Lower School Curriculum Guide 2026-2027

Fort Bend Christian Academy
1201 Lakeview Drive
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Curriculum Guide Overview

This curriculum guide provides an overview of Fort Bend Christian Academy's Lower School academic program, outlining what students learn, how instruction is delivered, and how learning progresses from prekindergarten through Grade 4. Guided by FBCA's mission as a Christian school, our program integrates strong academics with a biblical worldview, supporting students' intellectual growth while cultivating character, responsibility, and faith. This guide serves as a resource for parents and teachers, offering a clear understanding of our curriculum, instructional practices, and academic expectations as students build foundational skills in literacy, mathematics, and the content areas within a Christ-centered environment.

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Fort Bend Christian Academy Mission Statement

Fort Bend Christian Academy exists to glorify God through excellence in college preparatory Christian education. It is the mission of Fort Bend Christian Academy to equip students to thrive spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

Lower School Philosophy

At Fort Bend Christian Academy's Lower School, we provide a nurturing, Christ-centered environment where students grow in both faith and academics. These early years are foundational—not only for academic development but also for shaping hearts and minds through a biblical worldview. We help students see all learning as an opportunity to know, worship, and serve God—pointing them to His truth, character, and purposes in every subject and experience.

Our teachers intentionally model Christ-like character and Biblical values in everyday interactions, creating a culture where spiritual formation is woven into every aspect of school life. We believe that developing godly character—qualities like love, joy, peace, patience, and kindness—is just as vital as academic achievement.

Students thrive in our close-knit community where they are truly known and valued. Our small class sizes allow teachers to connect with each student personally, helping them build positive relationships while developing resilience and confidence. Through our cherished traditions and joyful atmosphere, children create lasting memories and meaningful friendships.

Our approach combines proven teaching methods with engaging, hands-on learning that encourages students to make meaningful connections across content areas. We strive to integrate subjects in ways that help children see the bigger picture—how ideas connect, how knowledge builds, and how truth reveals God's design. Students are encouraged to think critically, solve problems, and explore creatively. We also prioritize physical activity throughout the day, recognizing its importance in helping young learners stay focused and healthy.

We view parents as our essential partners in education. As their children's first and most important teachers, we honor parents' role as primary disciple-makers and welcome their involvement through chapel participation, classroom volunteering, and special events. Together, we nurture each child's spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development, preparing them not just for academic success but for a life of purpose and faith.

Biblical Worldview Integration in the Lower School

At Fort Bend Christian Academy, we believe God has something to say about every area of our study because He is the source of it all—whether it be science, math, history, fine arts, or physical education. A biblical worldview isn't an add-on to our curriculum; it is the lens through which every subject is taught, explored, and understood.

From Pre-K through 4th grade, our teachers thoughtfully weave Scripture, God's character, and His purposes into daily instruction. We want our youngest learners to begin seeing the world the way God sees it—full of His order, creativity, and love—so that as they grow, they are equipped not only with knowledge but also with wisdom rooted in Truth.

What Does Biblical Worldview Integration Look Like?

Biblical worldview integration means that every subject points students back to the Creator. Rather than treating faith and academics as separate pursuits, our teachers help students discover how God's truth speaks into every discipline. In the Lower School, this looks like age-appropriate conversations, Scripture connections, and Christ-centered classroom culture woven naturally into the rhythm of each school day.

We encourage our students to ask what God's purpose is in each discipline and to consider how He will use each area of study for His glory. Even at the youngest ages, our students begin learning to articulate and understand the Christian faith—not just what Christians believe, but why we believe, and how it shapes our everyday lives.

How It Comes to Life Across Subjects

Bible
In Bible, we affirm that God's Word is the foundation of all truth and the starting point for understanding every other area of study. Lower School students participate in Bible class every day, building a growing knowledge of Scripture, God's character, and His story of redemption through age-appropriate lessons that shape how they see themselves and the world around them.

English Language Arts
In ELA, we affirm God's gift and use of language, words, and story to reveal Himself. We want our students to mirror Him in their own written and spoken words and stories. From early readers to developing writers, our students learn that language is purposeful—given by God to communicate truth, build understanding, and reflect His character.

Mathematics
In Math, we affirm that God is methodical, purposeful, and constant—that He orders and structures. As students work with numbers, patterns, and problem-solving, they encounter a God who designed a universe that operates with precision and reliability.

Science
In Science, we affirm that God is the Creator and that creation, though fallen, points us back to Him. We affirm that careful observation and study of creation is a means of worship and praise. From plant life to weather to the human body, our youngest learners develop a sense of wonder and stewardship for the world God spoke into existence.

Social Studies
Students learn about communities, cultures, and historical events through the lens of God's sovereignty. They begin to understand that God is at work throughout history and that every person is made in His image.

Fine Arts
Music, visual art, and creative expression reflect the heart of a Creator who made us in His image. Students learn that their gifts and talents are given by God and can be used to glorify Him.

Athletics & Physical Education
In Athletics, we affirm the stewardship of our physical bodies in the belief that Christ dwells in us—therefore, what we do with our physical bodies matters to God. Students develop teamwork, sportsmanship, and healthy habits while learning that their bodies are a gift to be cared for with purpose.

A Cohesive, Intentional Education

As a Pre-K–12 school, we carefully design our entire academic program so that students benefit from a cohesive curriculum—from their earliest learning opportunities until graduation, when they are fully prepared to succeed in college and beyond. Biblical worldview integration in the Lower School is not a separate class or an afterthought. It is the starting point. Every subject, every classroom conversation, and every interaction between teachers and students is shaped by the conviction that God is the source of all knowledge and that learning is an act of discovering more about Him and His world.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."
— Proverbs 9:10

Lower School Leadership Team



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Head of Lower School



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LS Reading Department Head



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Overview of the Lower School Program



The Lower School at Fort Bend Christian Academy offers a strong academic foundation rooted in a biblical worldview. From pre-kindergarten through fourth grade, students build foundational skills in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies while deepening their knowledge of Scripture. Every aspect of this program—from curriculum design and resource selection to unit planning and assessment—is shaped by FBCA Academic Standards, the school's own rigorous framework developed through a comprehensive review of Texas state standards (TEKS), nationally recognized frameworks such as NCTE, NCTM, and NGSS, and ERB assessment benchmarks. Refined by experienced FBCA teachers and academic leaders, these standards define precisely what students should know and be able to do at each grade level, ensuring that the Lower School program reflects both academic excellence and biblical integration. Small group instruction in both reading and math allows teachers to meet students where they are and provide targeted support at every level. Each grade is intentionally designed to prepare students for what comes next, with dedicated specials in Spanish, STEAM, music, art, technology, library, and physical education woven throughout the week. Signature traditions, interdisciplinary projects, and annual field trips enrich the academic experience at every stage.

Grade Level Progression

Pre-Kindergarten: Pre-Kindergarten at Fort Bend Christian Academy is a purposeful introduction to school life that balances structured learning with play and discovery. Students build early reading and math skills from day one alongside daily Bible instruction and hands-on learning in science and social studies. Fine motor skill development is woven throughout the day as students practice proper pencil grip, scissor skills, and hand strengthening through activities like cutting, tracing, lacing, and manipulating small objects. Rotating specials—including Spanish, STEAM, music, art, and technology—round out the week and give students a well-rounded introduction to the full FBCA experience. A cherished tradition is Fairy Tale Day, when students dress up as their favorite fairy tale characters to celebrate their fairy tale unit. The annual field trip to the Houston Museum of Natural Science in Sugar Land brings classroom learning to life as students explore God's creation up close.

Kindergarten: Kindergarten is where the foundation of reading is established. Students spend significant time each day immersed in literacy, learning letter sounds, building words, and beginning to read independently. Math instruction grows as well, with students counting well beyond 100 and working with early addition and subtraction. In Bible class, kindergartners learn to recite all 66 books of the Bible in order and walk through the stories of Scripture from creation to the life of Jesus. A highlight of the year is a thematic learning unit on Texas that coincides with Go Texan Day, bringing Texas history, symbols, and traditions to life across the classroom. One of the most beloved traditions of the kindergarten year is the Kinder Senior Buddy program, in which each kindergartener is paired with an FBCA senior. Buddies meet once a month throughout the year for shared activities such as decorating pumpkins, enjoying a teddy bear picnic, and building gingerbread houses together. The friendships that develop through this program are a cherished part of the FBCA community. The annual field trip to Oil Ranch connects students to the land, agriculture, and community around them.

First Grade: First grade is a year of growing confidence and independence as students become stronger readers, writers, and thinkers. The year begins with a special milestone—the Bible Dedication Ceremony, in which each first grader receives their own *NIV Adventure Bible.* Parents are invited to attend this meaningful celebration, which marks the moment when students, now becoming proficient readers, are entrusted with God's Word in a translation made just for them. Students keep this Bible throughout their entire Lower School experience, using it in Bible class from 1st through 4th grade. Students are encouraged to always carry God's Word in their hearts and make it a lamp to their feet. Reading instruction deepens as students engage with longer texts and more complex words, and they begin the Accelerated Reader program during their weekly library block, selecting books, reading independently, and completing comprehension quizzes. In math, students extend their work with larger numbers and build fact fluency, and they are introduced to personal financial literacy, learning about earning, spending, saving, and giving. Bible instruction traces the biblical narrative from creation through Israel's arrival in Egypt, and students begin learning to locate passages in Scripture on their own. Cross-curricular projects are a hallmark of the year: students research polar animals and write and illustrate their own nonfiction books, and they complete an inventors' research project that connects science, history, and writing. The year is filled with

memorable moments too, including the Favorite Book Character Parade and field trips that bring the first-grade curriculum to life.

Second Grade: Second grade marks a pivotal academic transition—the shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Students begin reading chapter books, writing with greater structure and detail, and thinking more critically across subjects. Math skills advance as students work with larger numbers and begin building the foundations for multiplication. A defining experience of the year is an immersive interdisciplinary unit on Ancient Egypt, in which students explore what makes a civilization and investigate Ancient Egypt as a case study, examining its geography, society, and culture through reading, writing, science, and social studies. As part of this unit, students write a travelogue documenting an imagined journey through the ancient world, connecting research, writing, and storytelling into one rich project. A favorite tradition is Pet Day, when students bring their pets to school, tying into their studies of living things and God's creation. The annual field trip to the Houston Museum of Natural Science reinforces the year's learning and deepens students' appreciation for the world God made.

Third Grade: Third grade is a year of meaningful transition and academic growth. For the first time, students move between classrooms and teachers throughout the day, a shift to departmentalized instruction that builds independence, organization, and adaptability while preparing them for the upper grades. The academic expectations rise to meet this new structure: students take on multiplication and fractions, begin writing multi-paragraph compositions in cursive, and learn to design and conduct their own science experiments. Reading instruction moves beyond comprehension into deeper analysis, with students expected to support their thinking with evidence from the text. In social studies, the focus shifts to a global perspective, culminating in the World Symposium, a signature research project in which students select a region of the world, conduct research using multiple sources, and present their findings to an audience. A highlight of the year is Charlotte's Web Day, when students celebrate the culmination of their Charlotte's Web reading unit with hands-on spider studies in science, an interdisciplinary experience that brings together great literature and real-world learning. The annual field trip to NASA connects students to the wonder of space exploration and the vastness of God's creation.

Fourth Grade: Fourth grade is a year of leadership and deepening responsibility. As the oldest students in the Lower School, fourth graders serve as role models by leading praise and worship during weekly chapel services. Through Children in Action, they also take on daily service roles, from welcoming families at morning drop-off to holding doors for classmates and teachers. Academic expectations also increase significantly. Math expands to include multi-digit multiplication and division, fractions, and decimals, and writing progresses to persuasive essays, formal letters, and original poetry. Reading moves into analysis as students interpret figurative language, compare themes, and evaluate an author's purpose and craft. A highlight of the year is the living history project, where students research a historical figure and bring that person to life through a demonstration that connects research, writing, presentation, and social studies. Bible instruction continues the biblical narrative through the divided kingdom, the exile, and the rebuilding of Israel under Nehemiah and Ezra. Fourth graders also enjoy a rich calendar of field trips. A visit to the Health Museum deepens their study of

the human body, a fine arts trip to a live musical introduces them to the performing arts, a service project puts their faith into action in the community, and an end-of-year celebration at Andretti's caps their final year in the Lower School in style.

Curriculum at a Glance



The Lower School curriculum at FBCA is organized around six core subject areas and seven weekly enrichment classes. Every course is taught in alignment with FBCA Academic Standards—the school's comprehensive framework developed from a rigorous review of Texas state standards (TEKS), nationally recognized frameworks such as NCTM and NGSS, and ERB assessment benchmarks. These standards define the knowledge, skills, and competencies students are expected to master at each grade level, and they serve as the foundation for curriculum design, resource selection, unit planning, and assessment. What follows is an overview of each subject area and the learning experiences that define the Lower School years.

Biblical Studies

Curriculum at a Glance

Overview

Biblical Studies is a core subject at FBCA, taught daily across all Lower School grade levels. Our program is built on the conviction that Scripture is not simply a collection of stories to memorize but the living narrative of God's redemption that shapes how students understand themselves, their relationships, and the world around them. Through intentional, age-appropriate instruction, students develop biblical literacy, internalize foundational truths, and cultivate habits of spiritual formation that prepare them for a life of faith. Scripture memorization is woven throughout the Lower School experience—in Kindergarten, students memorize Psalm 139 over the course of the year and recite it to their families at the end-of-year kindergarten celebration, and in grades 1–4, students engage in weekly Scripture memorization, learning methods for memorizing, reading, and understanding God's Word.

Curriculum: Building on the Rock (Summit Ministries)

FBCA uses Building on the Rock, a K–5 Bible curriculum published by Summit Ministries. This program combines a Bible survey, which is an overview of the Bible's content, with worldview training through a spiral sequence that grows with students year after year. Twenty foundational Biblical Truths serve as the backbone of the curriculum, presenting timeless Scripture through the lens of God's larger narrative of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration. Each grade level concentrates on one thematic strand while reviewing and previewing the others, ensuring that students encounter and deepen their understanding of every truth across their elementary years. A signature element of the curriculum is the House of Truth—a 3D model that students help construct in the classroom each year, visually representing how their faith is built on the rock of God's Word.

Program Strands

Our Lower School Biblical Studies program is organized around four integrated strands:

Biblical Literacy

Students learn the structure and organization of the Bible. Beginning in pre-K, they are introduced to the two testaments and 66 books. By 4th grade, students can recite all books in order, locate them without a table of contents, and categorize them by genre.

Biblical Narrative

Students journey chronologically through Scripture. Each grade level adds a new era of the biblical story—from Creation and the Patriarchs through the Monarchy, Exile, and Restoration—building a comprehensive understanding of God's unfolding plan.

Biblical Truths

Anchored in Summit's 20 Biblical Truths, students explore foundational doctrines organized around five themes: Wisdom, Fellowship, Image-Bearing, Servanthood, and Stewardship. These truths follow the arc of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.

Spiritual Formation

Students develop lifelong habits of faith, including prayer, gratitude, Scripture memorization, and reflective Bible reading. Weekly chapel services and participation in the Church's celebration of Christmas and Easter nurture corporate worship.

The 20 Biblical Truths

The 20 Biblical Truths form the backbone of the Building on the Rock curriculum. Organized in groups of four, they trace the Bible's overarching story—creation, fall, redemption, and restoration—across five relational dimensions.

Wisdom (Grade 1)	1. God is Truth and always tells us what is right and true. 2. God is the only true and almighty God. 3. God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. 4. God is the Creator.
Fellowship (Grade 2)	5. God created people to be His children and to praise His glory. 6. God created people to need Him for everything. 7. Sin causes separation and disharmony between people and God. 8. Jesus died to restore fellowship and harmony between people and God.
Image-Bearing (Grade 3)	9. God created all people in His image. 10. God placed a crown of glory and honor on His image-bearers. 11. Sin causes disharmony within God's image-bearers. 12. Jesus died to restore harmony within God's image-bearers.
Servanthood (Grade 4)	13. God created His image-bearers to love and serve one another. 14. God created the family and nation in which His image-bearers are to live and serve. 15. Sin causes disharmony among God's image-bearers. 16. Jesus died to bring His image-bearers into a new family and nation—God's Church.
Stewardship (Grade 5)	17. God holds His creation together by His power. 18. God created His image-bearers to rule over His Earth. 19. Sin causes disharmony between God's image-bearers and the earth. 20. Jesus died to restore harmony between God's image-bearers and the earth.

Biblical Studies Grade-Level Overview

Grade	Theme	Biblical Truths Focus	Biblical Narrative	Character Traits
Pre-K	Introduction	Overview of all 20 Truths	Creation & the Fall; Bible families; young Bible characters; stories of adventure; Jesus' life, love, and miracles; Paul and the early church	—
Kindergarten	Introduction to Biblical Truths & Character	Overview of Truths 1–20 (Wisdom, Fellowship, Image-Bearing, Servanthood, Stewardship)	Creation & the Fall, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Ruth, David, Elijah, and Jesus' birth, parables, death & resurrection	Holiness, Obedience, Peace
1st Grade	Wisdom	Truths 1–4: God is Truth; God is the only true God; God is Triune; God is Creator	Seven days of Creation, Noah and the Flood, lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and Israel's arrival in Egypt	Obedience, Reverence
2nd Grade	Fellowship	Truths 5–8: God created people as His children; God created people to need Him; sin causes separation; Jesus restores fellowship	Israel in Egypt & slavery, Moses and deliverance, wilderness journey, the Tabernacle, Joshua and the Judges	Loyalty, Trust
3rd Grade	Image-Bearing	Truths 9–12: God created people in His image; God crowned His image-bearers; sin causes internal disharmony; Jesus restores harmony	King Saul, King David, King Solomon, the prophet Samuel, the building and structure of the Temple	Gratitude, Humility
4th Grade	Servanthood	Truths 13–16: God created image-bearers to serve; God created family and nation for service; sin causes relational disharmony; Jesus creates a new family—the Church	Divided Kingdom of Israel and Judah, kingship and prophets, life in exile, Nehemiah and Ezra rebuild Israel	Compassion, Honesty

Language Arts

Curriculum at a Glance

Overview

Language Arts is at the heart of the Lower School experience at FBCA. Our program is rooted in research-based, structured literacy practices and intentionally designed to develop confident, skilled readers and writers who think critically and communicate effectively. Instruction follows FBCA Academic Standards, which are based on Texas state standards (TEKS), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) standards, and ERB assessment benchmarks to outline the reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and oral communication skills that students should learn in each grade. From Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade, students progress from learning to read to reading to learn through explicit, systematic instruction paired with rich and meaningful reading and writing experiences.

Reading: Early Elementary (Pre-K–2nd Grade)

Foundational Reading Skills

Reading instruction in Pre-K through 2nd grade is anchored in Really Great Reading (RGR), a structured literacy program rooted in the Science of Reading. RGR provides explicit, systematic instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, decoding, encoding, and fluency through focused daily lessons (approximately 15–20 minutes of direct instruction). A distinctive feature of RGR is its hands-on spelling component. Students use colorful spelling tiles to build and manipulate words alongside the teacher, strengthening their understanding of sound-symbol relationships and supporting orthographic mapping—the process by which words become permanently stored for automatic reading.

In Pre-Kindergarten, instruction emphasizes kindergarten readiness, including phonemic awareness, early letter recognition, and foundational letter-sound connections. In Kindergarten through 2nd grade, students build decoding accuracy and fluency through cumulative instruction and classroom-based digital reinforcement using Reading Playground. This platform is used intentionally within the classroom to reinforce skills taught during direct instruction.

Literature & Comprehension

Each day, teachers read aloud high-quality literature and informational texts. Through guided discussion, questioning, and modeling of thinking strategies, students learn to interact deeply with text. Daily read-alouds expand vocabulary, build background knowledge, and strengthen listening comprehension—essential foundations for proficient reading. These conversations also help students make meaningful connections across subjects and understand the world through a biblical worldview.

Interdisciplinary Thematic Units

Throughout the year, teachers implement interdisciplinary thematic units that intentionally integrate reading comprehension, writing, science, and social studies. These units immerse students in connected learning experiences that build background knowledge and make reading purposeful. For instance, first graders learn about polar animals by reading about cold-weather science, studying how animals adapt, and doing a research project that is put together into a published class book. In 2nd grade, students study Ancient Egypt, examining geography, civilization development, and the science of mummification within a biblical narrative framework and create a travelogue documenting an imagined journey to Ancient Egypt.

Reading: Upper Elementary (3rd–4th Grade)

Literature & Novel Studies

As students move into 3rd and 4th grade, reading instruction deepens significantly. Students read classic and contemporary novels through novel studies, literature circles, and independent reading projects that develop critical thinking, literary analysis, and a lasting love for reading. In 3rd grade, titles include *Stone Fox*, *Charlotte's Web, The Jungle Book,* and *Secret in the Maple Tree*; 4th graders read *Sign of the Beaver*, *Number the Stars*, and *The Lemonade War.* Comprehension instruction focuses on analyzing text structures, identifying themes across multiple texts, making inferences supported by textual evidence, and evaluating author's purpose and craft, all while connecting literature to biblical themes and real-world ideas. Chapter novels are first introduced as a whole class during the second semester of second grade, though many students begin reading them independently before that point.

Small Group Instruction & Literacy Stations

Across all grade levels, every student participates in small group reading instruction. Teachers meet with small groups focused on fluency, comprehension, and targeted skill development, while the remainder of the class rotates through structured language arts stations. Stations include daily writing practice, word study and spelling reinforcement, targeted literacy skill activities, and independent and partner reading. This model ensures individualized attention and consistent practice across all components of reading and writing. In grades 1–4, students also participate in the Accelerated Reader program through the library, encouraging consistent independent reading and accountability.

Word Study & Spelling

FBCA has strengthened its approach to spelling instruction by moving beyond memorization of isolated weekly word lists to a comprehensive word study model that teaches students how words work. Rather than focusing solely on short-term memorization, students learn spelling patterns, syllable types, and word-building strategies that equip them to decode and encode thousands of words with confidence. Importantly, students are still held accountable for spelling mastery. Regular assessments continue, and students are expected to study, practice, and demonstrate proficiency in the spelling patterns and high-frequency words taught each week.

In Pre-K through 2nd grade, word study aligns with Really Great Reading. Students master systematic spelling patterns—including closed, open, r-controlled, and vowel team syllables—while also practicing irregular high-frequency "heart words." These heart words require memorization because part of the word does not follow typical phonetic patterns. Students are expected to study and practice heart words consistently and demonstrate mastery through ongoing assessments.

In 3rd and 4th grade, students transition to FBCA's internally developed word study curriculum. Third graders study prefixes, suffixes, base words, and spelling changes, while fourth graders advance to Latin and Greek roots, advanced affixes, and morphology. Students continue to be assessed on spelling patterns, word application, and vocabulary knowledge. This approach strengthens long-term retention, supports vocabulary growth, and improves spelling accuracy across all subject areas.

Writing Development

Writing instruction at FBCA is guided by the Voyages curriculum, which teaches writing by genre through extensive modeling and structured practice. Students develop skills progressively across narrative, informative, opinion, and persuasive writing. Beginning with drawing and dictation in Pre-K, students advance to composing simple sentences in Kindergarten. By 4th grade, students are producing well-structured, multi-paragraph compositions, including research projects, poetry, persuasive pieces, and formal letters. Students learn and apply

the complete writing process—planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing—with increasing independence each year.

In addition, our teachers are trained in the Jane Schaffer Writing Method. This structured framework supports narrative writing across all grade levels and expository writing in 2nd through 4th grade, helping students to organize ideas clearly and support their thinking with evidence.

Grammar is taught explicitly beginning in Kindergarten, and handwriting follows the D'Nealian style. Students begin transitioning to cursive in 2nd grade, and by 3rd grade, cursive handwriting is required across written assignments.

Assessment & Growth Monitoring

At FBCA, student progress in reading and writing is monitored through a purposeful mix of assessments that together give teachers and families a complete picture of each student's development. In Kindergarten, the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) is administered two to three times per year. This individualized, one-on-one assessment gives the teacher the opportunity to listen to a student read aloud and evaluate their reading level, accuracy, fluency, and comprehension through direct observation and discussion. In 1st and 2nd grade, the Star Renaissance reading assessment, aligned to Texas state standards (TEKS), is administered quarterly to measure reading comprehension, vocabulary, and text analysis skills, and to inform small group instruction. In 3rd and 4th grade, the ERB Milestone assessment is taken twice a year, providing standards-aligned benchmark data on student progress in English Language Arts. Every spring, all students in grades 1–4 take the ERB CTP-5. This test is based on national standards and FBCA Academic Standards and is designed specifically for independent schools. It measures reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing mechanics, writing concepts and skills, and verbal reasoning. Together, these assessments give teachers and families the information they need to support every student's growth as a reader and writer.

Our Goal

By the time students complete 4th grade, they are confident readers, thoughtful writers, and articulate communicators prepared for the increasing academic demands of Middle School. More importantly, they learn to use language as a tool for thinking deeply, engaging Scripture, and understanding the world through a Biblical worldview.

Language Arts Grade-Level Overview

Grade	Reading & Fluency	Word Study	Writing	Comprehension
Pre-K	Kindergarten readiness; phonemic awareness; letter recognition and sounds; print concepts; emergent reading with predictable texts; CVC word patterns; daily read-alouds	Letter-sound connections; simple word families (-at, -an, -it); beginning sound isolation	Letter formation, name writing, drawing to convey ideas, dictating simple stories, labeling pictures	Retelling familiar stories, answering who/what/where questions, making predictions from pictures, and making personal connections to stories
Kinder	Phonological awareness and phonics (CVC words); onset-rime blending; high-frequency words; decoding simple sentences; daily read alouds; independent reading 10–15 min daily	All letter sounds; CVC decoding; systematic phonics sequence, and high-frequency sight words	Simple sentences; narrative, informative, and opinion genres with scaffolding; D'Nealian manuscript; beginning punctuation, capitalization, and daily grammar	Key details: story retelling with sequence; characters, setting, and events; comparing character experiences
1st	Developing fluency in decodable text (approximately 60–90 WPM by year's end); phoneme blending and segmentation; all six syllable types; daily read-alouds; small group instruction; Accelerated Reader	Digraphs and blends, common vowel teams, phonetic and spelling patterns, and high-frequency, irregular spelling words known as "heart words"	Narratives, informative texts, and opinion pieces; descriptive words; D'Nealian manuscript with transition strokes; daily grammar; journal writing	Main characters, setting, and events; story structure; cause-effect; predictions from text; fiction vs. nonfiction; thematic units (e.g., Polar Animals)
2nd	Increasing fluency with prosody (approximately 90–130 WPM by year's end); multisyllabic decoding; syllable division strategies; daily read-alouds; small group instruction; chapter novels introduced (Semester 2); Accelerated Reader	Syllable division (VC/CV, V/CV, VC/V); vowel-consonant-e patterns; r-controlled syllables; encoding with tapping and vowel marking	Well-elaborated narratives; informative/explanatory with introduction and conclusion; opinion writing; D'Nealian cursive transition; daily grammar; Jane Schaffer expository method introduced	Main idea and key details; character responses to events; inferences with text evidence; comparing story versions; thematic units (e.g., Ancient Egypt)
3rd	Fluent reading with expression and phrasing (approximately 115-140 WPM by year's end); all six syllable types mastered; advanced spelling patterns; novel studies and literature circles (Charlotte's Web, The Jungle Book); small group instruction; Accelerated Reader	Common prefixes, suffixes, and base words; spelling changes with suffixes; regular and irregular plurals, synonyms, antonyms, and homophones; commonly misspelled words	Multi-paragraph compositions; personal narratives; informative and research writing with source citation; opinion and persuasive pieces; cursive required; daily grammar; Jane Schaffer's narrative and expository methods	Text structures (chronological, cause-effect, compare-contrast, problem-solution); theme and central message; author's purpose; summarizing; figurative language
4th	Fluent reading with expression across text types; morphology-based decoding; figurative language; novel studies, literature circles, and independent reading projects (Mr. Popper's Penguins, The Lemonade War); small group instruction; Accelerated Reader	Latin and Greek root words, advanced prefixes and suffixes	Multi-paragraph compositions across all genres; research projects with multiple sources; persuasive writing; poetry; formal letters; cursive required; daily grammar; Jane Schaffer narrative and expository methods	Theme comparison across texts; inference and textual evidence; literary element analysis (characterization, symbolism, plot structure); author's craft and point of view

Mathematics

Curriculum at a Glance

Overview

Mathematics at FBCA is taught daily with the goal of developing students who think mathematically, solve problems confidently, and understand the structure and order God has placed in His creation. Our program moves well beyond rote memorization of procedures. While students are expected to master essential math facts and algorithms, equal emphasis is placed on building number sense—the deep, flexible understanding of how numbers work and relate to one another.

Number sense is what allows a student to look at a problem and reason about it, estimate whether an answer makes sense, and choose from multiple strategies to find a solution. A student with strong number sense doesn't just know that 8 × 7 = 56; they understand why, can visualize it as an array or as repeated addition, and can use that understanding to tackle more complex problems. Building this kind of mathematical thinking from the earliest grades gives students a foundation that serves them throughout their academic careers. At the same time, fluency in math facts is a priority at every level. Students begin learning addition and subtraction facts in 1st grade, are introduced to multiplication in 2nd grade, and work toward mastery of their multiplication tables by the end of 2nd grade.

Curriculum & Resources

FBCA uses Texas Go Math as its primary curriculum, supplemented by carefully selected resources, including materials from Reagan Tunstall, Marvel Math, and Saddle Up. Instruction is aligned to FBCA Academic Standards—rigorous grade-level expectations developed from Texas state standards (TEKS), NCTM frameworks, and ERB assessment benchmarks that meet and exceed state requirements. These standards organize content into key strands that build progressively across grade levels: Number Sense and Operations, Algebra and Patterns, Measurement and Data, Geometry, Fractions and Decimals, and Personal Financial Literacy.

Instructional Approach: Guided Math

Our teachers are trained in the Guided Math framework, a research-based approach that ensures every student receives the right level of challenge and support. A foundational principle of our math instruction is the Concrete-Representational-Abstract (CRA) approach. Teachers begin by introducing concepts with concrete materials such as manipulatives and hands-on tools, then move to pictorial and visual representations, and finally guide students to apply skills using abstract numbers and equations. This progression—always guided by the developmental readiness of each student—helps children build deep understanding rather than surface-level memorization. Teachers provide intentional opportunities for students to make connections between visual and abstract representations through cooperative group activities, learning stations, small group instruction, peer collaboration, and project-based learning.

Whole Group Instruction

The teacher provides direct instruction on a specific math concept, introducing new skills and strategies to the entire class.

Small Group Instruction

The teacher meets with small groups of students based on their specific needs. Some students receive additional support, while others who have demonstrated mastery are provided extensions and enrichment.

FBCA Math Stations

Students rotate through four structured stations—Focus, Brain Builder, Create, and Apply—that reinforce the current concept while cycling in previously taught skills to strengthen retention. Activities are hands-on, engaging, and completed independently or with peers.

Independent Practice

Students demonstrate their understanding of the concepts taught during whole-group and small-group instruction. Teachers use this work to assess mastery and guide future instruction.

Assessment & Grouping

Assessment is an ongoing part of math instruction at FBCA. Before each new unit, teachers administer a pre-assessment aligned to the upcoming standards. This data is used—not as a grade—but to identify each student's mastery level and form targeted small groups for Guided Math instruction. Throughout the unit, independent practice and daily work provide additional data points that help teachers adjust instruction in real time. In addition to classroom-based assessments, students in 1st through 2nd grade take the Renaissance Star Math assessment every quarter to monitor growth and inform instruction. All students in grades 1–4 take the ERB CTP-5, a nationally normed standardized assessment for independent schools that compares student performance to a national sample. Students in 3rd and 4th grade also take the ERB Milestone assessment, which evaluates their math skills, twice a year. Together, these tools give teachers and families a comprehensive picture of each student's progress and ensure that instruction remains responsive to every learner's needs.

Personal Financial Literacy

Beginning in Pre-K and continuing through 4th grade, students learn age-appropriate concepts in personal financial literacy as part of their math instruction. Young students first learn to recognize coins and understand that money is used to buy things. Then they learn to tell the difference between spending, saving, and giving to charity. By 3rd and 4th grade, students explore budgeting, supply and demand, simple interest, and the responsible use of credit—all grounded in the biblical principle that money should be used to honor God. Upper elementary students even plan and execute class business projects and research charities or ministries to support.

Our Goal

Our goal is that by the time students complete 4th grade, they have a strong command of foundational math skills, a deep understanding of how numbers work, and the confidence to approach new problems with persistence and flexibility. More importantly, we want students to recognize the order and beauty God has built into mathematics and understand how to use mathematical thinking as a tool for serving others and stewarding the resources God has given them.

Mathematics Grade-Level Overview

Grade	Number Sense & Operations	Geometry, Measurement & Data	Financial Literacy
Pre-K	Counts to 100 by 1s; skip counts by 2s, 5s, and 10s; writes and represents numbers 0–20; addition and subtraction within 10 using manipulatives; composes and decomposes numbers to 10; subitizes to 20	Names and describes 2D and 3D shapes; measures with non-standard units; creates and extends simple patterns; sorts by multiple attributes	Recognizes and names coins; understands money is used to buy things
Kinder	Counts to 120 by 1s and 10s; fluent addition and subtraction within 10; composes and decomposes numbers to 20 using number bonds; place value understanding for 11–20 (tens and ones); solves word problems within 10	Identifies and compares 2D and 3D shapes; measures with non-standard and standard units; repeating and growing patterns; tells time to the hour; explores halves by dividing shapes into two equal parts	Identifies and counts pennies, nickels, and dimes; begins exploring coin values
1st	Fluent addition and subtraction within 10; begins mastering addition and subtraction facts within 20 using strategies (counting on, number bonds, doubles, making a ten); place value understanding to 1,000; compares two-digit numbers using >, <, =	Sorts and compares 2D polygons and 3D figures; measures with non-standard units; creates growing patterns; partitions shapes into halves and fourths; tells time to the hour, half-hour, and quarter-hour	Identifies coin values and counts mixed coins; defines income; distinguishes between spending, saving, and charitable giving
2nd	Fluent addition and subtraction within 20; adds and subtracts within 1,000 using place value strategies and algorithms; represents numbers to 1,200 in standard, word, and expanded forms; introduces multiplication and division concepts with arrays and equal groups; works toward mastery of multiplication tables; even and odd numbers	Classifies 2D polygons (up to 12 sides) and 3D solids; finds area using square units; measures length in standard units; tells time to the nearest minute; partitions shapes into halves, thirds, and fourths; collects and interprets data using graphs	Determines value of coin collections up to one dollar; distinguishes deposits and withdrawals; calculates savings over time; understands producers and consumers
3rd	Masters multiplication and division facts through 12; place value understanding through 10,000; adds and subtracts within 10,000; multiplies 2-digit by 1-digit; solves multi-step word problems; fraction equivalence and comparisons; adds and subtracts fractions with like denominators	Measures length, weight, and volume in standard units; calculates perimeter and area of rectangles and composite figures; classifies shapes and identifies symmetry; recognizes angle types; reads and creates scaled graphs; tells time to the minute and calculates elapsed time	Compares prices for best value; understands scarcity, supply and demand; identifies factors influencing spending; learns about banks and interest; researches a charity or ministry to support
4th	Place value through 1,000,000; fluent multi-digit addition and subtraction; multiplies up to 4-digit by 1-digit and 2-digit by 2-digit; divides up to 4-digit by 1-digit; solves multi-step word problems with all four operations; generates equivalent fractions; adds and subtracts fractions; decimal notation for fractions (tenths and hundredths); compares decimals	Measurement conversions within a system; area and perimeter of rectangles and composite figures; measures angles in degrees; identifies points, lines, rays, and parallel and perpendicular lines; classifies triangles and quadrilaterals; identifies lines of symmetry; plots points on coordinate grids; represents and interprets data in multiple formats	Creates and maintains a personal budget; tracks income and expenses; understands bank accounts and digital money; calculates simple interest; understands debit vs. credit; plans and executes a class business project

Science

Curriculum at a Glance

Overview

Science at FBCA builds curious, capable thinkers who understand how the natural world works and appreciate it as God's creation. From Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade, students develop a strong foundation in life science, earth and space science, and physical science through hands-on, inquiry-based instruction. Students learn to ask good questions, design investigations, collect and analyze data, and communicate their findings—skills that grow in sophistication each year and prepare them for the demands of middle school science and beyond. All science instruction is taught from a biblical worldview, helping students recognize the order and design in the world around them and understand that scientific inquiry is one way we learn more about God through the study of His creation. Science instruction is guided by FBCA Academic Standards, which draw from the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Texas state science expectations (TEKS) to define the scientific inquiry skills and content knowledge students are expected to develop across life science, earth and space science, and physical science at each grade level.

Instructional Approach

Hands-On, Inquiry-Based Learning

Science instruction at FBCA emphasizes learning by doing. Students participate in guided discovery activities, inquiry-based investigations, and STEM projects that connect to real-world problems. Teachers have the freedom to develop their own engaging science labs tailored to the needs and interests of their students. Activities frequently involve constructing and using models, which helps students explain their observations, make predictions, and understand that science is a process of discovery. Throughout these experiences, students learn to collaborate with peers, manage their time, and think critically.

Interdisciplinary Connections & Field Experiences

Science learning is intentionally connected to other subjects through interdisciplinary thematic units. When 1st graders study polar animals in Language Arts, for example, they also conduct science labs on ice and cold-weather phenomena. When 2nd graders explore Ancient Egypt, they investigate the science of mummification. These connections make learning richer and help students see how knowledge builds across disciplines.

Field trips bridge classroom learning with the real world. Third graders visit NASA's Johnson Space Center to extend their study of the solar system, and 4th graders travel to the Houston Health Museum to deepen their understanding of the human body. These experiences bring science to life in ways that a textbook alone cannot.

The Scientific Process Across Grade Levels

As students progress through the Lower School, their scientific thinking skills grow in sophistication. In Pre-K and Kindergarten, students participate in simple experiments, make predictions, and record observations through drawings and dictation. By 1st and 2nd grade, students ask questions about the natural world, conduct investigations with guidance, use science tools, and communicate their findings using age-appropriate vocabulary. In 3rd and 4th grade, students develop and test hypotheses, identify and control variables, collect and analyze data, form evidence-based conclusions, and begin using the STEM engineering design process to solve problems.

Curriculum & Resources

FBCA uses the BJU Press Elementary Science curriculum as its primary resource. BJU Press provides a comprehensive, grade-level program that covers life science, earth and space science, and physical science with integrated biblical worldview themes. The curriculum introduces students to scientific methods, the use of models, and the interpretation and application of scientific knowledge, while also introducing students to STEM careers. Teachers also have access to Trove, a digital resource platform provided through BJU Press, which offers a wide range of supplemental materials to enrich instruction. In addition, teachers supplement with resources from Science Penguin and other materials. In the younger grades especially, teachers read a wide variety of nonfiction books aloud when studying science topics, building vocabulary and background knowledge while making concepts accessible for early learners.

Statement on Teaching of Science, Scientific Theories, and the Origin of Life

At FBCA, we unapologetically affirm that "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" and that "God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Gen. 1:1, Gen. 1:27). As a Christian institution, we celebrate the scientific study of everything in our world as a means to know more about God through the study of His creation. In the Lower School, we use a variety of sources in the science classroom, one of which is the BJU Press Science curriculum. This specific resource aids our teachers in presenting science from a biblical worldview and affirms God as the Creator of all things. Students explore plants, animals, weather, the human body, earth science, and the natural processes that reveal His remarkable design. Through hands-on observation, experimentation, and inquiry, students learn to ask thoughtful questions and to see science as a way of discovering the order and beauty God has built into creation. We help students begin to develop the habits of careful observation and critical thinking that will prepare them for deeper study of scientific concepts and theories in the Middle and Upper School years. At every grade level, we affirm that truly unbiased scientific discovery is consistent with the affirmation of God as the creator of all.

Our Goal

Our goal is that by the time students complete 4th grade, they are curious, capable scientific thinkers who know how to ask good questions, design investigations, and draw evidence-based conclusions—and they are well prepared for the more advanced science instruction that awaits them in Middle School.

Science Grade-Level Overview

Grade	Life Science	Earth & Space Science	Physical Science	Scientific Process
Pre-K	Basic needs of living things; care for the environment	Daily weather patterns	Simple machines through play; properties of common materials; basic energy forms (light, sound, heat, motion)	Participates in simple experiments; makes predictions; records observations through drawings and dictation; uses basic science vocabulary
Kinder	Characteristics of birds, insects, and animals; basic plant life; human body parts	Seasonal changes; weather patterns; rocks and their properties; oceans and water, and the sun and moon	Magnetic properties, basic properties of matter, simple force and motion	Hands-on scientific activities; simple observation skills; asks questions about natural phenomena; begins using basic scientific tools
1st	Living vs. nonliving things; plant needs, parts, and life cycles; animal classification and life cycles; external body parts and internal organs	Daily and seasonal changes; Earth's rotation and revolution; water cycle; sun, moon, and stars; constellations	Properties of matter (solids, liquids, gases); forms of energy (light, sound, heat); vibrations and sound	Asks questions about observations; conducts simple investigations with guidance; uses simple tools; records data through drawings and charts
2nd	Plant life cycles and seed dispersal; animal habitats, food chains, and life cycles; human body systems	Solar system and Earth's position; day/night and seasonal cycles; landforms and bodies of water; Earth's layers; weathering and erosion; volcanoes and earthquakes; natural resources and conservation	Properties and states of matter; reversible and irreversible changes; mixtures; forces (pushes, pulls, friction, gravity, magnetism)	Plans and conducts simple investigations; uses scientific tools to gather data; records measurements; develops explanations using evidence; communicates findings
3rd	Cell structures (plant and animal); tissues, organs, and body systems; plant life cycle and photosynthesis; cold-blooded and warm-blooded animals; ecosystems, food chains, and adaptations	Solar system (inner and outer planets, stars, moons, gravity); weather tools, clouds, and precipitation; severe weather; climate zones	Properties and states of matter; atoms and molecules; energy forms and transfer; light and sound waves; electricity and circuits	Develops questions and hypotheses; conducts experiments and analyzes data; uses evidence to draw conclusions; identifies patterns in investigations
4th	Plant structures, functions, and reproduction; photosynthesis and adaptations; invertebrates and vertebrates; animal life cycles and metamorphosis; ecosystems and food chains; human body systems	Water cycle and ocean systems; Earth's surface and landform changes; plate tectonics and natural hazards; rock formations and minerals; renewable and nonrenewable resources; conservation and stewardship	Forces, motion, and simple machines; energy types and transformations; wave characteristics; light and sound properties; potential and kinetic energy	Develops and tests hypotheses; identifies and controls variables; collects, organizes, and analyzes data; uses STEM engineering design process; communicates findings with scientific vocabulary

Social Studies

Curriculum at a Glance

Overview

Social Studies at FBCA helps students understand the world they live in, its people, places, history, and systems, and their role in it as citizens and image-bearers of God. From Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade, students build knowledge across history, geography, government, economics, and culture through engaging instruction that connects to other subjects and to the real world. Instruction is taught from a biblical worldview, and students are encouraged to think critically about the past and present while developing the research skills, civic awareness, and global perspective they will need as they grow. Instruction is also shaped by FBCA Academic Standards, which draw from Texas state standards (TEKS) and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) frameworks to define the historical, geographic, civic, and economic knowledge and skills students develop across the Lower School years.

Instructional Approach

Social studies instruction at FBCA is designed to be active and meaningful. Teachers use nonfiction texts, primary and secondary sources, hands-on projects, and interdisciplinary thematic units to bring content to life. Field trips extend classroom learning, connecting students to the people, places, and history they are studying.

Research Skills

Research skills are taught at every grade level, growing in complexity as students progress through the Lower School. Students learn to locate information using nonfiction library books and digital databases such as PebbleGo, BrainPOP, Gale Elementary in Context, and Discovery Education. They learn how to create simple citations and how to write information in their own words rather than copying from sources. These skills come together in two signature projects in the upper grades. In 3rd grade, students complete a Global Symposium research project, selecting and researching one region of the world and presenting their findings. In 4th grade, students undertake a Living History project in which they research a Texas historical figure and present their learning through a living history demonstration.

Curriculum & Resources

FBCA uses the BJU Press Social Studies curriculum as its primary resource, providing a comprehensive program that covers history, geography, government, economics, and culture with integrated biblical worldview themes. Teachers supplement with nonfiction texts and digital resources, including PebbleGo, BrainPOP, Gale Elementary in Context, and Discovery Education, to support research and extend learning across all grade levels.

Content Progression

Early Elementary: Pre-K Through 2nd Grade

In the early grades, social studies begins with what is closest to the student and gradually expands outward. Pre-K students explore their families, classroom community, and daily routines. Kindergartners learn about community helpers, basic map skills, national holidays, and how life has changed over time. In 1st grade, students study American history from early settlements through the founding of the United States, learn to use cardinal directions and identify continents and oceans, and explore basic economic concepts like needs and

wants, goods and services, and the importance of saving and giving. First graders also complete an inventors research project, researching a historical inventor and presenting their findings in a project that connects science, social studies, and writing. By 2nd grade, students examine how American communities develop and change, compare rural, suburban, and urban communities, and study the Constitution and Bill of Rights in age-appropriate terms. They also explore what makes a civilization and investigate Ancient Egypt as a case study, examining its geography, society, and culture as part of an interdisciplinary unit that connects social studies, science, reading, and writing. Economic concepts such as scarcity, supply and demand, and trade are woven throughout the year as well.

Upper Elementary: 3rd and 4th Grade

In third grade, the focus shifts to a global perspective. Students study world geography, comparing cultures, landforms, economies, and systems of government across regions. They trace patterns of exploration and migration, examine how geography shapes the way people live, and learn about major world religions and belief systems. The year culminates in the World Symposium research project. In 4th grade, students focus on Texas history and American expansion. They study the history of Native Americans in Texas, the Texas Revolution and Republic, Texas during the Civil War, and the impact of the oil industry on the state's development. Students also study American territorial expansion, the Louisiana Purchase, and westward movement, while deepening their understanding of the U.S. Constitution, the three branches of government, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. The year features the Living History research project on a Texas historical figure.

Our Goal

Our goal is that by the time students complete 4th grade, they understand how history, geography, government, and economics shape the world around them. They can conduct research using multiple sources, think critically about historical events, and communicate their learning with confidence. Most importantly, they are developing into thoughtful, informed citizens who see the world through a biblical lens, understand their place in God's unfolding story, and embrace their responsibility to serve others and engage the world around them for His glory.

Social Studies Grade-Level Overview

Grade	History & Culture	Geography & Map Skills	Government & Economics
Pre-K	Follows daily routines, differentiates day and night, retells personal experiences in sequence, and recognizes seasonal changes	Uses position words (in, on, under); identifies features of immediate environment; recognizes weather and clothing choices	Names family members and their roles; follows classroom rules; identifies helpers in the environment; takes turns with materials; participates in dramatic play
Kinder	Places events in chronological order (before, after, today, tomorrow); identifies Christian and national holidays; compares life today with the past; creates a personal timeline; explores Texas history, symbols, traditions, and culture through an immersive Texas unit coinciding with Go Texan Day	Locates familiar places on simple maps; uses position words; identifies land and water on maps and globes; recognizes different types of homes; identifies the state of Texas on a map and learns basic Texas geography	Explains why rules help create a safe environment; identifies community helpers and authority figures; participates in class votes; demonstrates good citizenship
1st	Distinguishes past and present using timelines; identifies primary and secondary sources; describes contributions of historical figures; identifies important American settlements (Jamestown, Plymouth); completes an inventors research project connecting science, history, and writing	Creates simple maps with title, legend, and compass rose; uses cardinal directions; identifies continents and oceans; distinguishes land and water features	Explains the purpose of rules and laws; identifies community, state, and national leaders; recognizes American symbols; distinguishes needs and wants; identifies goods and services
2nd	Analyzes how communities develop and change; describes significance of monuments and memorials; compares different points of view on historical events; distinguishes fact and fiction in historical accounts; explores what makes a civilization through an immersive interdisciplinary study of Ancient Egypt, examining its geography, society, and culture	Uses grid maps and map scales; identifies major geographical features of North America and the U.S.; explains how climate affects how people live; demonstrates responsible use of natural resources	Explains how a bill becomes a law, describes the Constitution and Bill of Rights, explains elections and choosing leaders, identifies scarcity, opportunity cost, supply and demand, and distinguishes producers and consumers
3rd	Traces patterns of exploration and migration; identifies causes and effects of historical conflicts; describes origins and development of cultures; uses primary and secondary sources to study world history	Interprets different types of maps; identifies major physical features of Earth's continents; explains how geography affects culture and economy; describes interconnections between world regions	Identifies capitals and major cities of world regions; describes roles of leaders in various societies; explains global trade and interdependence; identifies major industries and technological innovations; World Symposium research project
4th	Explores Native Americans in Texas; analyzes the Texas Revolution and Republic; describes Texas during the Civil War; studies American territorial expansion, the Louisiana Purchase, and westward movement; Living History research project	Interprets political, physical, and regional maps; identifies major U.S. geographical features; locates state capitals; explains how geography influenced settlement patterns; analyzes impact of industrial development on environment	Analyzes the Constitution and Bill of Rights; explains three branches of government and checks and balances; compares federal and state government; describes rights and responsibilities of citizens; creates and maintains a personal budget

Enrichment Classes

Curriculum at a Glance

In addition to core academic subjects, all Lower School students in Pre-K through 4th grade attend seven enrichment classes on a weekly rotation. These classes are taught by dedicated specialists and provide students with opportunities to develop new skills, explore their creativity, and grow physically, artistically, and intellectually. Enrichment classes are an essential part of the FBCA experience, giving students a well-rounded education that extends well beyond the traditional classroom.

Library

The Lower School Library is a hub for reading, research, and discovery. During weekly library classes, students participate in a read-aloud and a library lesson covering topics such as the Dewey Decimal System, how to access quality sources, and how to navigate reference materials. Our librarian provides Reader's Advisory, helping students find "just right" books that match their reading levels and interests. All titles are carefully vetted to ensure age-appropriate content consistent with our Christian mission. The library supports the Accelerated Reader (AR) program, where students set reading goals, take quizzes on a dedicated computer lab, and earn points toward individual prizes and recognitions such as the Millionaire's Club for students who read one million words or more. The library also hosts two Scholastic book fairs each year, periodic author visits, and provides research support and curated book carts for classroom teachers.

STEAM

The STEAM lab uses Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Launch as its primary curriculum, giving students hands-on experience in science, engineering, computer science, and biomedical science through age-appropriate modules at every grade level. Pre-K students explore living and nonliving things and spatial sense, while 4th graders investigate computer systems, wave properties, and the human impact on Earth. Students learn the engineering design process—identifying problems, brainstorming solutions, building prototypes, and testing and refining their designs. Students also work with VEX Robotics, applying coding and engineering concepts to build and program robots. STEAM class develops critical thinking, collaboration, and creative problem-solving skills that connect to learning across all subjects.

Technology

Technology class builds digital literacy and research skills that students use across the curriculum. Students develop keyboarding skills—progressing from basic mouse control in Pre-K to typing at least 20 words per minute by 4th grade—and learn to use digital tools for writing, presentations, and research. Digital citizenship and online safety are emphasized at every grade level. Students also build research skills progressively, learning to use a table of contents and index, take organized notes, locate reliable sources in print and digital formats, write information in their own words, and create proper citations. By 4th grade, students explore basic coding concepts and logical sequencing and use online collaboration tools safely and effectively.

Art

Art class introduces students to the elements and principles of design through a wide range of media and techniques. In the early grades, students explore primary and secondary colors, lines, shapes, and textures through drawing, painting, and collage. As they progress, they learn color theory, perspective, proportion, and balance while working with printmaking, mixed media, and three-dimensional forms. Students also study art

history and learn to discuss artwork using appropriate vocabulary, identifying how art reflects different cultures and time periods. Throughout every grade, students are encouraged to see their creativity as a reflection of being made in God's image.

Music

Music class develops students' musical abilities through singing, movement, rhythm, and instrument exploration. Students learn foundational music concepts, including beat, tempo, dynamics, melody, and notation. In the early grades, instruction emphasizes singing, rhythmic movement, and exploration of classroom instruments. As students progress, they develop music reading skills, learn to play recorder and other instruments, and study music from various cultures and time periods. Students have opportunities to perform throughout the year, building confidence and stage presence.

Physical Education

Physical Education develops students' physical fitness, motor skills, and understanding of healthy living. Students participate in a variety of age-appropriate activities, including locomotor and non-locomotor movements, cooperative games, team sports, and fitness challenges. Instruction emphasizes sportsmanship, teamwork, and personal responsibility. As students progress through the grades, they develop more advanced skills in throwing, catching, striking, and game strategy while building endurance, strength, and flexibility. A highlight of the year is Go Texan Day in February, when students perform a special rodeo dance they have learned in PE class as part of a fun, school-wide celebration of Texas culture.

Spanish

Spanish class introduces students to the Spanish language and the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. In the early grades, students build vocabulary through songs, games, stories, and interactive activities, learning to greet others and identify colors, numbers, animals, and common objects in Spanish. As they progress, students develop basic conversational skills, learn simple sentence structures, and explore the customs, traditions, and geography of Spanish-speaking countries. Instruction emphasizes listening and speaking in the early years, with reading and writing skills introduced gradually.

Academic Policies & Assessments



Academic Policies

Lower School

The following policies outline grading, homework, and assessment expectations for the Lower School. These practices are designed to promote consistency, transparency, and a strong partnership between home and school. For full details, please refer to the 2026–2027 FBCA Student and Family Handbook.

Grading

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students are assessed using a standards-based grading system. Progress in academic, social-emotional, and motor skill development is communicated to families through report cards and conferences. In grades 1–2, a combination of numeric and letter grades is used. In grades 3–4, reading, writing/grammar, and math quarterly grades are weighted at 30% for major grades and 70% for minor grades. Other subjects are unweighted. Teachers use classwork, projects, quizzes, and tests to assess student learning.

A: 90–100	B: 80–89	C: 75–79	D: 70–74	F: 0–69

Conduct Grades

In addition to academic grades, students receive conduct grades on their report cards in homeroom and enrichment classes. Conduct is assessed on a scale of E (Excellent), S (Satisfactory), and N (Needs Improvement). Daily conduct reports, behavior checks, and office referrals throughout the quarter impact conduct grades.

Homework Expectations

Homework reinforces classroom learning, promotes responsibility, and builds independent study habits. The time frames below represent typical completion time for assignments and test preparation, excluding nightly reading, which is encouraged at all levels: Pre-Kindergarten receives no homework; Kindergarten has home readers only; 1st grade approximately 10 minutes; 2nd grade approximately 20 minutes; 3rd grade approximately 30 minutes; and 4th grade approximately 40 minutes.

Additional Policies

Assessment Communication: Teachers notify families of upcoming tests and projects through MyFBCA and weekly assignment sheets. Major grades are announced at least two weeks in advance. Teachers coordinate to ensure students do not have more than two major assessments on a single day.

Late Work: Students are expected to complete assignments on time. Repeated late or missing work may result in morning detention, loss of privileges, and a reduction in the student's conduct grade. Teachers contact parents when incomplete work becomes a pattern.

Make-Up Work: Students with excused absences are given adequate time to make up missed work. For prearranged absences, work is due the day the student returns unless otherwise arranged.

Reassessments: Teachers may reteach and reassess students to ensure understanding of key concepts. Students who score below 70% on a traditional assessment may have the opportunity to retake it, with a maximum grade of 70%, provided they complete test error corrections, all related classwork and homework, and meet with the teacher.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to do their own work and be truthful about their learning. Teachers provide age-appropriate guidance on using resources properly and giving credit to others' ideas. Parents support this by encouraging honest work habits at home and guiding rather than completing their child's assignments.

Progress Monitoring & Standardized Assessments

Lower School

FBCA uses a comprehensive assessment program to monitor student growth, guide instruction, and provide families with a clear picture of their child's academic progress. All assessments—both classroom-based and standardized—are selected and administered in alignment with FBCA Academic Standards, which define the knowledge, skills, and competencies students are expected to master at each grade level, ensuring that progress monitoring reflects the full scope of what students are learning. The assessments below are administered in addition to classroom-based quizzes, tests, and projects.

Pre-Kindergarten

Assessment	Purpose	When Administered
FBCA Reading Comprehension (Small Group)	The assessment, which is internally developed and administered by the teacher, evaluates early reading comprehension through guided interaction and observation.	Ongoing during small group instruction

Kindergarten

Assessment	Purpose	When Administered
DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment)	The teacher conducts an individualized reading assessment, measuring reading level, accuracy, fluency, and comprehension through one-on-one teacher conferences.	2–3 times per year
FBCA Reading Comprehension (Small Group)	The assessment, which is internally developed and administered by the teacher, evaluates reading comprehension through guided interaction and discussion.	Ongoing during small group instruction

1st–2nd Grade

Assessment	Purpose	When Administered
Renaissance Star Math	The Renaissance Star Math is a computer-adaptive math assessment that evaluates number sense, operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, and data analysis skills.	Beginning of each quarter
Renaissance Star Reading	The computer-adaptive reading assessment measures reading comprehension, vocabulary, and text analysis skills.	Beginning of each quarter
FBCA Reading Comprehension (Small Group)	The assessment, which is internally developed and administered by the teacher, evaluates reading comprehension through guided interaction and targeted questioning.	Ongoing during small group instruction

ERB CTP-5	This is a nationally normed standardized achievement test that assesses word analysis, auditory comprehension, reading comprehension, writing mechanics, and mathematics.	Late April / Early May

3rd–4th Grade

Assessment	Purpose	When Administered
ERB Milestones	Interim benchmark assessments provide standards-aligned data on student progress in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics between major testing windows.	October and January
ERB CTP-5	The ERB CTP-5 is a nationally normed standardized achievement test that assesses reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing mechanics, writing concepts & skills, verbal reasoning, and mathematics.	Late April / Early May
FBCA Reading Comprehension (Small Group)	The assessment, which is internally developed and administered by the teacher, evaluates reading comprehension through guided interaction and targeted questioning.	Ongoing during small group instruction

Character & Conduct

Lower School

Our Philosophy

Fort Bend Christian Academy Lower School builds godly character rooted in biblical truth. In partnership with parents, we shape Christ-like qualities in students' hearts and minds. When behavioral challenges occur, we view them as opportunities for reflection and growth, guiding students to see how God's truth applies to their choices while maintaining accountability through appropriate discipline and consequences.

Eagle Expectations

The Lower School uses four Eagle Expectations to guide student behavior. These expectations are displayed in every classroom and reinforced daily. Each expectation is rooted in a Fruit of the Spirit and anchored to a specific Scripture verse, helping students connect their daily choices to Biblical truth.

Expectation	Fruit of the Spirit	Scripture
Shows Respect to Others	Love	Luke 6:31— "Do to others as you would have them do to you."
Demonstrates Self-Control	Self-Control	1 Thessalonians 5:11—"Encourage one another and build each other up."
Be Responsible for Materials and Supplies	Faithfulness	Luke 16:10—"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much."
Complete All Assignments and Homework	Diligence	Colossians 3:23—"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord."

In the Classroom

Teachers bring the Eagle Expectations to life in their classrooms in age-appropriate ways. In Pre-K and Kindergarten, teachers use a daily color system that helps young students visually track their behavior and make positive choices throughout the day. In the older grades, each grade level has its own approach—some classrooms, for example, use a school store model in which students earn classroom currency for demonstrating the Eagle Expectations and can spend it on rewards, teaching financial responsibility and reinforcing positive behavior at the same time. While the systems may look different from grade to grade, every classroom is working toward the same goal: consistently recognizing, reinforcing, and celebrating the Eagle Expectations so that students internalize these values throughout their elementary years.

Beyond these classroom systems, teachers, administrators, and staff celebrate students who live out the Eagle Expectations through Positive Eagle Notes. When a staff member observes a student demonstrating an Eagle Expectation especially well, they fill out a note recognizing that specific behavior, which the student then takes home to share with their family. These notes affirm students in the moment, encourage continued growth, and give parents a meaningful glimpse into the character their child is developing at school.

Character Education Program

The Lower School Counselor visits each classroom regularly to lead engaging guidance lessons focused on specific character traits: responsibility, empathy, kindness, respect, honesty, and citizenship. During these lessons, the counselor reads a book connected to the trait and leads a class discussion, helping students understand what the character trait looks like in their everyday lives.

Following the lesson, each classroom teacher nominates a student who exemplifies that character trait. Nominated students are honored at an Extraordinary Eagle Award breakfast, where they receive an award in front of their parents, who are invited to attend. Students also receive a yard sign to display at home celebrating their recognition. This program has been a meaningful part of the Lower School experience, encouraging students to live out strong character both at school and at home.

How Conduct Is Tracked

Teachers use the Eagle Excellence Responsibility Chart in grades 1-4 to track student behavior daily. Each day of the week, students are assessed on how well they meet the four Eagle Expectations. The chart is sent home in their daily folder so that families can see how their child is doing and have meaningful conversations about character and choices.

When a student needs to reflect on a specific expectation, they visit the office and meet with the Lower School Administration. Together, they discuss the relevant Scripture, talk through what happened, and reflect on how God's truth applies to their choices. The student fills out an Eagle Expectations reflection form, identifying which expectation they need to work on, and the form requires both a student and parent signature—reinforcing the partnership between home and school in building character.

Conduct Grades

In addition to academic grades, students receive conduct grades on their report cards in homeroom and enrichment classes. Daily conduct reports, behavior checks, and office referrals throughout the quarter impact students' conduct grades. Conduct is assessed on the following scale:

E: Excellent	S: Satisfactory	N: Needs Improvement



Lower School students who exemplified the character trait of kindness were recognized at the Extraordinary Eagle Awards breakfast.

Student Clubs & Co-Curricular Activities

Lower School

Overview

At FBCA, learning and growth extend beyond the classroom. Through student clubs, academic competitions, and co-curricular activities, Lower School students have the opportunity to explore their interests, develop new skills, and build relationships with peers who share their passions. These programs reflect our belief that a well-rounded education nurtures the whole child—intellectually, physically, socially, and spiritually—and that every pursuit, whether on a competition floor, a soccer field, or an art table, is an opportunity to grow in character and glorify God with the gifts He has given.

Lower School Clubs

Robotics

Robotics Club gives students the opportunity to take their engineering and coding skills beyond the classroom and into competition. Building on the VEX Robotics experience introduced in STEAM class, club members design, build, and program robots to compete against other schools in weekend VEX competitions. Students develop critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills as they work together to refine their designs and prepare for competition.

Art

Art Club is led by FBCA's Lower School art teacher and gives students the opportunity to explore their creativity beyond the regular school day. Meeting after school, students dive deeper into a variety of artistic techniques and media, working on projects that go beyond what time allows during the school week. Art Club is a wonderful space for students who love to create and want to grow as artists, reflecting the creativity of the God in whose image they are made.

PSIA (Private Schools Interscholastic Association)

PSIA is the nation's most comprehensive academic extracurricular program for private school students, offering competition in 18 categories across a wide range of disciplines. At FBCA, Lower School students in grades 1 through 4 have the opportunity to participate in PSIA competitions in areas such as number sense, storytelling, impromptu speaking, and more. FBCA teacher volunteers coach and prepare students throughout the fall and winter, with the regional competition taking place in early March. FBCA has a strong tradition of success in PSIA, regularly sending a number of students to the state competition each year. Participation in PSIA challenges students to pursue academic excellence, develop confidence, and discover new areas of passion and strength, all in the spirit of healthy, encouraging competition with peers from private schools across Texas.

Eagle Sports Club

Eagle Sports Clubs exist to glorify God and enjoy Him by introducing Lower School students to athletics as a meaningful and joyful part of their growth. Through age-appropriate physical activity, students are encouraged to pursue excellence, develop healthy habits, and learn that effort, attitude, and character matter regardless of

circumstance.

Offered after school each fall and spring, Eagle Sports Clubs use athletics as a vehicle to engage, equip, and empower students within a Christ-centered environment. Led by FBCA coaches and physical education teachers, instruction emphasizes encouragement, safety, and positive development—helping students learn responsibility, teamwork, and respect for others while enjoying the game.

At the heart of Eagle Sports Clubs is the intentional development of compassionate competitors and the first steps of servant leadership. Through structured play and guided practice, students learn to put others first, encourage teammates, respect opponents and officials, and respond to both success and challenge with humility and integrity. Competition is framed not as self-promotion but as an opportunity to love others, honor God, and reflect Christ in all circumstances.

Welcoming both first-time participants and developing athletes, Eagle Sports Clubs meet students where they are and celebrate growth over outcomes. These experiences lay a foundation for future participation in FBCA athletics by shaping students who understand that leadership begins with service, excellence is pursued with character, and athletics can be used to bring God's Kingdom into everyday life.

Families receive information regarding available sports, schedules, and registration details at the beginning of each semester

Christian Formation

Lower School

Christian formation is at the heart of everything we do at FBCA. Beyond the Bible curriculum taught in each classroom, the Lower School offers a rich calendar of worship experiences, spiritual mentorship, service learning, and community traditions that help students grow in their faith and develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Weekly Chapel

Every Wednesday, Lower School students gather for chapel—a highlight of the week. Chapel features an age-appropriate Bible lesson or sermon led by our Director of Spiritual Life, Ashley Ashcraft, or by on-campus teachers, administrators, Upper School students, and guest speakers from local churches. Parents are encouraged to attend chapel with their child.

Worship is an important part of every chapel service. Our 4th-grade students lead worship each week, adding fun, choreographed hand gestures to the songs that get the whole Lower School engaged and moving, with live music featured on special occasions. It is a joyful, welcome part of the week that students look forward to. In January, the entire school comes together for an All-School Chapel where the student chaplain speaks, and the Upper School and Middle School praise and worship teams lead worship, giving Lower School students a glimpse of the spiritual community that awaits them as they grow.

Special Celebrations & Traditions

The school calendar includes several beloved spiritual and community traditions that bring the FBCA family together throughout the year. In the fall, families gather for See You at the Cross, a time of prayer and fellowship. Each November, the school pauses to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans with a special Veterans Day program featuring patriotic songs performed by students, a guest speaker, the playing of Taps, and a meaningful flag-folding ceremony.

The Christmas and Easter seasons are marked by special celebrations and assemblies on campus. In the spring, Grandparents Day—held around the Easter holiday—invites grandparents and special friends to enjoy a student musical program, tour the school, meet with teachers, and admire student artwork on display.

Every February, FBCA celebrates Rodeo Day on Go Texan Day, a beloved Texas tradition in which students across all grades perform rodeo dances to classics like *Cotton-Eyed Joe* and *Footloose*, the result of several weeks of rehearsal in PE class. Also in the spring, families come together for Praise and Worship Night, an evening of music and worship. As the school year draws to a close, students enjoy Field Day, a celebration filled with games and outdoor activities that ushers in the summer season.

FBCA also publishes a Christmas Devotional and an Easter Devotional that families can read together at home during the holiday seasons. These devotionals are written by members of the FBCA community—teachers, administrators, and other staff—making them a personal and meaningful resource for families.

Service Learning

Students participate in service projects throughout the school year, learning to put their faith into action by serving others. A highlight is Eagle Week, the week before spring break, when every grade level in the Lower School takes part in a dedicated service learning opportunity. Projects change from year to year, but past experiences have included assembling meal kits for families in need, visiting and singing to senior citizens at a memory care facility, making sunshine baskets to deliver to school administrators and staff, and planting gardens to beautify the campus. These hands-on experiences help students understand that serving others is a natural extension of their faith and an important part of life at FBCA.

Bible Studies

Throughout the year, Lower School faculty lead Bible studies for boys and girls, providing students with additional opportunities to dig into Scripture in a small group setting and grow in their faith alongside their peers.

Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual life at FBCA is supported by a dedicated team. Ashley Ashcraft serves as the Director of Spiritual Life, leading chapel programming and coordinating spiritual formation across the school. Our Lower School faculty begins every morning with a devotion and prayer together before students arrive—a practice that sets the tone for the day and reflects the spiritual foundation on which our school community is built.

Student Services

Lower School

Counseling Services

Fort Bend Christian Academy has a dedicated Lower School Counselor who plays an active role in the life of every student. The counselor visits each classroom regularly to lead character education lessons and coordinates the Extraordinary Eagle recognition program, which celebrates students who exemplify strong character traits.

The counselor also meets individually with students who need support with anxiety, friendship challenges, and other social-emotional concerns. Through play therapy, conversation, and age-appropriate strategies, the counselor helps students process their feelings and develop healthy coping skills. All services are grounded in a biblical worldview and aligned with the mission and values of Fort Bend Christian Academy.

The counseling office works in partnership with families and faculty to provide communication, support, and referrals when appropriate. Although FBCA does not offer therapeutic counseling services, the counselor can refer families to external professionals for further assistance when necessary.

Academic Support

Lower School students with documented learning differences may receive accommodations. Parents must provide professional testing documentation from a qualified diagnostician (e.g., educational psychologist or psychiatrist) that is current (within the past three years) and includes a comprehensive evaluation with presenting concerns, tests administered, results, DSM-based diagnosis, and educational recommendations. Teachers collaborate with the Lower School Counselor and parents to ensure student success.

Technology at FBCA

Lower School

Overview

At FBCA, technology is treated as one tool among many, purposefully integrated into the Lower School experience to support learning without replacing the hands-on, relational, and intellectually engaging instruction that defines our program. Every Lower School student has access to a school-issued iPad, which is stored on a classroom cart and used throughout the day for age-appropriate purposes such as research, educational applications, and digital practice in math and language arts stations. Devices remain on campus and do not go home, ensuring that screen time is intentional, supervised, and balanced with the rich variety of learning experiences that characterize life in the Lower School.

In addition to classroom use, all students attend a dedicated technology enrichment class once a week, taught by a technology specialist. Instruction is guided by FBCA Technology and Research Standards, which grow in rigor and complexity across grade levels. In the early grades, students develop foundational digital literacy skills, including basic device navigation, proper device care, and online safety. As they progress, they build keyboarding proficiency, learn to use digital tools for writing and presentations, develop research skills using print and digital sources, and practice responsible digital citizenship. By the end of 4th grade, students are expected to type at least 30–40 words per minute, conduct guided research using multiple sources, cite sources properly, and use online collaboration tools safely and effectively.

Across all grade levels, technology instruction is grounded in a biblical worldview. Students are taught to use technology responsibly, to exercise discernment when evaluating digital content, and to approach online interactions with honesty and integrity, understanding that the same values that guide their conduct in the classroom apply in digital spaces as well.

Regarding artificial intelligence, Lower School students do not use AI tools as part of their academic program. At this stage, the priority is building the foundational skills in writing, reading, research, and critical thinking that students will need to engage thoughtfully with emerging technologies as they grow. Students will receive more formal instruction in AI literacy beginning in Middle School.

Class Link

ClassLink is the secure portal students use to access FBCA's suite of approved educational applications. Rather than managing multiple usernames and passwords, students log in using a personal QR code, giving them quick and easy access to the digital tools used across their classes. Parents are also provided with a QR code so they can access the same resources from home. All applications available through ClassLink are age-appropriate, educationally purposeful, and consistent with FBCA's mission.

Responsible Use and Academic Integrity

At Fort Bend Christian Academy, students are taught from the earliest grades that their school-issued iPad is a privilege, not a personal device. While at school, iPads are to be used exclusively for educational purposes, and students are expected to handle their devices with care and use them only as directed by their teacher. Responsible technology use is woven into instruction at every grade level, and students learn that the same values that guide their conduct in the classroom—honesty, respect, and integrity—apply equally in digital spaces.

Academic integrity extends to all digital work. Students are expected to complete their own assignments, use sources honestly, and give proper credit to others' ideas. Teachers provide age-appropriate guidance on responsible research practices, and these habits grow in sophistication each year, laying a strong foundation for the academic integrity expectations students will encounter in Middle School and beyond. For full details regarding technology use policies, please refer to the 2026-2027 FBCA Student and Family Handbook.

Blackbaud Learning Management System (MyFBCA)

Blackbaud, accessed through the MyFBCA portal, is the primary learning management system used across all divisions at Fort Bend Christian Academy. In the Lower School, Blackbaud serves as the central communication hub between teachers and families. Teachers use the platform to post assignments, weekly newsletters, and their week-at-a-glance so that parents always have a clear and current picture of what is happening in the classroom. Families can also access their child's grades, schedule, and school-wide announcements, calendars, and directories all in one place. Families new to FBCA will receive guidance on navigating MyFBCA at the start of the school year.