

JENISON ACT PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024

Jenison Public Schools
Jenison, MI 49428



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PHILOSOPHY

Gifted and talented students have unique academic and affective needs. Administrators and teachers support a philosophy that emphasizes the need for a challenging learning environment that focuses on high achievement for every gifted and talented student. Programming for gifted and talented students must be responsive to individual needs and must recognize the multiple talents, challenges, and cultural diversity of the district's population.

The Jenison Public School District provides opportunities for optimal learning to ensure that gifted and talented students will perform at levels commensurate with their abilities. Gifted and talented students should be provided dynamic, challenging educational programming at every level throughout their school career.

DISTRICT BELIEF STATEMENTS

The Jenison Public School District recognizes a set of core beliefs regarding gifted and talented students and their education. Those beliefs include:

- Gifted and talented students have unique and varied cognitive and affective abilities and needs.
- Gifted and talented students appear in all populations.
- Gifted and talented students should be provided programming which fosters maximum academic and personal growth.
- Gifted and talented students should learn in an environment where their gifts and abilities are acknowledged, valued, and nurtured.
- Gifted and talented students should be provided appropriate and varied programming options throughout their school career.
- Gifted and talented students require adequate support, including direct instruction, to maximize their academic potential.
- Gifted and talented students need choice throughout their school career.
- Early recognition of and appropriate educational responses to gifted and talented students are essential.
- Providing appropriate programming for gifted and talented students is a responsibility shared by classroom teachers, specials teachers, gifted and talented specialists, administrators, and parents.

- Gifted and talented students must be active participants in and share responsibility for their own learning.

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JenisonACT

ACT — ACademically Talented

In 1985, assistant JJHS principal, Mary Tracey, and Bauerwood principal, Wes Bonzelaar, worked alongside a dedicated group of Jenison parents to create a program for students demonstrating evidence of high intellectual and creative achievement capability. The ACT Program (the acronym a variation of **AC**ademically **T**alented) was the result of their hard work! The ACT class is designed as an academic enrichment program specifically tailored for gifted and talented children. Meeting each school week, the curriculum promotes advanced academics in the core subject areas of Social Studies, Language Arts, Math, and Science. Third through sixth grade students from Jenison Public and Jenison Christian Schools who qualify for the ACT program are provided learning experiences that encourage them to apply their abilities, creativity, and task commitment to solve personally meaningful problems they encounter in their schools, community, and world.

ACT PROGRAM — Why We Exist

- To provide an enriched and accelerated program for academically talented and gifted students.
- To provide a responsive learning environment that includes: access to a variety of materials and activities; support for exploration, choice, student need, and psychological safety for all students. (Based on the research of Dr. Barbara Clark, expert on gifted education).
- To be partners with parents in educating academically talented and gifted children.

ACT IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Each spring, testing is conducted for potential ACT placement. For purposes of ACT identification, the district uses an invitation process to screen potential ACT candidates. Scores from students' winter benchmark tests are used to determine those students who will receive an invitation to participate in the testing process. On occasion, teacher recommendations are also taken into account. Parents of children who do not receive an invitation, but who are interested in having their child participate in testing, may make formal requests to building principals who will help determine if screening would be appropriate.

Students who participate in the screening process for ACT take the *Cognitive Abilities Test* in the spring. Composite scores from the Cognitive Abilities Test are used to determine ACT placements for the following school year.

Move-In Policy for Students New to the District

Students who are new to the district are eligible for testing and potential placement in ACT during the first semester of school. Eligibility will be based on the number of spots available and composite scores from the Cognitive Abilities Test. Students who are new to the district who test and receive a placement in ACT will start the placement at the discretion of the ACT teacher. All requests for testing must be made to building principals. After the first semester, students new to the district will be able to participate in spring screening for potential placement in ACT the following school year.

The logo for the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is displayed in blue. The word "Cog" is written in a cursive, italicized font, while "AT" is in a bold, sans-serif font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the top right of the "T".

CogAT[®]

2023-2024 ACT POLICIES

Attendance Policy: Because we meet only once a week, attendance at ACT is important. Each student who chooses to participate in the program is required to attend his or her ACT class each week unless the absence is excused. Notice of excused absences is preferred, in advance, so work can be adjusted accordingly.

Behavior Policy: During each ACT class session, positive student behavior is expected. During our first class sessions, the students and the ACT teacher will discuss behavior and work expectations to help ensure that each individual is contributing to class in a positive way. If a problem arises with an ACT student's classroom learning or behavior (in either the general setting or the ACT class), the ACT teacher and/or regular classroom teacher will conference with the student. If problems continue, the ACT teacher will connect with parents with the potential of a conference to be scheduled with the parent, ACT teacher, and homeroom teacher to seek a solution. A plan of action will be written to address the situation. Further problems with the student's classroom learning beyond this point may lead to removal from the ACT Program.

Work Policy: While at ACT, students miss regular class time. ACT class time may also conflict with a special or recess. It is important that students stay up-to-date with the concepts and/or assignments of essential homeroom work that are missed while at ACT.

- A student who participates in ACT is responsible for:
 - A. Finding out the assignment of essential work.
 - B. Turning in the assignment when requested.
 - C. Demonstrating knowledge of concepts taught.
- A teacher who has an ACT student in his/her classroom is responsible for:
 - A. Setting up a system for communicating essential work assignments.
 - B. Facilitating student understanding of concepts taught.
 - C. Scheduling special classroom events so as not to conflict with the ACT schedule (as much as possible).
 - D. Notifying the ACT teacher at least 2 weeks in advance of conflicts (i.e. field trips).
- Methods for teachers to implement the work policy:
 - A. Excuse work and/or provide partial assignments whenever possible.
 - B. Assign ahead.
 - C. Concentrate on essential work - less drill and practice.

- D. Confer with ACT student to assess student's understanding of concepts.
- E. Have a systematic and dependable method for keeping track of assignments for ACT students while they are at ACT.
- F. Notify ACT teacher of any work concerns in a timely fashion.

Student Growth Policy: Once students have received a placement in the ACT Program, they do not need to be tested again. Occasionally, however, some students do not maintain the high levels of proficiency expected of ACT students, and they may even fall below the initial program qualification criteria. If, at any point in time, a student is not progressing in his or her growth in the general education classroom, classroom grades, and/or on district assessments, a conference will be scheduled to explore the impact of ACT Program participation and set continuation requirements for the student. Decisions about discontinuing ACT participation will not be made in haste and only with input from families, teachers, principals, and the ACT teacher.

ACT SCHEDULE 2023-2024

Below, please find the class schedule for the ACT school year.

ACT Class Schedule 2023-2024

Monday 9:00 - 10:30	3rd grade -- Bauerwood, El Puente, JCS, JIA, & Pinewood
Monday 10:40 - 12:40*	6th grade -- Bursley, Pinewood, & Rosewood
Monday 1:00 - 3:00	6th grade -- El Puente & Sandy Hill
Tuesday 9:00 - 11:00	4th grade -- Bursley & Rosewood
Tuesday 1:00 - 3:00	6th grade -- Bauerwood, JCS, & JIA
Wednesday 9:00 - 10:30	3rd grade -- Bursley, Rosewood, & Sandy Hill
Wednesday 10:40 - 12:40*	5th grade -- Bauerwood, JCS, & Rosewood
Wednesday 1:00 - 3:00	5th grade -- Bursley & Pinewood
Thursday 9:00 - 11:00	4th grade -- Bauerwood, JCS, Sandy Hill
Thursday 1:00 - 3:00	5th grade -- El Puente & Sandy Hill
Friday 9:00 - 11:00	4th grade -- El Puente, JIA, & Pinewood

3rd Grade students attend ACT for 1.5 hours

4th - 6th Grade students attend ACT for 2 hours

* Students in this session will eat lunch at ACT. Cold lunches should be brought to class OR hot lunch can be ordered in the Pinewood office upon arrival (*Jenison Public students only*) — the cost will be deducted from the student's lunch account (students do not need to bring lunch cards from their home schools).

JIA families are responsible for their own transportation to and from Pinewood for ACT.

ACT

Jenison

ACT CURRICULUM COMPONENTS

THINKING SKILLS

Inferential Reasoning
Inductive Reasoning
Analogy
Cause/Effect
Deductive Reasoning
Categorical Reasoning
Probability
Fluency
Flexibility
Originality
Elaboration

RESEARCH SKILLS

Planning Research
Conducting Research
Product Development
Presentation
Public Speaking
Digital Citizenship
Digital Learning

AFFECTIVE SKILLS

Understanding Self
Understanding Others
Collaboration
Problem Solving
Decision Making
Time Management
Independence
Initiative
Social Responsibility
Goal Setting
Self-Assessment

ACT UNITS OF STUDY 2023-2024

3rd Grade

Wagon Train West: A Journey on the Oregon Trail

Choose your identity. Order and pack your supplies. Make life or death decisions as we reenact what it was like to be a pioneer on the Oregon Trail. This first ACT unit meets writing and social studies standards. It is a decision-making simulation in which students work on their team building and collaboration skills as they try to “survive” the arduous journey west.



Exploring Probability: Building a Funfair

The theory of probability is an important branch of mathematics with many practical applications in the physical, medical, biological, and political sciences. Moreover, probability also comes into play for students in activities such as board games, sports, playground games, and carnival (funfair) challenges. This exciting unit begins with an introduction to basic chip, die, and hand games for students to explore. They will learn about experimental and theoretical probabilities in determining the fairness of the games presented. As a culminating event, students will develop games for our own classroom carnival! They will find the experimental and theoretical probabilities of the games they develop using appropriate probability vocabulary. Step right up to try your luck!

You Are What You Eat: An Introduction to Food Science

This ACT unit is a favorite of many! In this unit, students explore science by analyzing food! We begin the unit with various science labs that focus on the human digestive system by completing a taste lab and learning about how nutrients are absorbed in our bodies. We then learn about the six nutrients our bodies need to survive in preparation for a chemistry lab in which we test food for the presence of nutrients. All the while, students are challenged to evaluate their own food choices to hopefully make better meal decisions!

4th Grade

Designing a Miniature Golf Course: S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math)

Let's apply geometry, math, art, engineering, and more as we build our very own ACT miniature golf course! This fourth grade favorite is pure delight as the students are engaged in an interdisciplinary project in which they integrate content from many different fields to create a working golf course. Throughout the unit, students will be generating hypotheses, validating them through mathematical proofs, and integrating more complex content from different domains. Students thoroughly enjoy the hands-on component and creativity they get to use as they make their golf course dreams come to life!



Owl Pellet Ecology

"Owl Pellets, owl pellets, owl pellets a ball of bones and fur and other things!" Fourth grade students will be singing this catchy tune as we turn our focus to studying winter ecology, birds of prey, and as we complete a fun dissection of owl pellets! Throughout this mini-unit, the students not only learn about birds of prey and the unique digestive tracts of owls, we also focus on how animals need to adapt to live during the winter months. Students learn about food webs/chains, trophic levels, taxonomic structure, and they recreate the skeleton of the animal their owl last gobbled down. A field trip to the Outdoor Discovery Center will allow students to view birds-of-prey up close while also exploring the beauty of nature and wildlife in the winter!



Up, Up, and Away: The Study of Aviation and Flight

This unit introduces students to the history and basic physics of flight! During our study, students investigate important aviation pioneers and use their research skills to

complete a mini-biography. We then learn about beginning flight principles by building models, such as kites, hot-air balloons, and more! This unit culminates with a field trip to the Air Zoo, which is, by far, a favorite of students and families alike!

5th Grade

Surfing with Sharks

We will kick off our year with this exciting unit! Students in fifth grade look forward to the *Surfing with Sharks* unit each year because they get to dissect a spiny dogfish shark! Leading up to this fantastic experience (which is often not completed until high school or beyond!), the students research different species of sharks, learn about the physical and behavioral characteristics of sharks, and explore the external and internal anatomy of the spiny dogfish shark, all while using the appropriate anatomical terms. In the culminating project for this unit, students will research a shark species of their choice – learning important research skills along the way – and will display this knowledge on a website they create. They will also explore using JavaScript to code a shark image/animation! Emphasis will be placed on the ability to use, comprehend, manage, and analyze technology in a safe, effective, and responsible manner. This will also include using technology to evaluate, create, and integrate information.



Mystery Disease: Diagnosis of Symptoms and Experiences

This exciting simulation will find the students in “medical school” as they learn about various body systems. As “medical residents,” students will research and complete hands-on activities to expand their knowledge of the intricacies of the human body in preparation to receive their own “patients.” After students have met with their patients and completed an intake and “physical exam,” they will work collaboratively to come up with a differential diagnosis and treatment plan. The unit includes the following:

- Exploration of the functions and dysfunction of human body systems
- Analysis and critical thinking
- Collaborative group work
- Presentation of diagnoses and recommendations to an audience as part of a “Medical Review Board”

Dream Big: Exploring Engineering & Architecture

This unit will have the students simulating what it is like to be an engineer who designs bridges! Key components of this unit will have the students:

- Establish a company to research, design, and build a toothpick bridge that meets building criteria and that we test on *Bridge Day!*
- Earn money for their company by completing various business “earnings projects.”

- Venture out on a field trip to the IMAX to view the movie Dream Big while also touring a few iconic bridges and viewing architecture in downtown Grand Rapids.
- Participate in hands-on exploration through fun stations: *Keva Planks, Zometool, K'Nex, Tinkercad*, and more!

6th Grade

Limnology — The Study of Fresh Water

ACT sixth graders have been studying the quality of fresh water for years in this ACT legacy unit. We will start our year doing the same! During this unit, the students are engaged in the following:

- Comparative water quality study of two fresh water systems
- Fresh water ecosystem and invasive species research, which addresses science and language arts standards
- Research and problem solving to create a presentation to address a problematic fresh water scenario
- Water quality testing on Lake Michigan and Spring Lake aboard the Grand Valley State University research vessel the *DJ Angus*



Forensic Science Sleuths

This intriguing unit will turn the ACT sixth graders into forensic scientists as we learn all about this exciting career. Students will get experience with a wide range of scientific labs, such as fingerprinting, footwear impressions, handwriting analysis, blood typing, DNA, and more. Along the way, students will also develop their problem solving skills through frequent use of logic puzzles and stories. In the end, we will combine our skills in a real-life simulation that reinforces the following learning targets:

- Research different forensic careers
- Collect and analyze crime scene evidence
- Learn the skills needed to become a crime scene investigator
- Solve mysteries using forensic science skills



Shark Tank: Creative Processes & Entrepreneurship

After learning creative thinking strategies and the invention process through the lens of famous inventions and inventors, we will put them into practice through hands-on lab work with Rube Goldberg machines, Lego contraptions, and even creating their own “Junk Inventions.” At the same time, students will work together in small self-selected groups as businesses. Over the course of several weeks, they will have opportunities to put

their collaborative and creative skills to use and earn "money" which can be spent at an end-of-unit Auction.

JPS Agreement for Acceptable Use of Technology

While at ACT, students will have the opportunity to use Chromebooks for classwork and collaboration. It is imperative that students use these devices appropriately. Dr. Clark does utilize Securly to monitor student screens during instructional and independent/group work times, and reports can be curated to communicate potential technology misuse. Thank you for reviewing the following JPS Agreement for Acceptable Use of Technology with your child:

- I will only use the computers, electronic devices, and Internet for school work.
- I will only use the computers, electronic devices, and Internet when my teacher or other school employee tells me that I am allowed to use the computers, electronic devices, and Internet.
- I will not use the Internet to try to look at websites that I know are for adults only or that I know I shouldn't access.
- If I accidentally access a website that I know I shouldn't look at, I will tell my teacher or other school employee right away.
- If someone sends me something on the Internet that I know is inappropriate, I will tell my teacher or other school employee right away.
- I will not use the computers, electronic devices, or Internet to bully or harm any other person.
- If someone else uses the computers, electronic devices, or Internet to bully or harm me, I will tell my teacher or other school employee right away.
- I will not damage the computers, electronic devices, or cause problems with the computers, electronic devices, or Internet on purpose.
- I will not use the computers, electronic devices, or Internet to cheat on my schoolwork.
- I will not copy anything that I see on the computers or Internet and pretend that it is my own work.
- I will keep my password secret from all other students.
- I understand that the school can see everything that I do on the computers, electronic devices, and Internet.
- I understand that the school has filters on the computers, electronic devices, and Internet, which means I might not be able to see some information. I will not try to interfere with those filters.
- I will follow all of these rules. I will also follow any directions that my teacher or other school employee gives me about my use of the computers, electronic devices, or the Internet.

Bus Rider Rules and Expectations

ACT is a privilege, and it is important that students show exemplary behavior on bus rides to and from classes at Pinewood. Please review the following bus rider rules and expectations for Jenison Public Schools.



BUS RIDER RULES & EXPECTATIONS

Jenison Public Schools Transportation Services

Transportation@jpsonline.org

(616) 457-3740

Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right. No law mandates transportation to be provided for regular education students. It is a service that Jenison Public Schools gladly provides to enhance convenience of education for students and parents. What we ask in return is that students conduct themselves in a manner which follows our bus rider rules and expectations; supporting the safety and due respect of others.

1. Expected Behaviors at Bus Stops:

- a. Parents/guardians are responsible for the student's safety to and from the bus stop. In the event that bus service is delayed, parents/guardians should be prepared to assume responsibility for the student's welfare until the bus arrives.
- b. Students need to arrive at their bus stop at least 5-10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick up times. If the student is not out and visible at the stop on time, the bus driver will continue on the route. The bus driver will not return for a student who is not at the bus stop on time. The parent/guardian is responsible for providing alternative transportation in these cases.
- c. As students wait for the bus – they must respect others property. They are not to walk or cut through yards and not be near the house where the stop is located. If students create issues at the bus stop location – Transportation Services has the right to remove them from that bus stop.
- d. Students are not to approach the bus until it has come to a complete stop and the driver signals them to board the bus. Students must stay out of the school bus "Danger Zone". The "Danger Zone" is the area 10 feet around ALL sides of the bus.
- e. If a student needs to cross the street to get picked up or dropped off, obey the driver's paddy and cross 10 feet in front of the bus. Always cross in front of the bus, NEVER behind the bus.
- f. If a student drops something when exiting the bus, NEVER go back near the bus to get it. Tell the bus driver and wait until they signal that all is safe.

2. Expected Bus Behaviors:

- a. Students must remain seated and out of the aisle at ALL times
- b. Students are to use inside voices on the bus
- c. Students need to listen and respect the instructions of the bus driver
- d. Students are to treat all other students on the bus with respect
- e. Students are to keep ahold of their personal property while on the bus
- f. Students are to keep head and arms in the bus at all time
- g. The bus driver can assign seats at any time as they deem necessary

3. Prohibited Bus Behaviors:

- a. Bullying, profanity, loud noises/conversations and verbal abuse to anyone on the bus
- b. Not staying seated, changing seats while bus is moving and being out in the aisle
- c. Disturbing and/or touching other students/passengers
- d. Littering on the bus
- e. Using emergency door when there is no emergency
- f. Eating and/or drinking on the bus. Parents/guardians of students that have medical conditions that require him/her to eat during the bus ride must contact the Transportation department
- g. Damaging the bus in anyway (including puncturing/tearing/writing on the seats) – parents/guardians will be monetarily responsible for any damage done to a bus
- h. Throwing objects inside and/or outside the bus
- i. Hanging body parts out the bus windows (arms, head, etc.)
- j. Physical aggressiveness and property destruction at bus stops (parents/guardians will be monetarily responsible for any damage done to the bus stop property)
- k. Fighting/pushing/tripping at bus stops or on bus

4. Prohibited Items (items that cannot be brought onto a bus):

- a. Objects which obstruct the aisle, exits, or may cause a safety concerns to other students
 - i. Skateboards, sleds, hockey sticks, bats
- b. Possession of any of these items by a student is cause for immediate removal from the bus:
 - i. Tobacco, drugs, vaping or alcohol products
 - ii. Weapons or explosive articles, including but not limited to chains, knives, razor blades, flammable materials, guns or other threatening items
- c. Glass containers or other glass items
- d. Live animals with the exception of canine assistants for the impaired
- e. The bus driver has the right to tell a student that they can no longer bring an item(s) on the bus if the item(s) becomes a distraction or possible danger to others.

5. No Electronics/Toys Rule:

All electronics and toys are to stay within the student's backpack during the bus ride (elementary buses only). The bus driver has the right to confiscate these items to ensure safety of the riders. The item(s) confiscated will be returned to the student when he/she departs the bus.

6. Personal Property Responsibility:

The student is responsible for his/her own personal property. Personal property found on the bus will normally be placed in a "lost and found" within the bus. Some items such as wallets, cell phones, etc. will be brought into the Transportation office. The bus driver is not responsible for items left on the bus.

7. Bus Passes:

Students cannot a ride bus that they are not assigned to. Bus passes are not allowed. Riding the bus to another person's home is only permitted in emergency cases. In an emergency, the parent/guardian must contact Transportation Services explaining the emergency. Transportation Services has the discretion to approve or disapprove the request.

8. Bus Discipline:

Students are expected to observe and follow all bus rider rules and expectations. Any violation may result in a bus discipline notice being sent to the student's parent/guardian and school. Failure to abide by the bus rider rules and expectations may result in a busing suspension and/or expulsion from the bus. The violation of the rules, the number of violations for the student and the gravity of the offense will determine the length of suspension. Suspension of riding privileges does not mean a suspension from school. Parents/guardians will be responsible for transportation to and from school during the duration of the busing suspension.

The Transportation Director and/or the school principal have the discretion to revoke busing privileges if a student is chronically disobeying the bus rules and/or creating an unsafe bus ride for themselves and/or other students.