

Kindergarten

In kindergarten, each child is viewed as a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth. Instruction focuses on the developmental abilities of children who are five and six years old. These young students learn best by doing and experiencing their world. The social-emotional, cognitive, and physical needs of each child are nurtured in our program.

Language Arts

Recognizing that speaking and listening skills are essential to intellectual growth and to the development of language skills, the kindergarten program presents all students with many opportunities to expand and enrich these skills. Opportunities to use language provide the basis for phonemic awareness which is the foundation for the skills of reading and writing. Students learn that written expression is another form of communication and are given many opportunities for writing. Basic sight word vocabularies are developed. Students begin reading books. Students with more advanced reading skills receive individualized instruction.

Mathematics

Mathematics offers a way of organizing and understanding observations of the world around us. Kindergarten students are encouraged to think, seek, and discover ideas; to form generalizations; and to look for patterns and relationships. Students learn to identify, write, and use numerals; to compare objects' volume, size, and shape; to understand concepts of more than and less than; and to do simple addition and subtraction problems.

Science

The science program provides students with opportunities to investigate and explore their environment, formulate predictions, and make inferences. Students participate in hands-on units dealing with temperature, senses, seasonal changes, color, shape, animals, wood, paper and/or fabric.

Social Studies

Students gain awareness of themselves and their role in the family and community and learn about community helpers. They also study holidays at appropriate times throughout the year.

Fine Arts

Fine arts experiences are an integral part of the kindergarten program. Kindergarten teachers incorporate music and art into classroom instruction throughout the day. Many opportunities are offered to help students appreciate cultural events and to express themselves through art, movement, drama, and music.

Physical Education

The emphasis for kindergarten students is on large motor activities. Students practice locomotor skills such as crawling, walking, hopping, jumping, skipping, and galloping. The concept of left and right and an awareness of the body and what it is able to do also are a part of the kindergarten curriculum. Games, team activities, and fitness activities are included in the lessons taught by our Motor Parents.

Grades 1 - 5

Art

The art curriculum is an articulated program that formally begins in first grade and gradually builds through fifth grade. Every year new artists are studied, new processes experienced, and the elements of design continually discussed and applied. Diverse media is used including paint, clay, glaze, paper, ink, marker, pastel, glue, and crayon. Artwork is explored through the eye of the artist both past and present. Ultimately, students become increasingly aware of the artists' role in our world. Students in grades 1 – 5 receive art instruction for 50 minutes each week.

Computer Education

The computer curriculum teaches students to use computers as tools. The goal is to make students more productive and more accurate and to expand the environment in which they learn.

In Kindergarten through second grade, students become familiar with computers and learn how to use software programs. They are taught the vocabulary of computers, primary word processing skills, and a variety of software programs. The goal is to be able to use a computer independently by the end of second grade.

Third grade students begin keyboarding instruction. They use computer software as part of the instructional program. Classroom instruction is reinforced through tutorial, drill, and practice software programs.

Students in fourth and fifth grades receive instruction in keyboarding, word processing, and the use of software to demonstrate their knowledge of content after which they use computers as the primary tool for their writing activities.

Environmental Education

Experiences in environmental education occur at all grade levels. The units are designed to help students develop a personal and positive relationship with the environment and to instill a sense of responsibility for its protection. This relationship is built by firsthand experience in natural settings and by increasing the student's knowledge of the earth.

A Nature Lady works with K-3 students several times a year both at school and nature sites. Fifth grade students extend their studies through an overnight outdoor experience every fall at Camp Timberlee in East Troy, Wisconsin.

Gifted Program

Students in grades 3 – 5 are identified to participate in our extended program through demonstrated aptitude and classroom achievement in either or both language arts and mathematics.

The program identifies our district's upper five percent of third through fifth grade students who are intellectually and/or academically gifted for pull out instruction at Grove as well as at every elementary school.

The upper one percent of intellectually talented students in third through fifth grades may participate in a self-contained class located at Hough Street School.

Health

The focus of health education is to promote healthy life styles and guide students toward optimal health as they mature.

The health curriculum goals are: to develop awareness of the role of health in the lives of individuals, families, and the community; to nurture the development of attitudes that place a high value on optimal health; to foster the development of self-awareness and self-esteem; to provide students with the knowledge and skills required to set goals, make informed decisions, and solve health problems; to enable students to deal effectively with change and take increasing responsibility for their health.

Instruction in human growth and development, nutrition, safety, drug awareness and family living is provided at each grade level. Fifth graders participate in DARE taught by a local police officer.

Language Arts

Reading, writing, and oral language are the foundation subjects of the curriculum; they develop the competencies on which virtually all subsequent instruction and learning depends. Reading is defined as a complex, interactive process in which the reader simultaneously uses numerous knowledge systems at multiple levels to construct meaning from print. The knowledge, skills, and strategies needed include at the least the following: decoding accuracy and fluency, language ability, and adequate vocabulary; and a fund of general and topical information.

The current adopted reading text program for grades 1 – 5 is Harcourt *Trophies 2003*. This program aligns with the district's philosophy for reading instruction and provides for both whole group and small group instruction at each student's instructional reading level.

Grade 1

Students continue to develop knowledge of phonemic awareness, learn phonics, and use strategies for word analysis. The students receive daily instruction at

their instructional reading level. Students write daily on self-selected topics and teacher directed topics and share their writing with others. Listening and speaking are an important part of the curriculum. Students receive instruction in printing and spelling.

Grade 2

Students are encouraged to become increasingly independent in their reading; silent reading periods are provided for this purpose. They consider prior knowledge of a topic and make predictions before reading, revise their predictions during reading, and retell the story after reading. Students receive some instruction at their instructional reading level when they meet in small groups. Instruction focuses on phonics, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency. The curriculum also focuses on independent and group writing. Students continue to enhance their formal writing abilities by using the writing process of brainstorming ideas, writing drafts, revising and creating a final piece. All students are taught spelling and cursive handwriting, listening and speaking.

Grade 3

Students at this level have sufficient skill with reading to start using it as a tool for learning. Silent reading in self-selected materials is more extensive. Instruction in phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension, research, and information skills is emphasized. Students receive some instruction at their independent reading level. In written expression, the emphasis is on writing expository, persuasive, and narrative writing essays that have three to five paragraphs featuring topic sentences and supporting details. Listening, speaking, and spelling instruction are also emphasized.

Grades 4 and 5

Reading instruction continues to emphasize comprehension, vocabulary development, word analysis, and fluency. They receive some instruction at their independent reading level. Both fiction and non-fiction reading materials are used. They learn to make predictions before reading, revise their prediction while reading and retell the story after reading. In writing, main idea, supporting details and revision continue to take on a central focus. Expository, persuasive, and narrative writing skills continue to be emphasized. Students also receive instruction in spelling, listening, and speaking skills.

Library-Media Center

Students in grades K – 5 visit the library every week; 50 minutes in Grades 1 – 2; 60 minutes for grades 3 - 5 and for 25 minutes in kindergarten. Our library-media center is staffed by a full-time certified school library-media specialist and is equipped with a wide variety of print and non-print materials. In order to maximize the district resources available to students and staff, a computerized card catalog has been developed. Students can access information from the card catalogs of the other ten schools in the district.

A library-media curriculum serves as the basis for developing cooperative partnerships between the library-media specialist and the classroom teacher. This curriculum emphasizes information retrieval skills, critical thinking skills, and the selection of quality literature for independent reading.

Mathematics

Grade 1

Students use manipulatives to study various topics in mathematics. They are expected to master basic facts in addition and subtraction to two-digit computations. Basic geometric shapes, simple graphs and charts, story problems, and early topics related to measurement are introduced. The study of patterns serves as an introduction to algebraic concepts. Calculators are used for some computations.

Grade 2

Students develop their addition and subtraction skills to three-digit numbers. They continue to study measurement (time, length, temperature, weight), basic geometry, fractions, and story problems. Problem solving strategies focus on multiple strategies for a given problem. Students are introduced to multiplication and division as well as addition and subtraction with regrouping.

Grade 3

Number concepts are extended to seven digits, and addition and subtraction to four digits. Students learn the relationship between multiplication and division. They are responsible for knowing all of the basic multiplication facts through 12. Students are taught fractions, decimals and probability. The study of geometry, measurement, pattern, and story problems continues. Application of problem-solving strategies continues with an emphasis on written reflection with their work.

Grade 4

Students continue with basic mathematic computations and more advanced story problems and problem-solving strategies. The study of fractions includes addition, subtraction, and reduction. The study of measurement includes capacity. Geometry in fourth grade includes parallel and perpendicular lines and perimeters. Decimals and probability are also emphasized.

Grade 5

In fifth grade students use the University of Chicago Everyday Mathematics program. They practice and extend their number sense, measure sense, and estimation skills. Students review and extend their arithmetic, calculator, and thinking skills through extensive work with fractions, decimals, percents, large whole numbers, and negative numbers. Fifth graders also refine their understanding of geometry, probability, and explorations with numerical data. There is an emphasis on algebra with the use of the Hands on Equations program which is continued in middle school. Throughout the year, students work on problem solving skills and strategies particularly through writing.

Music – Vocal

Classroom music is taught by music specialists for 50 minutes per week for students in grades 1 – 5. Concepts studied are rhythm, melody/pitch, harmony, form, tone color, texture, style, and dynamics. The vocabulary of music and the relationship between music and allied arts such as drama and dance are included.

A substantial part of the music curriculum consists of singing and listening. Movement is used to reinforce some music elements. Classroom instruments extend the singing experience, reinforce note and rhythm reading, and encourage creativity.

In-school concerts supplement the classroom music program by providing audience experience and quality live performances of an educational and entertaining nature.

Music – Instrumental

Stringed music instruction begins in fourth grade, leading to students' participation in the district's Beginners Orchestra. Students in fifth grade have the opportunity to participate in band instruction which includes playing in the district's Beginners Band. Recruiting for band is done in the spring of fourth grade, and for orchestra in the spring of third grade.

Physical Education

Students in grades 1 – 3 receive 75 minutes of PE instruction per week and students in grades 4 and 5 receive 100 minutes. The physical education curriculum focuses on physical development as a lifetime process. It is an integral part of the students' total education. Specific objectives have been established at all grade levels in each of the following:

Basic Locomotor Skills: Students gain experience and skill in climbing, jumping, balancing, hopping, and other basic movements which are then incorporated into rhythmic, sport, and fitness activities.

Fitness: Exercise and physical activity are emphasized with the goal of developing muscle tone, strength, flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, and life fitness habits.

Ball Skills: Students gain confidence and skill with the equipment used in popular sports.

Social/Emotional Development: The focus is on development of acceptable social and emotional behavior with emphasis on a healthy balance between cooperation and competition. Opportunities and guidance are given in the development of leadership and sportsmanship.

Team and Individual Activity: These activities provide and interrelation of skills and knowledge as well as practice to improve coordination, agility, balance, strength, and flexibility. They are designed to promote creativity and self-expression.

Reading Resource

The Reading Resource Program provides reading support to eligible students in grades 1-5. Reading Resource teachers work in cooperation with classroom teachers and parents to provide students with small group or one-on-one reading instruction. This reading support supplements the classroom teachers' reading program.

Science

The science program is a process inquiry-based program. Students have ample opportunities for hands-on learning preceding abstract lessons. The basic processes taught are observing, communicating, comparing, organizing, relating, measuring, predicting, and inferring. Integrated processes taught include controlling variables, interpreting data, formulating hypotheses, defining operationally, and experimenting.

Grade 1

First grade students learn characteristics of living and non-living things through the following processes: observing plant development, recording and communicating observations in words and drawings, comparing the developments of different kinds of plants; observing properties of solids, comparing different solids, observing, describing, and organizing observations of mixtures; classifying of sets of objects, measuring liquid volumes, observing and comparing how earth materials are used in human constructions: describing characteristics of living and non-living things using color, texture, shape, odor, and size. Students begin the construction of graphs, estimation of length, and make predictions based on data from a graph.

Grade 2

Second grade students learn characteristics of living and non-living things through the following processes: observing plant development, recording and communicating observations in words and drawings, comparing the developments of different kinds of plants; observing properties of solids, comparing different solids, observing, describing, and organizing observations of mixtures, classifying sets of objects, measuring liquid volumes, observing and comparing how earth materials are used in human constructions; observing weather and weather patterns, using meteorological tools to measure wind speed and direction, collecting weather data and creating graphs based on observations of weather, describing types of weather including cloud types, understanding the weather cycle.

Grade 3

Third grade students study ideas and inventions using the thinking process of advanced organizing, comparing, communicating, and observing. Measurement concepts continue to be introduced and used. Students compare measured capacity results to given values and communicate findings. They compare temperatures and organize information. Students research and investigate

principles of the Solar System. Students research, study and report on properties of different animal structures, behaviors, and habitats.

Grade 4

Fourth grade students extend the study of pattern, interaction, system, and structure. Measurement concepts are refined. Students observe, organize, compare, and record data using linear, weight (mass), fluid, and temperature measurements in both the metric and standard systems. Students observe, sort objects, measure force of attraction, test for conductivity and record observations and results. Students study the muscles, skeleton, and movement of the human body. They also study electricity.

Grade 5

Fifth grade students continue to refine their understanding of the big ideas/themes of pattern, structure, change, interaction, and systems. Students investigate environments through planting terrariums, observing the lifecycle of a beetle and understanding how the components of an environment work together. Variables are explored through experiments with pendulums, standard plane systems, and catapult systems. We also gain understanding of solar energy through the study of shadows and see how solar energy impacts our lives.

Social Studies

The primary purpose of the social studies program is citizenship education. The curriculum places a major emphasis on geography, including map skills. Current events are studied in each grade.

Grade 1

Students explore what makes them unique and their place in the home and family. They learn about their school, their homes, national and state holidays, and community helpers.

Grade 2

Second grade students focus on the worlds around them. They learn about communities, both near and far. Students explore their own culture by

participating in “Spotlight Student” activities that celebrate their family’s heritage. They also learn about other cultures through current events.

Grade 3

The focus is on local and regional communities. Students study how communities provide rules, services, and room for growth and change for the people who live in them. The local communities, the region of Chicago, and the State of Illinois and are examined in depth. A map skills program provides the basis for their study of Illinois. Current events is also a focus.

Grade 4

The diversity of states and regions of North America is studied in fourth grade. Students investigate the American landscape – mountains, deserts, and plains. They delve into specific regions of the U.S.-Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest, and the West. An introduction to U.S. History is offered while studying each region. Students learn how Americans make decisions together.

Grade 5

World Geography is the focus of the fifth grade curriculum. The relationship between different regions of the world is studied. We will delve into the world in spatial terms, places and regions, physical systems, human systems, and the uses of geography. Knowledge of geography will enable fifth graders to develop an understanding of the relationships between people, places, and environments over time.

Special Services

The Department of Special Services utilizes the regular education curriculum as a guide and adapts methodology and materials to achieve goals consistent with the student's developmental level.

Additional goals are developed for each student who is eligible for services through an individual education program (IEP). The IEP is developed before the student's placement is determined. It is reviewed and revised annually or sooner if indicated. The goal of special services is to return the student to the regular education program when possible.

Students who are enrolled in self-contained classes receive instruction in the basic skills, communication skills, problem-solving, decision-making, self-help, and social skills. Art, physical education, music, and library skills are covered in the mainstream. Related services available to help the student learn include occupational and physical therapy, speech and language services, counseling, and social work services.

Each student in a special services program is re-evaluated for continuing eligibility every three years or sooner if indicated.