



WISSAHICKON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Elementary Curriculum Information for Parents

Grade 4

Fourth Grade is an exciting time for students. There are multiple learning opportunities offered throughout the school day with a strong emphasis on developing the whole child: academically, socially, and emotionally.

The classroom schedules have been designed to create large, uninterrupted blocks of instructional time; in addition, the 30-minute, "Practice, Intervention and Enrichment", known as PIE time, will allow for further differentiation and individualization of instruction for all students. Our K-5 schools follow a 12-day rotation cycle for the Encore classes, which includes Art, Music, Health and Physical Education, Library, and School Counseling. Recess is a time when our students take a break from learning in the classroom in order to engage in more informal interactions with their peers. Recess supports the development of social skills and the overall health and well-being of our students. During this time, students engage in unstructured play and make choices, develop rules for play, and practice important social skills such as sharing, taking turns, being a good sport, cooperating, listening to others, and solving conflicts.

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

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The English Language Arts program in Wissahickon is an intensive exploration of oral, visual, and technological communication. In fourth grade, students follow the language and literacy framework, which provides a structure to help students construct meaning in their lives through reading and writing. Skills taught in fourth grade include:

- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words;
- Read with accuracy and fluency to support comprehension;
- Refer to details and examples in text to support what the text says explicitly and make inferences;
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in grade level text, including figurative language;
- Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text;
- Cite relevant details from text to support what the text says explicitly and make inferences;
- Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently;
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly;
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic;
- Write opinion pieces on topics or texts;
- Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely;
- Demonstrate a grade appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- Use cursive writing when completing assignments.

Wissahickon uses *Wonders*, by McGraw-Hill, as the core English-Language Arts program. Using a rich range of diverse print and digital media, *Wonders* provides the instructional support and materials to teach the rigor, intent, and depth of the Pennsylvania Core Standards.



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MATHEMATICS

The Wissahickon Mathematics program is a dynamic curriculum integrating the computation, problem-solving, and the use of manipulatives and mathematical tools. Students in fourth grade are taught the following concepts:

- Use the four mathematical operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic up to 1000;
- Understand fractions to show equivalence and ordering;
- Connect decimal notation to fractions, and compare decimal fractions;
- Develop and/or apply number theory concepts to find factors and multiples;
- Classify two-dimensional figures by properties of their lines and angles;
- Measure angles and use properties of adjacent angles to solve problems.

As the core Mathematics program, Wissahickon uses the *Everyday Math 4*, developed at the University of Chicago. To help develop students' mathematics fact fluency, the district currently subscribes to *First in Math*, a web-based program that encourages students to practice basic mathematics facts while also honing their problem-solving skills.

ENCORE SUBJECTS

Fourth grade students also study Art, Health and Physical Education, Library, and Music. Additionally, all students have the opportunity to work with our School Counselor as they develop their academic, career, and social skills. Students attend these encore classes on a weekly basis. In addition to the General Music program, fourth graders who wish to begin instrumental music instruction have the opportunity to enroll in the school orchestra or band program.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students in fourth grade study the history, geography, economics, and civics and government throughout the five main regions of the United States as well as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Students will examine topics such as Exploring the US Regions: *The Southeast, The Northeast, the Midwest, The Southwest and the West*. A unit of study on Pennsylvania will also be explored. During Social Studies, students are involved in classroom discussions, simulations and explorations, literature selections, digital learning, as well as reading and writing assignments.

SCIENCE

Wissahickon fourth graders study a Science curriculum based on three hands-on kits: Electromagnetism, Watery Earth, and Nature's Recyclers. During these explorations, students act as scientists following the scientific process, making hypotheses, and testing their conjectures. They revise their thinking based on experiments, collecting and organizing data, and then analyzing that data to develop new understandings. It is an inquiry-based program supplemented by both related literature and informational texts.