Advanced Learning Program for Higher Achievement (ALPHA) is a project-based class designed to meet the needs of the gifted student by enhancing what they are learning in the general classroom. A variety of teaching approaches will be used in order for each child to fully develop their intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capabilities. Flexibility is an important characteristic of the ALPHA program which allows each child to be nurtured based on their specific needs. Giftedness means many things. It means different things to different people, to society, and to gifted kids themselves. The term gifted and talented when used in respect to students, means students who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields and who need services or activities that may not be provided by their general education classroom.

The program is open to third and fourth graders based on the following criteria: combined scores from a cognitive test such as the Cogat, IA scores from ELA and Math, and DIBELS.

The third grade ALPHA class meets once a week on Thursday and will encompass the following topics: Power, Comparisons in rules and laws, Ecosystems, Environment, Cause and Effect, Citizenship, Economics, Social Action.

The fourth grade ALPHA class meets once a week on Tuesdays and will encompass the following topics: Exploration, Culture, Ecology, Project Create, Settlement, Currency, and Measurement.

ALPHA students use the educational blog EDMODO to communicate directly to parents and interact with their teacher and each other.

Course Aims and Outcomes - Students will be able to…

1. Develop concepts related to different relationships..
2. Work independently and collaboratively on certain projects
3. Will actively participate in solving various problems using specific problem solving techniques
4. Will participate in novel studies with rich, complex language, open-endedness to create reflection, and helpfulness in building problem-solving skills.
5. Will develop research skills using various types of technology, and resources.

Specific Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to…

1. Provide examples, illustrations and salient features of different relationships
2. Form and revise questions for investigations
3. Use multiple sources to locate information for earch questions
4. Produce research projects and reports in effective formats using visuals to support the research
5. Develop analytical and interpretive skills in literature
6. Develop understanding of selected literary themes
7. Develop linguistic competency through vocabulary and language study
8. Develop skills in written and oral communication
9. Develop higher level thinking and reasoning skills in language arts
10. Develop research skills