Inspiring Excellence
Upper Merion Area School District
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Upper Merion Area School District
Curriculum Information for Parents and Community

Kindergarten

With full-day Kindergarten since 2018-19, Upper Merion Area elementary schools welcome our youngest learners to formal education in the public school system. In Kindergarten, we offer a strong emphasis on developing the whole child: academically, socially, and emotionally.

All of our elementary classrooms begin the day with Morning Meeting, in which students actively participate in a circle for the purpose of greeting each other, sharing something about themselves, participating in an activity, and listening to the teacher's morning message. Then the teacher leads students through a daily calendar activity. Students participate in English Language Arts for 120 minutes and math for 60 minutes. Students go to Specials (Art, Music, Physical Education, and Library) for a 40-minute period each day and an additional 30-minute period every-other-day. Kindergarten students have science/social studies lessons every-other-day. Students enjoy snack breaks, recess, and creative play every school day as they engage in more informal interactions with their peers. Our elementary schools follow an 8-day schedule (Days A-H).

If you have any questions regarding your child's educational program, please contact your child's teacher for more information.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)
Kindergarten students develop academic communication skills through regular practice in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Specific ELA skills in Kindergarten include:
-Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes)
-Read emergent reader text with purpose and persistence
-Answer questions to demonstrate an understanding of key details in a text with prompting and support
-Identify parts of a book (title, author) and parts of a text (beginning, end, details)
-Use words and phrases acquired through being read to, conversations, and reading to participate in class discussions
-actively engage in small group Guided Reading with the teacher and associated independent activities in stations
-use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts
Upper Merion uses *Fundations* by Wilson to teach phonics and the correct formation of manuscript letters. We use *Wonders* by McGraw Hill to teach Balanced Literacy. And, we use the tenants of *Kid Writing* to encourage writing. Kindergarten teachers promote the articulation of vowels, consonants, digraphs, and blends through modeling and demonstrate tripod pencil grip for writing.

MATHEMATICS
In Kindergarten students are developing a positive feeling about mathematics by counting, measuring, comparing, estimating, and discovering patterns in life. Students use numbers to represent quantities and solve quantitative problems; choose, combine, and apply effective strategies for answering quantitative questions; describe their physical world using geometric ideas; and use basic shapes and spatial reasoning to model objects in their environment and to construct more complex shapes.

- Count to 100 by ones and tens.
- Count forward beginning from a given number (instead of having to begin at 1).
- Write numbers from 0 to 20.

- Count objects saying the number names in order (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4 objects).
- Identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group.
- Represent addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, sounds (e.g., claps), acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, or equations.
- Decompose numbers less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., 5 = 2 + 3 and 5 = 4 + 1).
- For any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to the given number, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record the answer with a drawing or equation.
- Fluently add and subtract within 5.
- Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object.
- Classify objects into categories; count the number of objects in each category and sort the categories by count.
- Correctly name shapes regardless of their orientation or overall size.
- Model shapes in the world by building shapes from components (e.g., sticks and clay balls) and drawing shapes.

SPECIALS

Art -- Kindergarten art focuses on how to be a student and how to be an artist. As students learn to use art materials safely and expressively, they start using those skills to say things about themselves and their world. The district art show in May features student work.

Music -- In music class students listen, sing, connect, create, play, and move. Students begin to learn about dynamics, tempo, steady beat, and pitch. They practice letter songs and dances and are introduced to the music of a few famous composers. All elementary students have access to the online curriculum available through *Musicplay*.

Health -- Our health education promotes wellness, personal responsibility, positive decision-making, and using S.M.A.R.T. goals. Students will study a variety of themes in health class that are taught at the age appropriate level for each topic. The health themes covered include: Social and emotional health, human growth and development, hygiene and disease prevention, nutrition and fitness, safety and injury prevention, and learning about the effects of drugs that help or hurt our bodies.

Physical Education -- In physical education students will learn about how lifestyle behaviors you develop now will have an impact on your wellness in the future. The curriculum is designed to promote physical fitness, effective communication, teamwork, sportsmanship and a determination to do your best. A basic tenet of the student's experience is that physical activity positively impacts your physical, mental, and social and emotional wellness. The main curriculum themes include: Movement (locomotor and non-locomotor movements), fitness (health and skill based fitness, manipulative games (throwing, kicking, sticking, bouncing), cooperative and creative games (working together), invasion games (soccer, basketball), net wall games (volleyball, tennis), recreational games (tag games, ga-ga ball, bocce), and safety (spatial awareness). Our goal is to have students up and moving 80% of their class time!

Library -- During library time, students listen to read-alouds, participate in lessons related to children's literature, and learn to locate and select books. School counselors provide lessons to students in place of some library periods.

SCIENCE/SOCIAL STUDIES

Hands-on Citizenship and Life Science lessons are provided for students. These lessons are extensions of the themes introduced in *Wonders*.