

FERN HILL ELEMENTARY

**Family Handbook
2020-2021**



**915 Lincoln Avenue
West Chester, PA 19380**

Dr. Rebecca Eberly, Principal

Welcome from the Principal

Dear Families,

Welcome to Fern Hill Elementary School. We have a very dedicated staff and we look forward to collaborating with you to help your children be happy, excited, and successful learners. Together, we can create a learning community where children, teachers and parents contribute equally to the success of the school. Our partnership will ensure that all children achieve their personal best.

Please take a moment to review your handbook. This is a brief overview of information about our school. Please also be sure to check email often and visit our school website and twitter page @FernHillES.

I look forward to another wonderful school year working together. As you know, my door is always open and I encourage you to call, e-mail or just stop in.

Thank you,

Dr. Rebecca Eberly, Principal

WEST CHESTER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

MISSION STATEMENT

**To educate and inspire our students to
achieve their personal best.**

BELIEFS

We believe that:

- Each person has intrinsic worth.
- All people can learn and succeed, but in different ways and at different rates.
- Education is the shared responsibility of parents, educators and community; learning is the responsibility of the individual.
- Individuals are responsible for their own actions.
- Learning is a life-long growth and change process.
- A positive sense of self promotes a willingness to challenge oneself and to exert efforts toward success.
- Achieving one's personal best is directly related to one's effort.
- High quality education is an essential component in preserving the principles of American democracy
- Results are directly related to expectations
- Ethical behavior is essential for society to flourish
- Diversity of culture and beliefs enriches and strengthens our community
- Family environment has a crucial impact on the growth and development of every child

If your family is experiencing a loss of housing, please contact your school caseworker or the district's Homeless Liaison to find out if you qualify for help. We will assess your eligibility for services and provide appropriate referrals to community resources.

teacher assistance, contact volunteers for events, and implement the emergency phone chain for school closings, etc. Other committees include: philanthropy, school fair, yearbook, spirit wear, and many more. Most committees are comprised of at least 2 co-chairs and several volunteers.

Volunteers are the backbone of our PTO. Fern Hill has a fantastic group of parents to help at events scheduled throughout the year, as well as in the classrooms. The PTO sponsors many activities such as: the fall festival, the December Holiday Gift Shoppe, the school fair in the spring, and the yearly school directory. The volunteers also work along with teachers on events such as: Pennsylvania Day for 4th grade, and the Technology Fair.

One of the primary objectives of the PTO is to raise funds to support our school. The monies are used for building improvements, equipment, and events. Fundraiser events include the Fall Fitness Fund Raiser, Jump Rope for Heart, Unite for her, the Book Fair, and the Spring Fair. In past years, the PTO raised funds for: new dry erase boards, classroom ceiling fans, playground and gym equipment, picnic tables, sound systems, computer headphones, and monies for each classroom teacher. The PTO has contributed money to school assemblies, CCRC teacher training, and books for the library, daily planners and folders for the students, and field trips.

Homeless Students Resources

Fern Hill Elementary School

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to educate and inspire students to achieve their personal best.

VISION STATEMENT

We believe that all students can learn at high levels when given the support, the means, and the opportunity.

SHARED COMMITMENTS

We commit to providing a safe, engaging, and supportive community where we value respect, communication, and collaboration.

Fern Hill Elementary is part of the West Chester Area School District (WCASD). The WCASD serves a 75-square-mile area in central Chester County including West Chester borough, East Bradford, East Goshen, West Goshen, West Whiteland, Westtown Thornbury and Thornbury Township. The WCASD serves more than 12,000 students in 10 elementary schools (K-5), three middle schools (6-8), and three high schools (9-12). The District operates under the oversight of an elected school board and is led by Superintendent, Dr. Jim Scalon. The WCASD has a professional staff of over 900 and a budget of more than \$150 million. The WCASD web site has abundant information about the District and ongoing operations. The website address is: **www.wcasd.net**.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Information

School Hours	9
School Calls.....	9
School Visitation Sign-In	9
Emergency School Closing.....	10
Early Dismissals.....	10
General Bus Rules.....	11
Permission Notes	11
Fern Hill Communication Folder.....	12
Toys and Electronic Games.....	12
Dress Code.....	12
Homework	12
Lost and Found	13
Forgotten Items	13
Safe Arrival.....	13
Absences.....	14
Cafeteria	15
Assemblies.....	16
Report Cards.....	16
Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)	17
Integrated Pest Management.....	17

Hill's web site can be accessed directly at <http://schools.wcasd.net/FernHill/>. Fern Hill's web page contains specific school information, such as: school calendar, lunch menus, school activities, library events, links, policies and classroom information by grade and teacher.

Twitter: FernHillES (handle name)

Fern Hill uses Twitter to communicate and share daily happenings with our school community. Be sure to follow us!

PTO

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Fern Hill PTO is made up of volunteers who work in conjunction with the principal and teachers to help support the student body and the infrastructure of the school. There is a PTO executive board, which consists of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. A board appointment is for two years. There are numerous PTO committees with chair and co-chair positions. These positions may be held for a maximum three-year term.

Annual PTO membership dues are paid per family. The funds are directed to the enrichment of the school and the benefit of the children. Paying dues entitles members to a school directory and to vote at general meetings on board issues and spending. PTO meetings will be communicated throughout the year.

One important PTO committee is Homeroom Parents. Each classroom has 5 or 6 parents who are asked to organize class parties, participate in class activities with

has his or her own iPad. These iPads are used to bring technology right to the classroom where curriculum integration takes place. In addition to the iPads, we have iMac computers in every classroom to be used for independent research and information acquisition. Video conferencing equipment and digital video cameras are also used throughout the school year.

Through the use of technology, Fern Hill students are involved in individual and group research, multimedia presentations, telecommunications, and experimentation activities that are aligned with state and national education standards.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

The West Chester Area School District strongly believes in the educational value of the Internet and recognizes its potential to support and enrich the curriculum and the student learning process. Use of the Internet in the classroom and Library is supervised by teachers and is used only for activities related to the curriculum. All students and their parents are expected to read the WCASD Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). You have the option to not have your child utilize the internet for instructional purposes. A form will accompany the AUP policy. If you do not consent for your child to utilize Internet resources for curriculum purposes and the acceptance of student responsibility for Internet use, please sign and return the form. Students will be trained in the appropriate and safe use of Internet resources. Records are maintained at the District Technology Office and passwords are then assigned to the students.

Web Site

The West Chester Area School District web site address is <http://www.wcasd.net/>. School District information and all staff and faculty email addresses can be found at this site, as well as links to the various elementary, middle and high school web pages. Fern

Educational Services

School Guidance..... 19
 Learning Support 19
 Reading - Title I..... 20
 English as a Second Language(ESL) 20
 Speech Therapy..... 21
 Occupational and Physical Therapy (OT AND PT)..... 21
 Standardized Testing..... 22
 Gifted Screening 22

Curriculum

West Chester Area School District 23
 Kindergarten –2 Program 23
 Math.....24
 Reading..... 24
 Writing24
 Music.....25
 Art 25
 Art Goes to School..... 26
 Library..... 26
 Physical Education..... 26
 Health..... 27
 CCRC and Conflict Managers..... 28

Extracurricular Activities

Safeties	29
After School Sports	29
Instrumental Music Program	29
Chorus	30

General Health Guidelines

General Information.....	31
Medications	31
Food Allergies.....	32
Immunizations	32

Technology

Computers.....	33
Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).....	34
Fern Hill Web Site Information.....	34

Additional Information

PTO.....	35
Homeless Student Resources.....	36

Hepatitis B — 3 doses
Measles — 2 doses
Mumps — 2 doses
Rubella — 2 doses
Polio — 3 doses
Varicella (Chicken pox) — 1 dose required for new school enterers.

The Public Health Immunization Clinic will give any required immunizations free of charge. The hours at the Government Services Building are Tuesday and Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Wednesday, 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

Technology

Computers

Technology integration has revolutionized the way teachers instruct and the way students learn. Skillful use of technology supports the development of process skills such as flexibility, adaptability, critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration which are essential to success in our rapidly changing information age. The students and faculty at Fern Hill Elementary School are able to access information, manipulate data, synthesize concepts and creatively express ideas using video, text, and audio media.

In order to provide for this technology integration, Fern Hill Elementary uses various types of technology. Each student

Medications

The school nurse must administer all medications. When sending prescription medications in to school, they must be accompanied by a doctor's and parent note and must be in the correct labeled pharmacy bottle. When sending in over the counter medications, please send in a parent note signed and dated explaining the reason for the medication. These over the counter medications must be in the original bottles with your child's name on the bottle. These steps will ensure the best possible care for your children.

Food Allergies

Teachers are made aware of all student allergies at the beginning of the school year and updated when necessary. Teachers and homeroom parents must check with the school nurse regarding any food products they are planning to serve. Some allergenic products to be avoided include:

All nut products, including cooking oils containing peanut oil

Latex products, especially latex balloons

Milk, eggs, shellfish and food coloring (especially red and yellow)

Immunizations

The State Health Department works hand-in-hand with the WCASD to ensure students are properly immunized. Required doses for school entry are:

Diphtheria — 4 doses, last after the age of 4

Pertussis — 4 doses, last after the age of 4

Tetanus — 4 doses, last after the age of 4

General Information

School Hours

The elementary school day begins at 9:10 AM and ends at 3:40 PM. All drop-offs and pick-ups happen at parent pick-up/drop-off line, near library. Children who arrive after 8:55am must come in the front door and bring a late note to the office. Children who come in without a note will be considered **unexcused tardy.**

School Calls

You are invited to call the school office (484-266-1600) regarding any matter. **However, because arrival and dismissal times are very busy, please avoid calling at these times unless it is an emergency.** Your cooperation is very much appreciated. You may also call the nurse (484-266-1606) and guidance counselor (484-266-1611) directly.

School Visitation Sign-In

Parents are always welcome to visit the school. District policy requires that all visitors must report directly to the school office when entering the building. All visitors will be asked while outside the purpose of their visit for the day for safety purposes. **Raptor:** All visitors need to report to the office to have their license scanned by the Raptor System. Parents must

make an appointment to see a teacher. **Volunteer Clearances:** Please be sure to submit your volunteer clearances to the office in order for you to be able to volunteer.

Impromptu visits to the classrooms are not permitted for security reasons and because unnecessary interruptions are a disturbance in the class. Teachers will be happy to schedule a conference at an appropriate time. Please send a note with your request or e-mail your child's teacher.

Emergency School Closings

Parents and students are asked not to call the schools or administrative offices for information on school closings for inclement weather or other emergencies. The district typically communicates via email, phone, and social media. Additionally, information is available through the following sources:

District telephone: (484) 266-1000 (recorded message)

Web Page: www.cancellations.com (use 19380 as the ZIP code). This Internet address may also be accessed through the district's web page at www.wcasd.k12.pa.us.

Radio Stations:

WCOJ (1420) WILM (1450)

WDEL (1150)

Television Stations:

Fox TV (Channel 29) CBS/KYW (Channel 3)

ABC (Channel 6) NBC (Channel 10)

District number: 851

Early Dismissals

At the indicated grade level, the following chorus programs are offered to support and expand classroom music experiences.

Chorus: Chorus Instruction (open to all fourth and fifth grade students) — rehearsals are held once a week during recess. The fourth and fifth grade chorus performs at the Winter Concert).

Honors Chorus: A district-wide Honors Chorus is offered to fifth graders. Membership is chosen by audition for students who have shown exceptional interest and vocal ability.

Health Guidelines

General Information

Children should attend school only when they are well enough to participate in all regular classes and recesses. Exceptions include (but are not limited to) broken bones, past surgery, etc. Students should be well for 24 hours after fever, vomiting and diarrhea before returning to school. Students should also remain home for 24 hours after being placed on antibiotics for any condition.

By district policy, the school nurse is not permitted to diagnose or treat illness and injuries occurring at home. Do not send your child to school expecting this to be done.

Please advise the nurse of newly diagnosed, chronic or recurring health problems and medications given at home on a regular basis.

By district policy, students are not permitted to keep or carry medication of any type or to self-administer medications during school hours. All medications are to be secured and administered in the Health room.

(flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone horn, and percussion) are taught in fourth and fifth grades only. This is a program the WCASD offers in addition to the general/vocal music class.

All students observe an instrument demonstration early in the school year and, if interested in learning one, must sign up by the end of September to be included in the program. Students have a half-hour group lesson per week at no charge, which occurs during the regular school day. However, if students are not performing to classroom expectations and the concern appears to be related to lesson time absences, the instrumental music teacher will attempt to arrange another lesson time with the subject teacher. To monitor student progress, reports will be given to parents in January and June.

The student is responsible for instrument rental and purchase of a lesson book, both of which are available for reasonable fees at area music stores. Students who have been playing one or more years can participate in the Advanced Band or Orchestra, which rehearses before school for 45 minutes once per week (transportation must be provided by parent/guardian). These groups perform in the Winter and Spring Concerts. Beginning string players will have the opportunity to perform in January for the primary grades, and all beginners in Band and Orchestra play in the annual Spring Concert with the advanced groups. A district-wide Honors Orchestra and Honors Band are offered (membership chosen by audition) to fourth and fifth graders who have shown exceptional progress.

Fern Hill has a proud history of fine music performing groups, and we encourage you and your child to take advantage of this excellent program.

Chorus

Early dismissals are to be kept at a minimum due to instructional times allotted for individual subjects for the school year. Therefore, it will be necessary to have these types of dismissals cleared by the office via a note to the teacher. When coming for your children please come to the office, sign your child out, and we will call the student upon your arrival. Such dismissals generally may only be for medical appointments or other emergencies and must have the principal's approval. In the event of an unplanned change in dismissal schedule, you may call the office during the school day. Please keep phone notification to a minimum. Children feel more secure when they know their dismissal plans in the morning and our phone lines remain open if you can plan ahead and send in a note.

General Bus Rules

The safety of our children using school bus transportation is of great importance. Therefore, no student can be permitted to conduct himself/herself in such a manner that could endanger his/her safety or that of others. Our bus drivers have been trained to handle the buses in a safe manner. Reports from the drivers concerning a student's misconduct will be brought to the principal's attention. Serious or continuous misbehavior could lead to suspension of bus privileges. Students will not be permitted to change buses except for an emergency and then only with approval from the principal. Changing buses to visit another student is not permitted by transportation guidelines.

Permission Notes

When your child brings a friend home from school or goes home from school with a friend, parents of both children must send a dated note stating permission. The note must also state

who will be picking up the children that day from school.

Communication Folders

The primary source of communication is the blue Fern Hill Bobcat communication/homework folder. Each student will receive a communications folder at the beginning of the year. The student is asked to bring the filled folder home each day. The folder should be emptied and reviewed by the parent or guardian and then returned empty to school the next school day.

Toys and Electronic Games

Toys, electronic games, radios, trading cards and so on should not be brought to school unless at the teacher's request for a special project or special day. These are distracting to the education process and are easily damaged or lost.

Dress Code

Please use good judgment when dressing your children. Students go out for recess daily, unless it is raining or too cold, so a jacket or sweater is needed for the chillier days. Sneakers and socks are a must on physical education day. Girls should not wear spaghetti strap tops or tops that are too brief. Shorts and skirts should be a reasonable length. Also, tee shirts with bad language or tasteless sayings are not appropriate.

Homework

Homework is an extension of the learning process requiring a student's time beyond the school day. The district has homework guidelines. We strive for homework to be meaningful for each child.

If you would like homework when a child is absent for one or two

younger students can trust.

The Conflict Managers volunteer their time to help younger students talk through problems they are having during recess. The blue caps worn by Conflict Managers serve as a visual cue for students. Students are reminded of the skills necessary for successful conflict resolution, more specifically, cooperation and communication. Utilizing these skills will allow them to better communicate thus enabling them to better resolve their conflicts.

Extracurricular Activities

Safeties

Open to fifth graders at the beginning of the school year, the safety job affords students the opportunity to help their school run smoothly. It also gives students a chance to demonstrate responsibility. Students report to their posts at 8:55 AM and 3:40 PM each day.

After School Sports

Open to fourth and fifth graders at various times during the school year, after school sports gives students the chance to practice what they have learned in physical education in a competitive setting. Different grades meet on different days each month, and schedules are changed monthly to accommodate other schedules.

Instrumental Music Program

If your child has ever expressed an interest in playing a band or string instrument, Fern Hill can help make it happen!

Instruction is offered on string instruments (violin, viola, cello, doublebass) in third, fourth and fifth grades. Band instruments

is also available from the district's health office or the school nurse, Ms. Kim Onderdonk.

CCRC and Conflict Managers

Children's Creative Response to Conflict, or CCRC as it is more commonly known, is a program with a broad base of activities designed to teach the children creative alternatives to violence. As our world around us continues to grow and change, there is an ever-increasing need to help our children understand that there are many ways to solve a conflict. This program has been designed for integration into the regular curriculum. Through various team-building activities, children are asked to hone their communication and problem-solving skills, which will further enable them to take responsibility for and solve their own conflicts in a peaceful manner.

Students at Fern Hill participate in teachable moments/lessons in the classroom, which incorporates a theme of communication, cooperation, self-esteem, or problem solving. Once the theme has been introduced, it is emphasized throughout the remainder of the week. Our staff believes that part of our mission as educators is to help shape the lives of children to become successful, life-long learners. To that end, the environment in which our children learn must be a safe one. CCRC is the avenue by which children learn alternatives to solving conflicts thus creating a safe learning environment. Having experienced the CCRC training program, children in fourth and fifth grade, nominated by their classmates, are invited to go through the process of becoming Conflict Managers. In a two-day workshop, the students develop skills, which enable them to be a good listener, a fair person, a good team worker, a helper and a dependable person that the

days, the teacher will decide on the make-up of homework. One day's notice will be required when requesting homework for extended absences due to illness, or for absences due to family trips. Homework requests must be called in to the office by 9:00 AM to allow teachers time to gather materials and prepare the assignments. Homework may be picked up at the school office after 3:30 PM.

Lost and Found

To keep lost and found articles to a minimum, please mark your child's name on his/her belongings. Anything not claimed will go to an organization for the needy periodically throughout the year. If an item has been lost, please check the "lost and found" box/table in the cafeteria.

Forgotten Items

Classes will not be interrupted with forgotten lunches, homework, musical instruments, etc. If a lunch is forgotten, children may charge lunch in the cafeteria or the lunch may be brought to school and dropped off at the office (be sure child's name and grade are on the lunch). All forgotten items will be delivered to your child, in his or her classroom, in a timely manner.

Safe Arrival

Safe Arrival is an absentee program, designed to insure your child arrives to school safely. If your child is absent or will arrive at school later than 9:00AM, **call the SAFE ARRIVAL HOTLINE at 484-266-1610** between 5:00 PM (the previous evening) and 8:40 AM (the day of absence). Leave a message indicating your child's name, grade, teacher and date of absence. If you do not report your child's absence, the office assistant will contact you to verify his or her absence.

Absence

When children are absent from school, he/she must bring in a signed WCASD excuse form when they return or a signed note. These forms are included in the first day packet; additional forms are available from the teacher or the office. This form is to be signed by the parent and returned to the child's teacher immediately. **If the teacher does not receive the form or note within three (3) school days, the absence will be considered unlawful.** We must adhere to the state guidelines, so your cooperation will be greatly appreciated. The principal must approve absences for a family vacation.

State law establishes conditions under which children may be excused from attendance at school. In keeping with these statutes and recommendations, pupils of the WCASD may be excused from school attendance for the following reasons:

- sickness
- quarantine
- death in the immediate family
- observation of a major religious holiday
- for other exceptional reasons with prior approval of the administration/principal

If a child is late for school, he/she will need to report to the office for a late slip to enter the classroom. If a child arrives after 12 noon, it is considered a half day absence and an excuse form is required. If the nurse sends a child home, it is considered 1/2-day

Physical Education

Physical Education is once for 50 minutes during the four day cycle. Children are required to wear tennis shoes (sneakers) during physical education classes and should dress properly for physical activities both indoors and outdoors.

Our Physical Education program gives students the opportunity to learn about and take part in a variety of activities, such as rhythmic, natural play, individual, team, recreational and physical fitness.

At the K-2 level, the areas of emphasis are movement experiences, low organized games, manipulative skills, self-testing activities and rhythmic activities. At the 3-5 level, the areas of emphasis are a continuation of primary activities, fitness activities, specialized skills and modified games in a variety of sport activities and apparatus.

Fourth and fifth grades participate in a district-wide track meet, which coincides with our physical fitness unit.

To be excused from physical education class, students must have a note from a parent/guardian and/or a doctor noting their physical limitations. The note should be presented to the school nurse.

Health

In fifth grade, maturation is part of the health curriculum. This topic is taught by the classroom teachers and focuses on puberty and adolescent changes. There is a brief introduction to hormones and how these hormones are responsible for changes in the male and female bodies. Male and female reproductive anatomy is discussed. A copy of this curriculum

minutes. The program is set up to inspire students to create, listen, talk and learn about art. Students are introduced to basic art concepts and a variety of media. The curriculum interweaves art appreciation with art from other cultures, and integrates other disciplines.

Art Goes to School

Every year, trained volunteers from the *Art Goes To School* Program spend one week in each of the ten elementary schools in the West Chester Area School District. Art Goes To School is a nonprofit organization that uses volunteers to teach art appreciation to elementary students.

Library

Students in all grades will have library class once a cycle for 50 minutes. The Linda S. Seybold Library plays a vital role in the life of each student and teacher at Fern Hill. The library is open daily to provide books and other resources for research, recreational reading and curriculum support. There are certain times to be shared at the start of the year by the librarian where students can exchange library books. Teachers cooperate with the librarian in planning lessons that coordinate with classroom themes. Overdue notices are issued monthly as a reminder to return materials. There are no overdue fines; however, if an item is lost or damaged, a replacement price will be charged. A student's report card will not be issued at the end of the year until all library obligations have been met.

The library program runs smoothly thanks to the help of our parent library volunteers. The library also benefits from books given as gifts through the Share-A-Book program. Consult with the librarian about how to donate a book to the library in honor of your child or your child's teacher.

absence depending on when the child leaves school and an excuse form is not required.

Cafeteria

Students may bring a lunch to school or may purchase the lunch meal at the school cafeteria. Breakfast and lunch are offered for purchase daily. The prices for breakfast and lunch are set in the beginning of each school year. A lunch menu is posted and can be found online. Milk, ice cream and snacks may also be purchased a la carte. A pre-pay cafeteria system (PayForIt) allows parents to put money into their child's account for meals and snacks so that cash is not necessary. Children can also bring money to purchase breakfast or lunch. Checks, money orders or cash can be placed in the child's account at the school cafeteria, or the account can be prepaid via the WCASD web site using a debit or credit card. Make checks payable to: **WCASD Cafeteria Fund**. We strongly encourage you to participate with the PayForIt program. It certainly seems to make paying for breakfast and lunch a smooth process. Students use their student id number for the cafeteria. This number identifies the student for the cashier. The student's name and picture are used for verification of the correct pin number and account. The WCASD participates in the National School Lunch/Breakfast Program. Children may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals based on a family's income. An application needs to be completed yearly and received by the school caseworker. The caseworker reviews the application and notifies the family of their eligibility. All applications are confidential. Applications for the *National School Lunch/Breakfast Program* are sent home in the beginning of the school year or can be requested from the school caseworker or the office. Check the Fern Hill web site or call the school office to contact the Fern Hill caseworker.

Assemblies

Assemblies provide students of Fern Hill a window to the outside world. Thanks to funding from the PTO, students are able to participate in a wide range of programs performed by professionals. About six times a year assemblies covering topics such as science, music, art, nature, theatre plus many others are brought to the school. Most performances intertwine messages of environmental and social responsibility, respect for self and peers plus other valuable lessons creating a multi-faceted approach to learning.

Report Cards

In grades K-2, students are assessed according to their current developmental levels on a standards-based system. Report cards are issued each trimester. Beginning in grade 3, students receive letter grades in the major curricular areas according to the WCASD grading scale:

A+ = 97-100	C+ = 77-79
A = 93-96	C = 73-76
A- = 90-92	C- = 70-72
B+ = 87-89	E = 60-69
B = 83-86	F = below 60

While report cards are an indication of the progress and achievement of individual students, regular communication with the classroom teacher is recommended.

students. The domains are as follows: focus, content, organization, style and conventions. Focus: an awareness of topic and concept of point; content: ideas developed through facts, examples, details, anecdotes, opinions, reasons and/or explanations; organization: order of ideas and sense of overall structure; style: choice, use, and arrangement of words and sentence structure; conventions: grammar, mechanics, spelling, sentence formation, and concepts of print. A four-point scale is used to determine a student's writing proficiency based on the ability shown in each of the domains. This allows teachers to assess an individual student's strengths and needs. The scale is designed as a rubric and does not calculate to grade levels or percentages, eg, level 2 does not mean grade 2, level 2 does not mean 50%.

District writing assessments are given at each grade level throughout the year. Each student develops a writing portfolio during each year at Fern Hill. Two pieces of writing are saved and passed on to the next grade. By the end of grade 5, each student has a portfolio showing his/her development as a writer.

Music

All students in grades K-5 have a 50 minute general music class per cycle. With instruction through Music in Education (MIE) technology, students participate in interdisciplinary activities, gain insight into America's multicultural heritage, increase feelings of self-esteem, work in small and large cooperative learning groups, develop listening skills, and engage in singing and playing a wide variety of songs using developing musical skills.

Art

Students in all grades will have art class once a cycle for 50

discuss concerns, plan curriculum and share ideas for professional growth.

Math

Our students receive robust math instruction based on the PA common core standards. *Math in Focus* promotes an emphasis on metacognition, hands-on problem solving, and a powerful concrete– pictorial—abstract approach which allows students to gain deeper conceptual understanding through hands on manipulatives, diagrams and models and abstract symbols. Through a math workshop approach students receive small group differentiated instruction to meet their needs.

Reading

Fern Hill's reading department has three reading specialists. All three reading specialist collaborate to plan and teach a differentiated remedial reading program for all students who require additional support. All three reading specialists coordinate and supervise the reading and language arts program for grades K-5. These specialists may provide supplementary instruction in reading and writing within the classroom or in a small group environment. The staff of the reading department is responsible for monitoring the progress of every Fern Hill student

Writing

The West Chester Area School District has embraced a writer's workshop model to explore writing in all grades. We also use a domain rubric to determine a writing level for

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)

West Chester Area School District has engaged Eagle Industrial Hygiene Association to fulfill the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40 CFR Part 763, Subpart E. This law requires that each Local Education Authority (LEA) engage EPA accredited individuals to initially inspect and subsequently re-inspect every three years all students and staff accessed areas for the presence of both friable and non-friable asbestos containing materials (ACM) and to develop an Asbestos Management Plan from the information developed from the building inspections. All accessible areas of the facility were inspected for asbestos-containing materials.

The Management Plan provides a description of the amount, type, location and condition of all ACM found in these areas. The Plan also contains a detailed schedule of responses and activities for handling the ACM. The Management Plan is available for review by interested parents, faculty and staff in the school offices during business hours. It is also available through the district web page.

Integrated Pest Management

The West Chester Area School District uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for managing insects, rodents and weeds. Our goal is to protect every student from pesticide exposure by using an IPM approach to pest management. Our IPM approach focuses on making the school buildings and grounds an unfavorable habitat for these pests by removing

food and water sources and eliminating their hiding and breeding places. We accomplish this through routine cleaning and maintenance. We routinely monitor the school buildings and grounds to detect any pests that are present. Pest sightings are reported to our IPM coordinator who evaluates the "pest problem" and determines the appropriate pest management techniques to address the problem. The techniques can include increased sanitation, modifying storage practices, sealing entry points, physically removing the pest, etc.

From time to time, it may be necessary to use pesticides registered by the Environmental Protection Agency to manage a pest problem. A pesticide will only be used when necessary, and will not be routinely applied. When a pesticide is necessary, the school will use the least toxic product(s) possible. Applications will be made only when unauthorized persons do not have access to the area(s) being treated. Notices will be posted in these areas seventy-two (72) hours prior to application and for at least forty-eight (48) hours following the application.

Parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school may request prior notification of specific pesticide applications made at the school. This notification will include the name, address, and telephone number of the applicator providing the treatment, day of treatment and the pesticide being applied. To receive notification, you must be placed on the school's notification registry.

If a pesticide application must be made to control an emergency pest problem, notice will be provided by telephone to any parent or guardian who has requested such notification in writing. Emergency applications of EPA registered pesticides will be done on a Friday evening after occupants leave the building. Exemptions to this notification include disinfectants and antimicrobial products; self-containerized baits placed in areas not accessible to students, and gel type baits placed in

Child Study Team recommendation regarding the need for further gifted evaluation.

Gifted Evaluation

If the student is being recommended for further evaluation, the parent will be provided with the Permission to Evaluate paperwork and a parent input form. Upon receipt of the permission, the evaluation will be completed and results provided to the parent within 60 days (not including summer break).

Referrals can be made at any time during the school year, but only one referral per child per year is permitted. Any questions about Fern Hill's screening and identification process should be directed to the Fern Hill School Counselor, 484-266-1600. Any questions about WCASD's screening and identification process should be directed to the Supervisor of Gifted Education, 484-266-1000.

Curriculum

West Chester Area School District K-12

A copy of the curriculum is available to all parents. It can be downloaded from the WCASD Home Page at:

<http://www.wcasd.net/curriculum/curriculum.htm>

This curriculum develops programs according to district goals and objectives. The uniform curriculum ensures equal academic exposure, opportunities and expectations for all children as they enter the middle school and high school years.

Kindergarten-2 Program

The K-2 Program is a district-wide program aimed at monitoring the progress of students in kindergarten, first and second grades. Students identified as needing extra support in language arts and/or math are provided additional support through small group differentiated instruction in the classroom or through a resource teacher. The staff meets weekly to

additional evaluations, at which time a parent permission form will be sent home.

Standardized Testing

Fern Hill students' skills are assessed periodically through the use of standardized testing. Third, fourth and fifth grade students take the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in the spring.

Gifted Screening

The following is the referral process used to evaluate students for inclusion in the gifted program.

At any time during the school year, teachers or parents may recommend that a student be evaluated for gifted services. That recommendation initiates a data collection process. Once all screening data has been collected, a decision is made by the Child Study Team as to whether to make a referral for a gifted evaluation. The screening data collection process involves the following:

- Teachers complete observational rating scales that evaluate characteristics of giftedness, and rates of acquisition and retention.
- Teachers provide data that includes structured assessments (reading and math), work samples, report card grades, standardized test scores, and input from specialists.
- The Child Study Team gathers additional screening data, such as reading assessments, math benchmark assessments, and classroom lessons/observations involving convergent/divergent thinking.

Screening results and school data are reviewed with parents by the guidance counselor. The parents are notified of the

cracks, crevices or voids.

Notification requests will be valid for the current school year and must be renewed each year.

If you have any questions, please contact the IPM Coordinator's office at 610-436-7135.

Educational Services

School Guidance

Fern Hill's school guidance program is a full time support system that is available to all students. Individual and group guidance programs are available throughout the school year. Counseling interventions commonly take the form of discussions and strategy and coping skill identification, but are not meant to take the role of therapeutic or psychoanalytic counseling. Referrals for counseling services are made through the school counselor at 484-266-1600.

Learning Support

Special Education encompasses a large spectrum of services based on the ideals outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a federal law most recently amended in 1997. The learning support program at Fern Hill services children in all grades, K-5 who have been identified with a specific disability. Children within the program receive an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a document geared toward meeting their individual needs. Services are implemented within the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), the environment most closely aligned with the regular education curriculum in which the child can meet with success.

At Fern Hill such services range from supportive intervention within the regular classroom to supplemental instruction in the resource room. Direct, small group instruction typically includes instruction in the areas of language arts and/or mathematics. Support within the classroom may also include those subjects. Learning support teachers, building reading specialists and classroom teachers work closely together to provide a cohesive, individualized program geared toward meeting the child's needs and accessing his/her strengths.

Reading-Title I

Title 1 is the largest federal aid program for schools. The program serves millions of children in elementary and secondary schools. Each year the federal government provides funding to states. This money is then sent to school districts. Schools identify students most in need of educational help, set goals for improvement, develop programs that supplement the regular classroom instruction, involve parents in the program and measure student progress. Title 1 provides additional reading assistance. All of the reading specialists and teachers work closely together to provide a cohesive program for the students. **Fern Hill is a Title I school, so all students who are in need of reading support are considered "Title I".**

English as a Second Language Department (ELD)

EL instruction is based on the needs of individual students and derived from an initial assessment given to the student when he/she enters the school. This assessment determines whether or not the student is in need of ESL instruction. Throughout the school year, strategies and skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing are taught to help the student achieve proficiency in English. The ESL curriculum is specifically designed to teach English Language Learners (ELL) how to communicate in social settings, how to achieve academically in all content areas,

and how to communicate in socially and culturally appropriate ways.

Descripcion Del Curso De Ingles Como Segunda Idioma

Cierto estudiantes reciben instrucción en inglés como segundo idioma. Los estudiantes son recomendado por la oficina escolar. Su proficiencia en inglés es evaluado usando exámenes de lenguaje oral, lectura, y escritura. Los exámenes identifican estudiantes que necesitan apoyo en inglés. Los estudiantes identificados reciben apoyo individual o en grupos pequeños en estrategias de aprendizaje, destrezas de lenguaje, lectura, y en vocabulario. Los estudiantes reciben la instrucción apropiado para tener éxito en el salon de clases regular.

Speech Therapy

A speech and language clinician provides diagnostic, consultative and direct therapy services to students in all grade levels. Services are for children with articulation, language, or stuttering disorders. Teachers or parents/guardians may request speech screenings.

If there are questions about services offered by the speech program, please call the school office and speak to the building speech specialist.

Occupational and Physical Therapy (OT and PT)

Occupational and Physical Therapy screenings are available through the Chester County Intermediate Unit. Referrals are generated by contacting the school counselor. A consultative screening with the Occupational Therapist or the Physical Therapist is completed first. After the child is observed in his/her classroom setting, the therapist provides a report with suggested strategies. The therapist may recommend