

Pierce Terrace School Fort Jackson

School Profile
2006-2007

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Pierce Terrace Elementary School



Mission

The mission of Pierce Terrace is to accept all students, regardless of background, and help them to become efficient and effective readers, writers, and productive citizens of the world.



Vision

Pierce Terrace School has a continuum of learning programs based on curriculum expectations and best teaching practices as defined by DoDEA Quality Indicator Map and the National Curriculum Associations.

All students shall be included in classroom plans and activities and they shall be expected to learn in order to fulfill our mission.

Within our school community we believe that:

- All learners will have opportunities to achieve their greatest potential in all areas.
- We must encourage, support and expect all learners to meet their individual goals.
- Responsibility for one's self is an important part of learning and growing.
- Maximum success is achieved when teachers, students and parents work together.
- Students, parents and staff should respect themselves, each other, their families, school property and individual differences.
- Everyone has a shared responsibility and ownership for our school.



School Characteristics

Pierce Terrace Elementary School is a uniquely designed and configured learning community. Our students range in age from 3 to seven years old – preschool to grade one. The three year olds are limited to those who fall within the boundaries of facing special learning challenges. The four year olds must have had their fourth birthday on or before September 1st of their entry year, and our kindergarten students must be five on or before September 1st of their entry year.

We offer a full range of programs to include special needs, art, music, physical education, and gifted education. Our instructional day is from 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM for kindergarten and first grade and we have two sessions of preschool (both three and four year olds) 8:00 to 10:30 AM and 12:00 to 2:30 PM.

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is our world wide headquarters, located in Arlington, VA, and our area office – Dependent Domestic Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) - is located in Peachtree City, GA. Our curriculum standards and supporting instructional materials originate from the DoDEA and these standards and materials are used in all our schools in Europe, the Pacific and of course the United States, Cuba and Puerto Rico. These standards (what we want students to know and be able to do) can be viewed at www.am.dodea.edu, under “Standards and Curriculum”.

Unique Local Insights

Built in the early 70s at the entrance of the Pierce Terrace housing area, **Pierce Terrace School** is the second oldest school on Fort Jackson. Constructed as a bomb shelter as well as a school (accounting for the minimum window space), the classrooms were originally configured as 'open spaced.' After several years of open space classrooms and team teaching, teachers proposed that pupils would be better served and learning enhanced by self-contained classrooms. Walls were subsequently installed, but movable accordion-style classroom dividers still permit the joining of most adjacent classrooms.

The Pierce Terrace housing area is the larger of the two housing areas on Fort Jackson and is the on-Post living quarters for enlisted personnel and their families. A smaller housing area of the school provides housing for officers and their families on Post.

Fort Jackson is the army's largest training facility. Many drill sergeants live with their families in the Pierce Terrace housing area. Drill sergeants have difficult schedules, leaving their homes before dawn and returning after dark each day. Spouses of drill sergeants may sometimes feel like single parents during the cycles when drill sergeants are on duty and on call. Children of drill sergeants often have special needs due to dads' or moms' military schedule. If the head of household is single, these needs are sometimes more pronounced. Approximately 13% of pupils come from single parent households on Fort Jackson.

The military was one of the first sectors of American society to successfully integrate. Today pupils in military schools - and particularly on a training Post such as Fort Jackson - are born in many countries and come from families with many multicultural traditions and customs. Some pupils have one or more parents whose native language is not English. English as a Second Language programs are therefore essential for some pupils, and a wealth of family customs and traditions enriches multicultural programs that occur throughout the school year.

Having high family rotation rates, sometimes difficult training schedules for military members and at least two to three single parent families in each classroom, teachers in the Fort Jackson schools must be sensitive to the adjustment and emotional needs of pupils and their parents and be flexible in terms of instructional strategies. Our educators realize that strong parent support is critical to student achievement. The 2005 DoDEA Parent survey of parents indicates that 92% of parents would assign an A or B rating indicating their satisfaction with the school's programs and policies.

In recent years due to older housing units and the appeal of low mortgage rates, many Fort Jackson families have invested in homes off-Post. Since only families living on Post may attend Post schools, pupil enrollment has been dropping in the Fort Jackson Schools. Peak enrollment of 259 pupils was reported for SY 2005-06. Staffing is based on projected enrollment and we reduced by one kindergarten position for SY 2006-2007.

Pierce Terrace School is fortunate to have a very active and committed sponsoring unit, the 2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment. Soldiers from the 2/60th donate time and effort to support various activities through the year. The most prominent is the International Day celebration held in May of each year.

We also have a strong Parent Advisory Committee that meets one time per month and plans support activities for the students throughout the year. Parent involvement is critical to the students' achievement and our Committee supports this effort to a very high degree. We had approximately forty volunteers who logged over 1000 hours of volunteer time to assist during the school year in a variety of ways.



“You can’t use knowledge up. As you use it, it grows, creating a perpetual wealth machine.” (Daniel McKnight)

Pierce Terrace Environmental Scan

As we prepare students for the future, the Pierce Terrace Elementary School Improvement Team reviewed three articles focusing on future trends. The articles included Ten Trends by Gary Marx, “*21st Century Skills by North Central Regional Educational Laboratory*” (NCREL), and “*When K-12 Education and Technology Meet*” from eSchool NEWSonline. From these readings, information was found that was helpful in determining the knowledge and skills students will need to be better prepared when completing their formal education and choosing careers.

Some of the major trends from these articles are:

- Our country will become a nation of minorities, and older citizens will outnumber the young.
- To survive in the 21st century continuous improvement will be necessary.
- Growing technology will have a profound effect on every person and every aspect of our lives.
- The worldwide availability of increasing technologies is leading to knowledge increasing exponentially.
- Schools of the 21st century are faced with the great challenge of providing equal opportunities and closing the achievement gap among students.

For our students’ future success, the Pierce Terrace School Improvement Team believes that good educators will:

- Incorporate life skills in the classroom that will empower students with leadership and social responsibility.
- Our schools will foster information and technology literacy.
- Educators will use a balance of assessments, including authentic assessments.
- Educators will guide students not only to acquire knowledge, but also to effectively and creatively use what they know---and to become continuous learners.

We want to prepare our students for a diverse global economy, and “make them useful across professions, demographics, and geographies.” (Michelle Kim)

PIERCE TERRACE SCHOOL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Pierce Terrace School Rights and Responsibilities serve as a code for living and learning at school. Each grade level and special area class develops student responsibilities that are developmentally appropriate for achieving each of the student rights. Each student has the responsibility to honor, to respect, and to uphold these guidelines.

Student Rights

1. I have a right to work and play in a safe and organized environment.
2. I have a right to be happy and to be treated with kindness and respect.
3. I have the right to learn new things.
4. I have a right to be myself and express my opinions.
5. I have a right to hear and to be heard.

Student Responsibilities

At the beginning of the school year, the Rights and Responsibilities are reviewed in each class and they are sent home for parents to review. Below are school wide responsibilities by which we will live and learn at Pierce Terrace School:

- Treat others with **kindness** and **respect**
- Do my **best work**
- Take care of **school property**
- Play and work **safely**
- **Listen** when someone is speaking

Parent Rights

It is the right of parents or guardians at Pierce Terrace Elementary to:

1. Visit their child's classroom.
2. Be informed of the activities and learning that is occurring in their children's classroom via periodic newsletters from the principal, their children's teachers or by attending Parent Advisory Committee meetings.
3. Be provided information regarding curriculum standards and teaching and learning strategies and techniques.

Parent Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of parents or guardians at Pierce Terrace Elementary to:

1. Be involved in their children's education by contributing their time, and talents to support our Mission Statement.
2. Attend student/teacher conferences, academic conferences, and any other conferences requested by their children's teachers.
3. Collaborate with faculty and students in supporting students in their emotional, social, physical, and academic growth and development.
4. Communicate in a timely manner both verbally and in writing with faculty regarding their children's development as a learner.

Teacher/Staff Rights

1. I have a right to work and play in a safe and organized environment.
2. I have a right to be happy and to be treated with kindness and respect.
3. I have the right to learn new things.
4. I have a right to be myself and express my opinions.
5. I have a right to hear and to be heard.

Teacher/Staff Responsibilities

Teachers/Staff at Pierce Terrace Elementary have the responsibility to:

1. Accept all students as they are, respect them as learners, and expect them to be able to learn.
2. Organize classroom routines and procedures and facilitate students' learning and practice of these routines and procedures.
3. Learn each student's literacy (the broad meaning) strengths and provide instruction and activities that build upon those strengths.
4. Know and implement the adopted curriculum standards and supporting materials.
5. Communicate in a timely manner both verbally and in writing with parents and colleagues regarding their students' development as learners.
6. Engage in professional development activities in order to remain current with appropriate teaching and learning techniques and strategies.
7. Take good care of personal and family health, safety, and recreational endeavors.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

	Classroom Teachers n = 11	Specialist Teachers n = 13	Part-time n = 4	TOTAL Pierce Terrace Teachers n = 24	TOTAL DDESS Teachers
White	64%	77%	31%	71%	48.12%
Black	36%	15%	0	24%	13.60%
Latina	0	8%	0	4%	n/a

There are 24 certified teachers at Pierce Terrace (excluding the principal). 71% are white, 24% are black, 4% Latina, 17% are male, 83% are female.

ENROLLMENT

On September 29, 2006 the enrollment at Pierce Terrace School was 220 pupils: 66 pre-kindergarten; 80 kindergarten pupils; and 74 first graders. Attendance levels each year are around 94%. The mobility rate for this school year was 34.5%, which means we had over one-third of the students that began the year leave before the end of the year.

Effective 12 February 2007

Pupils	Male	Female	Black	White	Hispanic	Other
218	115	103	84	108	41	6
Percentage	53	47	39	50	19	3

The **pupil/teacher ratio** has remained fairly constant at Pierce Terrace School over the last several years – approximately 38 to 1 for pre-kindergarten, 21 to 1 for kindergarten, and 19 to 1 for first grade.

PUPIL-TEACHER RATIOS

Pre-kindergarten	Kindergarten	First Grade
94	83	95
38:1	21:1	19:1

As of 12 February 2007, 23 pupils – 11% - were receiving special education services through Preschool Child Development program, self-contained program or resource room program. Thirty-nine (39) – 18 % - pupils were receiving speech and language services. For SY 2006-2007 the speech and language students are reported separately from the resource/self-contained students. This reporting more clearly depicts the number of students in each area based upon the total population. Six (6) pupils receive **ESL** (English as a Second Language) services.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

2003-04 52 pupils 24% of pop.	Speech/Language 75%	Resource/Self-Cont. 25%
2004-2005 38 pupils 14% of pop.	Speech/Language 76%	Resource/Self-Cont. 24%
2005-2006 46 pupils 19% of pop.	Speech/Language 28/6 = 61%	Resource/Self-Cont. 18/6 = 39%
2006-2007	Speech/Language n = 39 18%	Resource/Self-Cont. n = 23 11%

SOCIAL/ECONOMIC STATUS

Approximately 41% of pupils at Pierce Terrace receive free/reduced lunches and approximately 30% attend childcare services on Post before and/or after school.

Assessment

Assessment data at Pierce Terrace School is developmentally appropriate for early childhood pupils and is gathered during everyday classroom experiences as well as in test situations. Assessment is ongoing and used to guide instruction. Throughout the year teachers use a variety of local assessments such as portfolios, end-of-book tests, observations, and anecdotal records. For purposes of gathering school data, grade levels administer specific assessments at set times according to the School Improvement Plan. All first grade teachers administer the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) at a set time in the fall and spring. Kindergarten teachers administer the DRA in the spring. Teachers use the DRA at other times with pupils on an as needed basis. The use of DRA is increasingly used as a tool for informing instruction.

The following charts provide an overview of DRA results, the first is for kindergarten and the second for first grade.

Kindergarten Results from DRA Testing Spring 2006

DRA LEVELS	GUIDED READING LEVELS	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	PERCENTAGE	At/above standard
A		9	10%	
1	A	7	8%	N=86
2	B	17	20%	
3	B	26	30%	53 @ 3+ = 62%
4	C	13	15%	
6	D	4	5%	
8	E	3	3%	
10	E	2	2%	
12	F	0	0	
14	G	2	2%	
16	H	0	0	
18	I	0	0	
20	J	1	1%	
24	K	2	2%	
3,4 (At the Standard or higher)		53	62%	

This chart indicates that 62 percent of the kindergarten students performed at or above the DoDEA Standard of Level 3 for kindergarten on the spring assessment for School Year 2005/2006.

First Grade Results from DRA Testing Fall 2005 & Spring 2006.

DRA LEVELS	GUIDED READING LEVELS	FALL n - %	SPRING n - %	Fall
A				
1	A	1 – 1%		
2	B	16 – 20%		n =79
3	B	36 – 46%		Fall 67%<standard
4	C	5 – 6%		33%@ or above
6	D	5 – 6%	7 – 10%	
8	E	4 – 5%	4 – 6%	Spring
10	E	1 – 1%	3 – 4%	N=70
12	F	2 – 3%	1 – 1%	51@16+= 73%
14	G	5 – 6%	4 – 6%	
16	H	2 – 3%	14 – 21%	
18	I	2 – 3%	13 – 18%	
20	J		7 – 10%	
22			0	
24	K		2 – 3%	
26			0	
28	L		5 – 7%	
30	M		5 – 7%	
32			0	
34	N		1 – 1%	
36			0	
38	O,P		4 – 6%	
(At Standard or above)		26 - 33% (standard- 4)	51 – 73% (standard-16,18)	

The chart above indicates that 73 percent of the first grade students achieved at or above the DoDEA Standard of 16 in the spring assessment for School Year 2005-2006. It also shows the growth in achievement between the spring and fall assessment periods.

The DRA levels and DoDEA designated proficiency Standards for early childhood pupils state... *for a student to move from one DRA level to another, they must score....*

- 94% or above on the Record of Oral Reading *and*
- 16 or above on the Comprehension Rubric.

LEVEL Grade Level Standard

3	Kindergarten
16/18	First Grade
28	Second Grade
34	Third Grade

Note: DoDEA has changed the DRA Proficiency Levels (“At the Standard) for SY 2006-2007 to

<u>LEVEL</u>	<u>Grade Level Standard</u>
2	Kindergarten
14/16	First Grade
24/28	Second Grade
38	Third Grade

Other School Improvement Plan Assessments

In school year 2005-2006, pupils experienced daily read aloud sessions to increase comprehension abilities and enjoyment of reading. Three “Read-Aloud” assessments using uniform quality Scholastic Publishers literature materials were scheduled during the year. On 8 September, 12 January, & 18 April all teachers used the books listed below to read to the students and then the students were asked to respond to the story by drawing pictures and/or write words to express their understanding of the stories. Specific levels of achievement were identified and the students’ responses were scored according to those levels. Emphasis was placed upon their recognition of story ‘characters’, ‘plot’, and ‘setting’, areas which were taught and reviewed during the school year.

The Scholastic Books used were:

	<u>FALL</u>	<u>WINTER</u>	<u>SPRING</u>
Pre-K	adjustment	1 <u>Amy Loves the Snow</u>	2 <u>Raindrops</u>
K	2 <u>Noisy Breakfast</u>	3 <u>Buzz Said the Bee</u>	4 <u>Amy Loves the Snow</u>
1ST	4 <u>The New Baby Calf</u>	5 <u>The Cow That Went Oink</u>	6 <u>George Shrinks</u>

Number of pupils demonstrating comprehension at the three assessment dates:

Grade Level	n – Fall %	n – Winter %	n – Spring %
Pre-K at standard	Adjustment	40 - 68%	40 – 68%
below standard	Adjustment	19 – 32% N=59	19 – 32% N=59
Kindergarten at standard	56 – 85%	78 – 90%	75 – 90%
below standard	12 – 15% N=68	9 – 10% N=87	7 – 10% N=82
First at standard	18 – 42%	26 – 35%	47 – 82%
below standard	55 – 58% N=73	49 – 65% N=75	10 – 18% N=57

Pupils are provided multiple ‘writing’ activities through journaling, dictation, making books, and drawings throughout the year. Both creative writing and the mechanics of handwriting were promoted during the year. We intend to strengthen those areas in the upcoming school year by focusing on the Scholastic Literacy Place handwriting program and incorporating the Writing Process when the students form the muscle coordination and mental abilities to be successful.

Summary and Implications for Future Planning

The Pierce Terrace School Improvement Team has compiled existing data into a form that is sufficiently detailed to guide new School Improvement Plans (SIP) while hopefully being understandable to the Fort Jackson community. Since standardized testing officially begins for DODEA pupils at third grade, data collection and data driven decisions specifically concerning early childhood pupils' academic progress have been less clearly defined. Various local assessments have been implemented in Pierce Terrace School Improvement Plan to assist with guiding us through the school improvement process and concentrating on student achievement.

The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is developmentally appropriate for young children, guides instruction in the classroom, and for purposes of measuring student achievement provides reliably leveled baseline reading data for all pupils. Objectives for future School Improvement Plans will be determined in part by data from the DRA.