San José Unified School District

ELEMENTARY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS (GRADES K–5)

All courses are aligned with the California Department of Education frameworks and state-adopted standards.

Language Arts
The Elementary Language Arts program builds a foundation in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, aligned with California standards. Students explore diverse texts, write for various purposes, and engage in discussions to boost critical thinking and communication. Instruction covers vocabulary, grammar, and language use in context. English learners get targeted support per California ELD Standards to improve their English and access grade-level content.

Curriculum:
Reading K-2: SJUSD Guided Reading
Reading 3-5: Lucy Calkins Readers Workshop
Writing K-5: Lucy Calkins Writers Workshop
English Language Development (ELD): SJUSD ELD
I-Ready Personalized Instruction in Reading

Mathematics
The Elementary Mathematics program boosts students' understanding, fluency, and problem-solving skills, aligned with California standards. Students explore domains like Operations, Algebra, Fractions, Measurement, Data, and Geometry. The instruction fosters perseverance, precision, multiple strategies, and clear reasoning. English learners receive language support per the California ELD Standards.

Curriculum:
Classroom Mathematics California (CMC)
I-Ready Personalized Instruction in Mathematics

Social Studies
The Elementary Social Studies program introduces students to history, geography, civics, and economics, aligned with California standards. Students explore communities, California's history and geography, and early U.S. history, developing skills in analyzing sources, maps, spatial reasoning, and civic duties. Lessons connect past and present to foster empathy, cultural understanding, and civic engagement. English learners receive support per California ELD Standards.

Curriculum:

Science
The Elementary Science program invites students to explore the natural and physical world in accordance with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for California and the California Science Framework. Students build understanding across Physical Science, Life Science, Earth and Space Science, and Engineering, Technology, and Science Applications. The program emphasizes hands-on activities, inquiry-based learning, and the use of Science and Engineering Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Disciplinary Core Ideas. English learners are provided with targeted language support to enhance their academic vocabulary and fully engage in scientific discussions and investigations.

Curriculum:
Twig Science

Physical Education
The Elementary Physical Education program promotes lifelong fitness, health, and well-being, aligning with California standards. Students develop key movement skills, participate in cooperative games, and learn about health topics like nutrition and safety. It emphasizes teamwork, sportsmanship, and confidence. Support for English learners includes visual demos, peer modeling, and clear instructions.

Curriculum:
SPARK

Designated English Language Development (ELD)
The Designated English Language Development (ELD) program offers daily academic English instruction for English learner students, following California ELD Standards and Framework. Students are grouped by proficiency—Emerging, Expanding, or Bridging—and receive targeted lessons to boost their language skills.

Instruction develops listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, focusing on meaningful interaction, building vocabulary, grammar, text structure, understanding and creating complex texts, and connecting language to content.

Curriculum:
SJUSD ELD Units

Visual Arts

The Elementary Visual Arts program promotes creativity, expression, and skills consistent with California Arts Standards. Students participate in creating, presenting, responding, and connecting through activities like drawing, painting, sculpture, and media. Instruction covers artistic elements, principles, and appreciation of diverse artists and cultures. English learners receive support via visual aids, group projects, and vocabulary focused on art concepts.

Curriculum:

Music

The Elementary Music program enhances musical knowledge, performance, and cultural appreciation, aligning with California Arts Standards. Students engage in singing, rhythm, instruments, and movement while learning to read and write music notation. The program fosters listening, creativity, and teamwork. English learners receive multimodal instruction, hands-on activities, and culturally inclusive repertoire.

Curriculum:

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Division of Instruction
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