

PACE Program Ecker Hill

(Program for Academic Challenge and Enrichment)

Ecker Hill Middle School does not have a stand-alone gifted program. Our middle school PACE programming is coordinated differently than our elementary model. Identified students do not meet with a gifted specialist outside of class. Instead, students may participate in enrichment activities such as WordMasters in Language Arts and Noetic Math for challenge math opportunities.

Students who demonstrate high academic aptitude or achievement through testing in math, language arts, or both are cluster grouped in those areas. Specific academic aptitude or achievement is defined as significant cognitive ability and/or achievement above age-level peers in one or more academic domains. Cluster grouping typically places 3–8 students with similar strengths in the same general education class. These groupings are based on students who were identified as Tier III in elementary school. Teachers are informed of these groupings and consider them when planning instruction. Please note that electives and dual immersion enrollment may influence final groupings.

Ecker Hill does not use the leveled service model from elementary school due to its middle school schedule structure. With over 750 students in two grade levels and a block schedule across four core content areas, services are delivered differently. Most support and accommodations for identified students occur within the general education classroom through differentiated instruction. If you have questions or concerns, we encourage you to reach out to your child's content area teacher. Teachers may consult with the PACE specialist for resources or support.

Students may receive enrichment in the following ways:

- **ELA Enrichment:** Clustered students in ELA may participate in WordMasters. Enrichment is integrated into the regular classroom and/or during itime.
- **Math Enrichment:** Students receive challenge activities, including participation in Noetic Math.
- **Instructional Planning Support:** Teachers may use additional materials or collaborate with the PACE specialist to extend student learning.

Additional Opportunities at Ecker Hill

As students transition to 7th grade, Ecker Hill offers both an Honors and an Accelerated Math pathway. All students are re-evaluated for possible placement into the Accelerated Math class. Placement is not automatic, even for students previously identified as Tier III. The evaluation process is rigorous and includes multiple assessments. In addition, a debate elective may be offered if there is sufficient student enrollment.