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

Grade 4

Fourth Grade is the middle year of the intermediate grades (3-5) and the final year in our elementary school buildings. In Fourth Grade, students are expected to use figurative language and apply critical analysis to their writing. In math, understanding fractions is a major point of emphasis. Even as fourth graders are in a leadership role in their school, we continue to provide a rich, supportive learning environment for 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. After that students spend their morning working on reading and writing during English Language Arts. After recess and lunch, Fourth Graders have math class and then attend Specials (Art, Music, Physical Education, and Library) classes. Fourth Graders attend Specials for a 40-minute period each day and an additional 30-minute period on half of their school days. To complete their school day, students participate in science/social studies and then Excel. During Excel, students get small-group reading instruction based on their skill needs. Bridgeport, Caley, and Roberts follow an 8-day schedule (Days A-H), while Caley and Gulph follow a 10-day schedule (Days 1-10). Fourth-grade students are invited to sign up for strings and/or band lessons.

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

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)
Fourth Grade students develop academic communication skills through regular practice in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Visual and technological communication is integrated. Specific ELA skills in Fourth Grade include:
-Read and comprehend grade-level literary fiction, literary nonfiction, and informational text independently and proficiently
-Know and apply grade-level phonics, sight words, and word analysis skills in reading with accuracy and fluency
-Refer to details and examples in texts to support what the text says explicitly and to make inferences
-Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in grade-level texts, including figurative language
-Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text
-Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly
-Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the nonfiction topic
-Write opinion pieces, using words and phrases to convey ideas precisely and effectively
-Demonstrate a grade-appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

Upper Merion Area School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious affiliation, national origin, sex, age, marital status or non-relevant handicaps and disabilities in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504. The district's commitment to nondiscrimination extends to students, employees, prospective employees and the community. For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures or for information regarding services, activities and facilities that are accessible to and useable by handicapped persons, contact Manager of Human Resources, Upper Merion Area School District, 435 Crossfield Road, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, 19406, (610) 205-6405.

-Use cursive writing to complete assignments
Upper Merion uses *Wonders* by McGraw Hill to teach Balanced Literacy. We use *Zaner Bloser* materials to teach cursive writing. Overall, our teachers instruct students toward the mastery of the Pennsylvania Core Standards.

MATHEMATICS
Fourth Grade students are immersed in a mathematical environment where they will be automatic in their math facts and use these facts to solve intricate problems. Problems involve using factors, adding and subtracting multi-digit numbers, multiplying and dividing using a variety of algorithms, and begin working with the fundamental properties of Geometry.

- Interpret a multiplication equation as a comparison, e.g., interpret 35 = 5 x 7 as a statement that 35 is 5 times as many as 7 and 7 times as many as 5.
- Determine all factor pairs for a whole number in the range 1 - 100.
- Determine whether a whole number in the range 1 - 100 is prime or composite.
- Apply concepts of place value to recognize that in a multi-digit whole number, a digit in one place represents ten times what it represents in the place to its right.
- Use place value understanding to round multi-digit whole numbers to any place.
- Fluently add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm.
- Multiply a whole number of up to four digits by a one-digit whole number, and multiply two two-digit numbers.
- Find whole-number quotients and remainders with up to four-digit dividends and one-digit divisors.
- Explain what a fraction *a/b* is equivalent to a fraction *(n x a)/(n x b)* using visual fraction models. Use this principle to generate equivalent fractions.
- Compare two fractions with different numerators and different denominators, e.g., by creating common denominators or numerators, or by comparing to a benchmark fraction such as ½.
- Understand addition and subtraction of fractions as joining and separating parts referring to the same whole.
- Decompose a fraction into a sum of fractions with the same denominator in more than one way, recording each decomposition by an equation.
- Add and subtract mixed numbers with like denominators.
- Use decimal notation for fractions with denominators 10 or 100.
- Know relative sizes of measurement units within one system of units including km, m, cm; kg, g; lb, oz; l, ml; hr, min, sec.
- Use the four operations to solve word problems involving distances, intervals of time, liquid volumes, masses of objects, and money, including problems involving simple fractions or decimals.
- Apply the area and perimeter formulas for rectangles in real-world and mathematical problems.
- An angle that turns through *n* one-degree angles is said to have an angle measure of *n* degrees.
- Measure angles in whole-number degrees using a protractor. Sketch angles of specified measure.
- Draw points, lines, line segments, rays, angles (right, acute, obtuse), and perpendicular and parallel lines. Identify these in two-dimensional figures.
- Classify two-dimensional figures based on the presence or absence of parallel or perpendicular lines, or the presence or absence of angles of a specified size.

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SPECIALS

Art -- As students work to find their own voices as artists, they look at more contemporary art and the work of American artists. Students are introduced to more ways of art-making and continue to improve their techniques. The district art show in May features student work.

Music -- In general music students listen, sing, connect, create, play, and move. Students continue to analyze beat, rhythm, tempo, form, pitch, dynamics, timbre, articulation, melody, harmony, and more. In fourth grade, students learn to play the recorder and may be invited to participate in school musical performances. 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 research, and learn to locate and select books. School counselors provide lessons to students in place of some library periods.

SCIENCE and SOCIAL STUDIES

Science content centers on Life Science (e.g., life cycle and ecosystems), Earth and Space Science (e.g., water cycle, solar system), and Physical Science (e.g., energy and matter, forces and motion). Social Studies content is based on the geography and culture of regions of the United States.

In Fourth Grade, students take PSSA tests in ELA and math. The Text Dependent Analysis (TDA) essay makes up 25% of a student's ELA score.

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