

## **PACE Program**

The PACE program incorporates three components: gifted and talented education, Advanced Placement program, and academic competitions. The emphasis is on higher level cognitive skills, creativity, leadership and habits of mind, research skills, depth and complexity of investigation, accelerated content, communication skills, and high quality presentations.

Gifted and Talented Students are identified for the GT program beginning at the end of grade 1. Gifted students are defined as those needing a qualitatively differentiated educational experience due to demonstrated academic ability or potential (intellect, creativity, and task commitment/motivation). Approximately seven percent of the student population of the Van Buren School District meets the criteria for service. Identification is an ongoing process throughout the grades. Testing occurs twice a year: beginning of the school year and spring. A student must be actively enrolled in the district to be referred, and referrals may be made by school personnel, students, or parents. A GT specialist administers several tests. The review committee employs a student profile process that assures equal access to all students regardless of cultural or socioeconomic background/environment. Students in grades 2-4 may receive services in cluster classrooms (King and Parkview) where the regular classroom teacher is GT-licensed and provides ongoing differentiation as well as GT enrichment. Students in the other elementaries receive services through a weekly 2.5 hour pull-out enrichment class taught by GT-licensed teachers. Students in grades 5-6 receive services through content classes taught by GT-licensed teachers.

Advanced Placement Any advanced student who has high task motivation may participate in the Advanced Placement program. At junior high and high school, students may select from a variety of pre-AP offerings in all core and extended content. The high school currently provides 13 AP courses: English language and composition, English literature and composition, statistics, calculus AB, biology, environmental science, chemistry, US history, US government and politics, world history, European history, psychology, music theory, studio art. All teachers in the Advanced Placement program have additional training and certification by College Board. AP courses have been approved through the College Board review process.

Additional Opportunities Any student with interest and task commitment may participate in a variety of academic competitions. Students have the opportunity to compete with other advanced students in the region, state, and nation through events such as: chess, debate, forensics, National History Day, and Quiz Bowl. Interested high school students may participate in AM: Active Minds which meets from 7:00 – 7:45 AM. A GT-licensed teacher provides research assistance and enrichment activities in leadership and special studies. AM hosts Mind Games in the spring.