

PAI FAQs – Frequently Asked Questions & Expectations

Pierce Academic Institute – For Students Who Love to Learn

School Copy
Sign and return
with your
application

What is PAI?

- PAI stands for Pierce Academic Institute
- The institute is a school within a school, with challenging classes for high-performing students

How do I get started if I'm interested?

- All students who want to be a part of PAI must apply for the program at Pierce Middle School, and their academic and behavioral performance must meet the established requirements
- Applications are available in the Pierce Counseling Office and on the website
- Applications include an information form, teacher referral, and a written student statement of intent
- Once the application is complete, the student will be contacted to set up a time for testing, if the student does not currently have STAR Math and Reading scores

Who is the program open to?

- Students who live within the boundaries of the South Redford School District
- Students who will be enrolled in the 6th, 7th, or 8th grade

How many students are in the PAI?

- Approximately 90 PAI students will be enrolled during the 2015-2016 school year
- 30 students per grade – 6th, 7th and 8th

When is the application due?

- Thursday, May 7, 2015 by 4:00 p.m.
- Parents or students must turn in both the Student Application Form and the signed PAI FAQs to the counseling office at Pierce Middle School
- Teacher recommendations need to be turned in directly to the Pierce Counseling Office by May 11th, so be sure to give them plenty of time
- Students who miss the deadline may submit an application, but enrollment in the PAI will occur only after those on the waitlist have been considered

How are students selected once the application is turned in?

- Students are ranked based on a number of assessments, including the State assessment, STAR Math, STAR Reading and grade point averages
- Incoming 6th graders will need to schedule a day to take the STAR Math and Reading tests at Pierce Middle School – several dates are available (4/27, 5/2, 5/6 and 5/12)
- Based on these scores and teacher recommendations, students are ranked and the top 30 students in each grade are considered for the PAI
- A waitlist is established for students who qualify academically

When can my child take the Star Math and Reading tests?

- Current Pierce students will take the Star Math and Reading tests during school in May and will not need to arrange any additional testing
- Future Pierce students can take the test on any of the following dates:
 - Monday, April 27 @ 4:00 p.m.
 - Saturday, May 2 @ 10:00 a.m.

- Wednesday, May 6 @ 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 12 @ 4:00 p.m.
- The Pierce counseling office will contact you once your application is received and set up a testing date
- Testing will take approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours, although times vary from student to student
- Testing is done online and students may use pencil and paper on the math portion

How and when are students moved from the waitlist to the PAI?

- Students on the waitlist are selected in order when an opening is available
- Parents are notified and consulted when an opening is available
- After updated Star scores have been received and/or student GPAs have been updated, students on the waiting list are selected based on their updated assessments and GPA, rather than the assessments and GPA from the previous spring

What are the “more rigorous academic requirements” that PAI students must meet?

All PAI students...

- Must maintain an overall GPA of at least 3.0 for each card marking
- Must keep up with the rigorous academic requirements
- PAI students will have required summer assignments in Language Arts, Science, Math, and Social Studies in order to prepare students for the coming year
- Summer assignments are turned in and graded when school begins
- Eighth grade students will be enrolled in Algebra I and English 9 (these are high school courses and students will earn high school credits)
- PAI students often have more homework in math, read more books, and perform at a higher level in all core subjects
- Must complete a minimum of 5 hours of community service at Pierce Middle School during the school year, such as tutoring, office helper, Media Center aide, teacher helper, etc.
- PAI students who are also NJHS members will complete a total of 15 hours, 5 of which will be at Pierce and will satisfy the PAI community service requirement

What happens if a PAI student doesn’t do well under the “more rigorous academic requirements” that PAI students must meet?

- If a student has an quarterly GPA of below a 3.0, they and their parents will receive a probation letter telling them that the student is on immediate academic probation
- Once on academic probation, they will have one more reporting period to meet the 3.0 quarterly GPA and overall GPA standard
- Students showing exceptional improvement but not meeting the required GPA standards for a second time may be considered for the PAI PASS program [Positive Academic Support System]
- The PAI PASS program requires students to attend PAI homework clinics twice per week in order to receive additional and individual support
- Struggling students are also encouraged to come up with a plan for how they may become more successful
- Pierce also offers Honors classes in all grades for Language Arts and Math, for students who excel in those subjects but are not in the PAI

What if a PAI student has behavior problems?

- All PAI students must comply with the Pierce behavior policy
- Suspensions and failure to comply with behavioral expectations can alone be grounds for removal

- Students who have behavioral infractions will be put on behavioral probation
- Additional infractions while on probation may result in removal from the PAI

I have read and understand the FAQs pertaining to the Pierce Academic Institute.

Student signature: _____

I have read and understand the FAQs pertaining to the Pierce Academic Institute.

Parent/guardian signature(s): _____

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