

Mrs. Warner

September Newsletter, 2017-2018

Greenville Elementary Discovery Program Overview

**Who is on the Discovery teaching team?**

Mrs. Warner, English Language Arts; Mr. Westfall, math, science and social studies.

**How are students grouped for advanced academic instruction in grades 3 and 4 at Greenville Elementary?**

Students are cluster grouped with peers who share common academic strengths in reading and/or math.

Students may qualify to be in the academically advanced cluster group by: (1) scoring well on Measures of

Academic Progress reading and math tests, (2) scoring in the gifted range on measures of cognitive ability, and

(3) scoring in the “gifted” range on tests that measure achievement in academic areas. We have a representation of students from each of these three categories in our cluster group. These students are in reading, writing and math classes with each other.

**What are WEPS?**

WEPS are Written Education Plans for individual students who are identified as gifted. Only those identified as gifted will have a WEP. WEPS will typically be shared with parents in the fall.

**How do teachers differentiate for gifted or academically advanced students?**

* Pre-testing is done to determine if student understanding is sufficient to either move more quickly through skills and concepts or omit them from the unit of study.
* Student self-assessments are used in addition to teacher assessments.
* Rubrics are provided so that students know what the expectations are for high scores on projects and writing assignments.
* Teachers align units of study with state standards for learning in all subject areas; however, when students are capable, teachers may teach standards in greater depth or difficulty.
* Whenever possible, teachers ask questions or provide assignments that require students to think at high levels of cognition – they apply their knowledge and understanding in order to analyze, create, or evaluate. These types of questions may be part of the daily classroom discussion, classwork, homework or tests.
* Students are given advanced work, not more work, than peers who are not in the advanced cluster group. (This is true of homework as well as classwork.)
* Although students may be able to read books at levels beyond 3rd or 4th grade, we will strive to teach “in depth” at levels from 3rd to 5th grade. A variety of genres will be studied in detail so students are able to understand various types of texts they read. Fiction and nonfiction will be read each 9 weeks.
* All students have a reading log, but Mrs. Warner’s is more advanced than you would typically see in other 3rd and 4th grade classrooms. This is one example of differentiation.
* Fourth graders in the cluster group may be invited to work on the school news crew which produces the school newspaper. Students will be given opportunities to submit work for the paper; however, Mrs. Warner, and Mr. Westfall reserve the right to determine if a student’s work, work habits, behavior, and level of responsibility are sufficient to warrant participation and publication.

**How will teachers on the team communicate with parents and students?**

* Teacher newsletters
* Teacher webpages (links on the GCS webpage under SCHOOLS~Vicky Warner)
* Emails (fastest, easiest way to communicate with teachers)
* Phone (548-1013)
* Study guides
* Rubrics
* Student planners