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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
CURRICULUM



ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

Overview of Curriculum for Grades 1–5

Elementary School students complete seven class periods each day. Academic courses include Literacy Instruction (Reading, Language Therapy, Language Connections, Language Arts), Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education.

Weekly Special Courses

Special courses are scheduled weekly and include Music, Visual Arts, Library Explorations, and Computer Applications.

LITERACY INSTRUCTION

Literacy is the ability to read, write, listen with understanding, and speak. The Fairhill Literacy Committee has worked to create an academic program to support the goals of literacy in a way that meets the individual needs of each student.



DYSLEXIA INTERVENTION Grades 1-5

The Build and Take Flight programs are sequential and structured language programs designed to teach reading, spelling, handwriting, and alphabet skills. These programs were developed by Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children and are based on Orton-Gillingham principles for dyslexia intervention.

The multi-sensory programs begin with the introduction of the most frequently used sounds and letters and progress to letter combinations for reading and spelling. Alphabet sequential skills are introduced and refined throughout the curriculum. Sound manipulatives are used to enhance visual and auditory discovery in phonemic awareness and spelling instruction. The emphasis of Build and Take Flight is to create an automatic response to reading, spelling, and writing.

LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS Grades 4–5

Based on research on developmental spelling and word knowledge, the framework of the Language Connections class provides an exploration of spelling or orthographic knowledge as words are examined for relationships, sounds, spelling patterns, and meanings. Students examine, manipulate, and categorize words with a discovery approach resulting in more confident, proficient, and joyful readers/writers as literacy skills are developed. This approach provides students with the skills to retain, internalize, and transfer valuable knowledge for improved results in all areas of literacy, including written expression. Cursive writing instruction and practice is incorporated into this curriculum.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language arts is a developmental language program that progresses from oral expressive language to written language skills. Initial emphasis is placed on relating verbal language to written language through methods including language experience stories and collaborative writing activities. Written language instruction includes punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. Students write to understand, share their knowledge, persuade, and entertain.

READING

The reading curriculum is an interactive program involving both decoding and comprehension. Students learn, practice, and apply strategies as part of a dynamic process. Instruction is meaning-based and integrates listening, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, and critical thinking. A variety of activities accommodate different learning styles and language proficiencies. An eclectic approach involves both phonetic and whole-language classroom instruction. Class time is divided between literature-based text and novel units.

ADDITIONAL CORE CURRICULUM

MATHEMATICS

Math instruction focuses on developing number concepts from concrete experiences to abstract understanding. Each concept is introduced at the concrete level with manipulatives, and progresses through semi-concrete and abstract levels. Building number sense and math fluency is stressed throughout the elementary mathematics curriculum. Problem-solving is emphasized as students learn to think mathematically and apply their understanding and skills.

SCIENCE

The science program expands students' scientific knowledge while developing abstract thinking skills. Students observe, measure, infer, make judgments, analyze data, test hypotheses, and conduct experiments. Guided discovery and hands-on learning are reinforced through field trips, speakers, movies, and other resources.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social studies involves history, geography, political science, economics, and sociology. Each discipline provides an understanding of human relationships and our world, past and present. Content is reinforced through dramatizations, discussions, research, and projects.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education develops attitudes, skills, and knowledge of movement that encourage lifetime participation in physical activity. The program focuses on fundamental movement and perceptual motor skills through movement exploration, guided discovery, demonstration, and explanation.



ENRICHMENT CLASSES

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

Technology is integrated into the classroom to enhance learning and expand student skills. Students learn word processing, graphic design, spreadsheet applications with charts and graphs, slide show production, and research techniques using electronic reference tools. Content-specific software supports the academic curriculum.

CREATIVE DRAMA

Creative Drama is an improvisational, non-exhibition, process-centered form of drama. Participation can develop language and communication abilities, problem-solving skills, creativity, positive self-concept, social awareness, empathy, and an understanding of the art of theater.

MUSIC

The music program creates awareness, appreciation, and a love of music. Students have opportunities to listen, sing, move, create, play instruments, and perform according to individual abilities and interests while developing concentration, listening skills, and positive self-esteem.

VISUAL ARTS

Visual Art develops visual literacy through exploration of form, texture, color, line, and the ways these elements affect our lives. Students learn to express and communicate concepts in non-verbal terms at a level appropriate to their verbal and perceptual development.

