverse needs of an increasingly diverse population, but also allows the unique abilities of students from different backgrounds to blossom

**Phonics:** Letter-sound relationships; a set of instructional strategies that brings a child's attention to parts of words, including syllables, phonograms (e.g. – at, -ick, etc.) and single letters

**Problem based learning:** This is a teaching approach that places students in the role of problem solver confronted with a “real-world” problem. The aim is to have students learn critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as the essential concepts of the subject matter

**Problem solving:** The act of identifying and defining a problem, exploring options, and selecting possible solutions; the skills students need to become proficient as they read, write and interact

**Reading approaches:** The many roads to meaning; ways to help students of all reading abilities and learning styles gain a meaningful understanding of what they're reading

**Rubric:** A rubric is a set of scoring guidelines for evaluating student work that provide meaningful feedback

**Teaching for Understanding:** This is the term we use to describe the preferred instructional model in Cranford. Essentially, students are asked to use information, facts and skills as a means to acquire understanding of the “big ideas” (i.e. principles, concepts) of a topic

**Technology:** The use of technical equipment to allow a person to complete a task or job with less effort; commonly refers to computers and computer-related equipment

**Theme teaching:** Providing a context for learning so that reading, writing and content-area learning are connected

**Trade books:** Authentic, whole works of literature – the kind that children take off the shelves, take home and take to heart!