

CENTER FOR ACCELERATED STUDIES (CAS)



PROVO PEAKS ELEMENTARY

665 East Center Street, Provo

The vision of Provo Peaks is to perform on a metacognitive level.

The mission of Provo Peaks is to foster a culture of pride in ourselves and our school. By understanding our strengths and weaknesses, we are accountable for our own growth and we can achieve and surpass high expectations. By becoming critical thinkers and active learners, we invest in ourselves and our future.

We commit to...

- having civil, honest conversations
- working hard
- being dedicated and consistent as a school team
- having a safe environment where all opinions are valued
- making sure that students' needs are the focus of all decisions
- reaching consensus (willing to make compromises and move forward as one)

WHAT IS CAS?

The Center for Accelerated Studies is a full-time gifted magnet program for students in grades 4-6 from across the district, which was created to address the unique instructional needs of students with high academic ability and/or potential. It serves about 180 students who have demonstrated high proficiency in mathematics, science, and language arts.

CAS provides the opportunity for students to move beyond the core curriculum, as they have demonstrated mastery of grade-level curriculum. Unique enrichment activities are provided that are particularly appropriate for students who learn at a more rapid pace, desire to delve deeply into curricular topics, and work as practitioners in various fields of study. The flexible and more rapid pacing in the CAS classrooms meets the needs of accelerated students. The CAS students become a close-knit group, as they have opportunities for many friendships with intellectual and social peers. The students learn to respect the differences, gifts, and achievements of peers.

WHO BENEFITS FROM CAS?

Students who enjoy being challenged and learning at an accelerated pace often excel in CAS classes. Sometimes, high performing students who feel socially awkward in school have developed social skills and peer relationships not seen before. Here is one parent's report about her child's experience in CAS which is typical of many CAS parent responses:

(CAS) has captured the interest of my child and increased her love of learning. I love that my daughter's confidence and self-esteem have improved. She is exemplifying the "growth mindset." The main reason I wanted her in CAS is because of the content of the academics that would be offered. So many good things have come from CAS.

MEET THE TEACHERS



HEATHER PETERSON 4TH GRADE

I have been teaching for 24 years and in the CAS program for 3 years. I started teaching at Joaquin, then moved to Farrer, and when it closed moved to Provo Peaks. I have taught 6th grade the longest in my career. I really enjoy teaching math. It was always a subject I was able to do well in at school. When I became a teacher, I didn't understand that everyone didn't learn math like me. I have really had to learn how to teach math so that everyone understands and enjoys it. It has taught me to be a better teacher. In my free time I enjoy playing the piano, reading, and spending time with my family. One of my passions is computer programming. It has now become one of the things that all students are expected to learn. I love coding and we spend half the year learning to code and doing projects.



TRICIA BIGGS 5TH GRADE

I am the mother of three creative Little Women and enjoy eating chocolate while reading for pleasure. I have been a teacher with Provo School District for over a decade. I work closely – as a mentor, an advisor, a speaker, and an author - alongside Brigham Young University and Utah Valley University Departments of Education. My educational work, my resources, and my articles have been prominently noted by Teachers Pay Teachers, Educents, and in the Provo Daily Herald. A child, every child, deserves a teacher who can guide them towards their ultimate potential. Ultimately my interest in working with gifted and talented students is best summarized by Robert Frost, “There are two kinds of teachers: the kind that fills you with so much quail shot that you can't move, and the kind that just gives you a little prod and you jump to the skies.” Needless to say, I find it amazing how powerful a thoughtful and well-timed prod can be.



TEHANI FIATOA 6TH GRADE

This will be my 2nd year teaching CAS 6th grade and 10th year teaching overall. I have taught at private school, charter school and public schools-- I love being able to draw from the cache of skills sets that I have developed from all three settings. I earned a Bachelors Degree from Brigham Young University-Hawaii and a Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with Concentration in Digital Teaching and Learning. I integrate the 4 CORE subjects as well as Art, Drama, Physical Education, Music in to my curriculum and feel that my classroom is a place where all intelligences are celebrated. In my free time I am a volleyball, soccer and basketball coach and enjoy the outdoors. When my students step into my classroom, they feel welcomed, challenged and celebrated. I look forward to meeting my new learners!

ACCELERATED INSTRUCTION



CURRICULUM

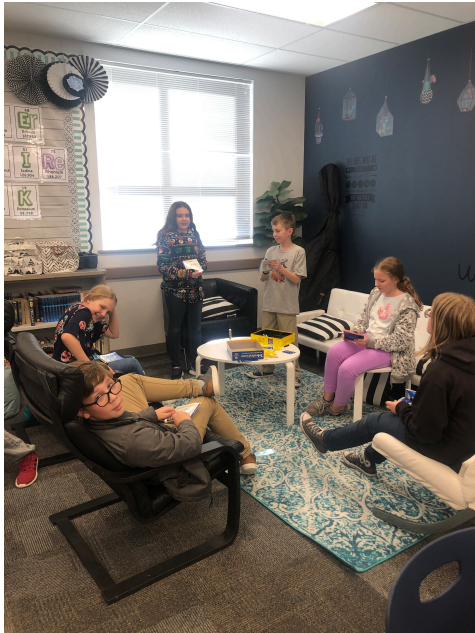
- Students in the CAS program will be taught to meet, and exceed, grade level standards.
- In mathematics, accelerated instruction will be offered. Instruction will be compacted to allow students to complete Math 7 in sixth grade.
- In other subjects, such as English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science, instruction will help students meet grade level standards and aspects of higher grades.

NOTES FROM THE TEACHERS

- *CAS students can read higher-level books, so we read books that non-CAS students might not read. We finish everything more quickly so can spend more time learning science and social studies. We also have time to do some passion projects like Genius Hour.*
- *Our in-class learning is supplemented with cooking, experiments, field trips, technology skills, acting, dancing, art, and in depth analysis of literature in all its forms. I work hard to provide students with authentic opportunities for learning through discovery.*
- *While my classroom takes full advantage of technology, I also ensure that students have time in the day using paper and pencil, clay, crayons and their own bodies to experience life beyond a screen.*
- *Students in my classroom enjoy a variety of learning opportunities. We enjoy projects, design thinking, STEM fairs, guest speakers, engaging discussions, cooperative learning, and great literature!*
- *I've found that CAS students are incredibly kind and thoughtful. They teach each other and lift each other, and it amazes me everyday!*



ASK OUR STUDENTS



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF BEING IN CAS?

- *I'm having fun because I'm finally learning things I don't already know!*
 - *Being pushed is hard, but I like the challenge!*
 - *I like that I'm understanding how everything connects to real life and the world.*
 - *CAS feels like a real class. My other classes were too easy.*
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- *I love how CAS has changed me. I've grown. Before, I already knew everything they were teaching me. I couldn't learn, couldn't struggle, couldn't grow. In CAS, I'm able to learn, have fun, struggle, and even teach and instruct myself. I love CAS.*
 - *The best thing about CAS is that you learn at an awesome pace, and the teachers are absolutely AMAZING!*
 - *CAS lets me be able to work at my own speed, and not have to wait for others because they are all at the same level as me!*
 - *CAS lets me embrace the meaning of difficult, if you give up easily ... it will not be easy, however, if you want to become a hard worker, or are a hard worker who is bored of easy stuff, this is for you.*
 - *The best thing about CAS is that it is not easy like normal school, you have to actually try, plus depending on your attitude, it could be super fun doing hard things and the things you do there will probably be fun.*
 - *I love how we learn at a perfect speed, and there are great teachers. It is difficult sometimes, but it is always worth it in the end*
 - *I love how other kids in CAS appreciate my skills more because they have them to.*

FLASHMOB



Watch a 6th grade CAS class
FLASHMOB their teacher!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PARENTS WONDER...

- **Is CAS a pull-out program?**

No, CAS places students in an accelerated classroom for the entire school day.

- **How are students selected for CAS?**

Provo City School District strives to maximize fairness and diversity in identification for accelerated placement. A key strategy utilized is the casting of a broad net in initial screening for talent. All 3rd grade students took part in the CogAT assessment earlier this year for the purpose of identifying those students who would benefit from the accelerated nature of the CAS program.

- **What if my child is placed on the waiting list?**

Students on the waiting list are ranked according to the results of the CogAT exam. As space in the CAS program becomes available, parents will be notified.

- **Can my child receive other accelerated services in our regular, boundary school?**

Yes. Every school has opportunities for accelerated students to learn at high levels. Contact your school's principal to discuss the options for your child.

- **Does the district bus students to CAS sites?**

Unfortunately, no. The state does not fund transportation services for parent choice programs such as CAS and Dual Language Immersion. In some cases, parents have coordinated carpools to CAS sites.

- **If I have a child in CAS, can my other children attend the school, as well?**

Although entrance into the CAS program is merit based, boundary exceptions can be granted to parents who want additional children to attend regular school at the same location. As in other school choice instances, parents need to apply for this boundary exception to the Student Services department at the Provo City School District offices (280 West 940 North).

