This year, all students at Poplar Tree will continue employing the nine Critical and Creative Thinking Strategies, with a focus on also incorporating the Habits of Mind. A “Habit of Mind” means having a disposition toward behaving intelligently when confronting problems, to which the answers are not immediately known. Below you will find descriptions and an elaboration of 16 attributes of what human beings do when they behave intelligently. They are referred to as the Habits of Mind. These behaviors are rarely performed in isolation. Rather, clusters of such behaviors are used in various situations (Describing 16 Habits of Mind-Costa and Kallick, 2000). Each month, the students at Poplar Tree will be introduced to one or more Habits of Mind, which they will then apply to their learning each day. We are looking forward to a fabulous year of critical, creative, and intelligent thinking!

Habits of Mind

1. Persisting
Stick to it! Persevering in task through to completion; remaining focused. Looking for ways to reach your goal when stuck. Not giving up.

2. Managing Impulsivity
Take your Time! Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful and deliberative.

3. Listening with understanding and empathy
Understand Others! Devoting mental energy to another person’s thoughts and ideas. Make an effort to perceive another’s point of view and emotions.

4. Thinking flexibly
Look at it Another Way! Being able to change perspectives, generate alternatives, consider options.

5. Thinking about your thinking (Metacognition)
Know your knowing! Being aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others.

6. Striving for accuracy
Check it again! Always doing your best. Setting high standards. Checking and finding ways to improve constantly.

7. Questioning and problem posing
How do you know? Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed and developing questioning strategies to produce those data. Finding problems to solve.

8. Applying past knowledge to new situations
Use what you Learn! Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.

9. Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
Be clear! Striving for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding over generalizations, distortions, deletions and exaggerations.

10. Creating, imagining, and innovating
Try a different way! Generating new and novel ideas, fluency, originality

11. Taking responsible risks
Venture out! Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one’s competence. Try new things constantly.

12. Responding with wonderment and awe
Have fun figuring it out! Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.

13. Finding humor
Laugh a little! Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected. Being able to laugh at oneself.

14. Thinking interdependently
Work together! Being able to work in and learn from others in reciprocal situations. Team work.

15. Remaining open to continuous learning
I have so much more to learn! Having humility and pride when admitting we don’t know; resisting complacency.

16. Gathering data through all senses:
Use your natural pathways! Pay attention to the world around you. Gathering data through all the senses; taste, touch, smell, hearing and sight.

This and other resources available at www.habitsofmind.org
Welcome to the 2015-2016 school year! I am looking forward to another exciting year at Poplar Tree as the Advanced Academics Resource Teacher. This year will be a unique and wonderful experience for all Poplar Tree students. I will be working collaboratively with all classroom teachers to provide enrichment and extension lessons using the 9 Critical and Creative Thinking Strategies. We will also be working together to incorporate STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) and the Habits of Mind into lessons and daily instruction. Together, we are dedicated to making this year an educational and inspirational experience for every child. Please note the deadlines for Level IV referrals, as they are much earlier than last year.

**October 9, 2015**

(NEW to FCPS since January 2015)

Students in grades 3-8 for placement beginning second semester for the 2015-2016 school year.

**January 15, 2016**

Students in grade 2 not in the screening pool, students in grades 3-7 for placement beginning Fall 2016.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

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*Advanced Academics Resource Teacher*

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*Poplar Tree Elementary School: Every other Monday, Wednesday Thursday*