FOURTH GRADE
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING

ACADEMY OF THE SACRED HEART

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DEAR PRESCHOOL AND LOWER SCHOOL PARENTS,

At the heart of the Preschool and Lower School educational philosophy lies a curriculum designed as a living, breathing framework—one that is both a reflection of our school's mission and a catalyst for student growth. This balance among disciplines is not incidental; it is a deliberate alignment intended to shape well-rounded girls who are prepared for the complexities of the world.

The academic experience is defined by a commitment to challenging experiences that inspire intellectual curiosity, problem solving, and a global mindset. We believe that true intellectual development occurs when students are challenged to think critically and engage with increasingly complex concepts.

The ***Progression of Learning*** is intended to provide families with an overview of our programs including the skills and concepts for the coming school year and a few hallmarks of the grade level. We hope this is a helpful tool in communicating and understanding the philosophy of our program and the expectations for the grade level.

Sincerely,

Shara Hammet
Preschool and Lower School Division Head



PRESCHOOL & LOWER SCHOOL INTEGRATED APPROACH TO LITERACY AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Literacy and written language instruction focus on content-rich, academically rigorous coursework aligned with evidence-based practices for reading comprehension. By implementing the Wit & Wisdom program by Great Minds, the PSLS curriculum builds content knowledge and literacy skills simultaneously. Rather than teaching reading skills in isolation, this research-based, module-driven approach immerses students in complex texts, fine art, and interdisciplinary science and social studies topics to foster deep reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

Key Features and Structure:

- Knowledge-Building Modules: Students gain deep background knowledge through four thematic modules.
- High-Quality Core Texts and Materials: Curriculum is anchored by rich, engaging, and award-winning literature, historical nonfiction, and fine art.
- Inquiry-Driven Framework: Lessons are structured around essential, focusing questions and follow a consistent "Wonder, Organize, Reveal, Distill, Know" progression.
- Integrated Literacy Approach: Reading, writing, and language arts are woven into a cohesive theme. This includes "Deep Dives" for vocabulary, syntax, and grammar, and aligned decodable reading practice.
- Academic Rigor and Complexity: The program provides highly demanding, quality instruction that fosters academic conversations, robust vocabulary development, and strong public speaking skills.



MATHEMATICS

Math curriculum builds deep conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and mathematical rigor from the start using the Singapore Math Methodology (via Dimension and Math in Focus). Prioritizing true mastery over rote memorization, the curriculum uses a deliberate sequence from Pre-K through Fourth Grade so students can apply foundational knowledge to complex problems.

Our approach relies on three core pillars:

- The CPA Progression: Students transition from hands-on, concrete materials (e.g., connecting cubes) to pictorial representations (e.g., ten-frames) before mastering abstract mathematical symbols.
- The Problem-Solving Framework: A holistic approach balancing concepts, skills, processes, metacognition, and positive attitudes.
- Mathematical Habits: Woven into daily activities, students learn to persevere, justify arguments, use tools strategically, identify patterns, and communicate with precise mathematical language.

Ultimately, we don't just teach calculation—we build the confidence, reasoning, and creativity needed to become lifelong problem solvers.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies program is an integrative approach that incorporates civics, economics, geography, and history with designated social studies time allotted each week across all grade levels. Aligned with the mission and *Goals and Criteria* of the school, through curriculum and programs, students form the foundational skills that prepare them to participate respectfully and intelligently in society.

Hallmarks of the program include:

- Meaningful, tangible, and engaging learning opportunities.
- Strong foundation for inquiry using research, debates, discussions, and projects of all varieties.
- Access to multiple resources-including, but not limited to, books, images, speakers, and field trips.
- Students as digital citizens and global citizens.
- Informational, visual, cultural, and economic literacy.
- Partnerships and collaboration among faculty, enrichment teachers, and community organizations and resources.

OVERVIEW OF LITERACY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Over the course of the year, Fourth Grade students will be introduced to many literacy and written language concepts and skills. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Describe and explain story elements in depth (characters, setting, plot).
- Determine basic themes in literature.
- Synthesize reading across a literary work (fiction) and across various texts (nonfiction).
- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

- Differentiate between different points of view in a literary piece (first and third person narrations).
- Utilize common nonfiction text structures (chronological, problem/solution, cause and effect, compare/contrast, and main idea/details) to interpret and comprehend various forms of nonfiction.
- Explain events from a novel as they relate to the historical context.
- Interpret information presented visually, orally, and quantitatively (nonfiction).
- Apply phonics, word analysis skills, syllabication patterns, and morphology to decode and accurately read unfamiliar multisyllabic words.
- Read orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression.
- Use context to self correct when reading.
- Build academic vocabulary through real-world application.
- Understand multiple points of view.
- Collaborate with multiple resources and with peers.
- Read in multiple formats.
- Investigate literacy - visual, cultural, media, digital, and ethical.
- Problem solve through design, implementation, and reflection.

OVERVIEW OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Over the course of the year, Fourth Grade students will be introduced to many written language concepts and skills. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

Realistic Fiction, Personal and Persuasive Essays, Bringing History to Life, Literary Essay

- Develop characters with struggles and motivations.
- Plan and draft a realistic plot.
- Gather, organize, and use evidence to support an opinion.
- Use factual details and evidence to describe historical events.
- Apply persuasive writing skills to literary essays on fiction texts.
- Identify audience and purpose of writing.
- Utilize the revising and editing processes to make writing ready for others to read.
- Apply proper mechanics, conventions, and grammar to independent writing.
- Spell according to known patterns and use resources to spell unknown words.
- Master cursive handwriting.
- Improve typing skills and word processor literacy.
- Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge: selection, evaluation, and application of resources.

Informative/Explanatory Text, Realistic/Imaginative Narrative Text, Personal Opinion Writing, Paraphrase from Informational Text

- Write text to convey ideas and information clearly.
- Take notes and categorize information.
- Plan and draft a real or imagined narrative in which the development is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
- Write an opinion piece, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- Identify the audience and the purpose of writing.
- Utilize the editing processes to make writing ready for others to read.
- Apply proper mechanics, conventions, and grammar to independent writing.
- Spell according to known patterns and use resources to spell unknown words.
- Master cursive handwriting.
- Improve typing skills and word processing literacy.

OVERVIEW OF MATH CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

During Third Grade, students will be introduced to:

- Determine differences between digits, places, and numbers.
- Explain place value up to 1,000,000 and comparing using knowledge.
- Read and write numbers to 1,000,000.
- Round numbers to 1,000,000.
- Describe numbers that have a digit one place to the right as ten times more.
- Fluently add and subtract with multi-digit whole numbers up to 1,000,000.
- Generate and analyze patterns with shapes and numbers.
- Multiply up to four digit by one digit.
- Multiply two digit by two digit.
- Divide with four digit dividends and 1 digit divisors.
- Multiply and divide multi-digit numbers using traditional methods.
- Solve multiple-step word problems using four operations.
- Interpret multiplicative equations as comparisons.
- Gain familiarity with factors and multiples up to 100.
- Determine whether a number is prime or composite.
- Explain fraction equivalencies.
- Compare two fractions with different numerators and denominators.
- Add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers with common denominators.
- Decompose fractions using unit fraction.
- Multiply a fraction and a whole number.
- Use decimal notation for fractions with tenths and hundredths.
- Compare tenths and hundredths in both fractions and decimal form.
- Convert measurements using metric and US customary systems.
- Solve perimeter, irregular perimeter, area, and irregular area problems.
- Make line plots with whole numbers and fractions.
- Recognize acute, right, obtuse, straight and reflex angles.
- Recognize angles as two rays that share a common endpoint and measures as additives.
- Measure angles using a protractor.
- Draw points, lines, line segments, rays, angles, and perpendicular and parallel lines.
- Classify two dimensional figures.
- Recognize lines of symmetry with two-dimensional figures.

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL STUDIES CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

In Fourth Grade, students embark on a comprehensive regional study of the United States. Utilizing a student-centered, inquiry-based approach, the curriculum encourages students to think critically about how place, history, and economics shape the American identity. Through project-based learning, map analysis, and critical thinking exercises, students investigate three core thematic strands within each geographic region:

History: Narratives, Perspectives, and Change Over Time

Students examine the unique historical trajectories that define each region of the United States. The curriculum emphasizes the interaction between different cultural groups and how historical events impact contemporary society.

- Core Concepts: Indigenous cultures and civilizations, exploration and settlement patterns, immigration, and the contributions of diverse individuals to regional development.
- Skills Developed: Chronological thinking, distinguishing between primary and secondary sources, and analyzing cause-and-effect relationships in historical events.

Economy: Resources, Interdependence, and Industry

Students are introduced to foundational economic concepts by examining how each region utilizes its environment to drive production, trade, and employment.

- Core Concepts: Natural vs. human resources, specialization, regional interdependence, supply and demand, and major economic sectors (such as agriculture, manufacturing, technology, and tourism).
- Skills Developed: Identifying how localized resources influence global trade, and understanding the economic choices made by individuals, businesses, and communities.

Geography: Physical Systems, Spatial Patterns, and Climate

Students develop advanced spatial awareness as they map and analyze the diverse physical landscapes and environmental characteristics of the United States.

- Core Concepts: Iconic landforms (e.g., the Rocky Mountains, the Great Plains, major river basins), distinct climate zones, ecosystems, and human-environment interaction.
- Skills Developed: Reading and interpreting physical, political, and thematic maps; analyzing how climate and geography influence human settlement and regional lifestyle choices.

THE ENRICHMENT HUB

The Enrichment Hub on the ASH PS/LS parent portal provides an overview of the skills and concepts taught in our enrichment courses including religion, art, music, science, technology, library, physical education, innovation lab, and French.

Organized by grade level, the Hub also features virtual tours of our enrichment classrooms.

To View The Enrichment Hub, Scan Below:

SCAN ME

Highlights from Fourth Grade*

Global Education Capstone: Walking in the Steps of St. Rose Philippine Duchesne • French Quarter Field Trip
Sacred Heart Network Exchange with Grand Couteau
Philippine Duchesne Exhibit •Saints Research Project
Palette Art Show • Intramurals • Smock Patrol • Snack Shack
Third- and Fourth-Grade Clubs • Mater Innovation Lab
Pixie Dolls • Passing of the Plaid • Fourth Grade Liturgy

**Subject to change*

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