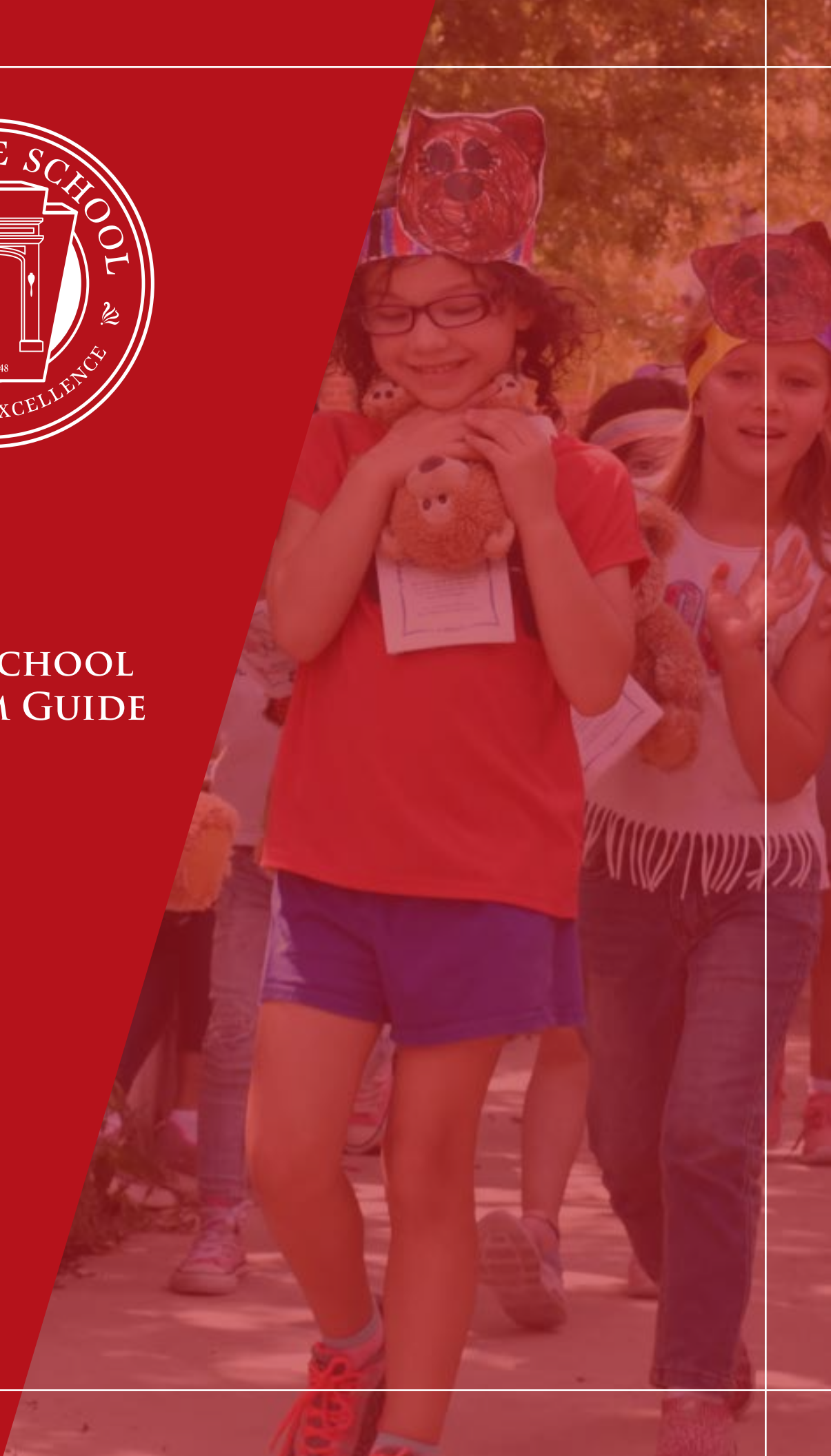




# LOWER SCHOOL PROGRAM GUIDE





# LOWER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Keystone Lower School builds the frameworks that support a lifetime of learning. Lower School faculty provide a challenging program composed of diverse experiences designed to spark enthusiasm for learning and establish advanced core competencies. Students are engaged in rich exploration and discovery, and academic excellence becomes a natural byproduct of a passion for knowledge and understanding. Each step of the way, Lower School students are challenged and appropriately supported as they develop into curious, confident, and thoughtful learners.

The Lower School program is designed to create an educational experience that stimulates intellect, ignites passion, encourages risk-taking, and shapes character. We maintain a focused academic curriculum with accelerated core subjects of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies and daily visits to specialist classes in the subjects of performing arts, visual arts, physical education, Spanish, library, and more. These disciplines, combined with an integrated approach to technology, create an educational experience that provides daily opportunities for students to think creatively and collaboratively through in-depth exploration, analysis, and experimentation.

Lower School students are grounded by the Keystone core values of integrity, empathy, creativity, curiosity, and service. These values are the cornerstone of thoughts, words, and actions in our classrooms and help us cultivate a community where students listen to each other respectfully, advocate for themselves and others, and care about each other and themselves.

*Mallory Matthews*

Head of Lower School

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# KINDERGARTEN

The Kindergarten program offers a rich, integrated curriculum that reflects the developmental characteristics of five and six year-old students who are ready for more formal learning. Classroom lessons and activities embrace student enthusiasm and energy while instilling foundational learning and behavioral skills. Students leave kindergarten more independent, with a positive learning attitude, and the necessary foundational skills to lead a successful journey through Lower School and beyond.

## **English language arts and reading**

Students build reading skills by focusing on phonemic awareness, phonics, and high-frequency words. The ELAR curriculum uses leveled readers to differentiate and scaffold fluency and reading comprehension. Writing Workshop begins in kindergarten with narrative, informative, and opinion/ persuasive writing. Writers are introduced to the writing process: think, write and draw, revise, edit, and publish. Students develop handwriting skills by practicing manuscript letters and numbers.

## **Math**

Lessons include: learning place-value and number sense to 120, addition and subtraction within 12, calculating money sums up to \$1.00, algebraic reasoning, telling time to the hour and half-hour, introduction to geometry and measurement, and introduction to data analysis and graphing.

## **Social studies**

Lessons begin with Myself and My Family and then broaden to learning about community helpers. Students are introduced to geography through the Bears Around The World project and the Holidays Around The World unit. Students also learn about Texas state symbols and are introduced to Texas history.

## **Science**

Students explore the five senses, needs of plants and animals, explore sunlight, weather and simple machines, learn about Earth Day and environmental stewardship, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) lessons introduce students to the engineering design process: ask, imagine, plan, create, test/improve, and reflect/present.



# KINDERGARTEN

## Technology

Students are introduced to the iPad as a computer and are taught four major units throughout the year:

- iPad Foundations (using and caring for the iPad)
- Computer Science Fundamentals (basic coding skills)
- Robotics (using coding skills for Beebots, Dash and Dot and Indi Sphero)
- Community Building and Spatial Reasoning (using Minecraft to build skills and work in communities)

## Music

Kindergarten music encompasses singing, dancing, rhythm and cooperating in a group setting. A vast repertoire of songs, dances and musical games help to develop the concepts of steady beat, fast/slow, long/short, rhythm, 4 voices, high/low, form, texture, and harmony, through multi-cultural song literature.

## Studio Art

Kindergarteners have art once a week over the course of a school year. The emphasis in kindergarten is on media exploration and fine motor development. The curriculum is designed to support student autonomy and to develop social and emotional learning skills by practicing artistic habits of mind that foster imagination, problem-solving, collaboration, development of art skills, and reflection. Students will have the opportunity to draw using pencils, pastels, and markers; to paint using watercolor paints and tempera paints; to print using ink and brayers, explore mono-printing as well as make Styrofoam printing plates; collage using various papers and techniques; weave with yarn; paper mâché; sculpt using clay, craft supplies, recycled materials, wire, beads, and wood. Students draw inspiration from historical and contemporary artists in developmentally appropriate ways. Kindergarten artwork is displayed throughout the year in the cafeteria in Founders Hall. In the spring, their work is part of the K-12 art show.

## Theatre Arts

Kindergarten theatre is designed to develop storytelling techniques and encourage creative play. Units include puppetry, pantomime, and improvisation. Students engage with age appropriate stories to develop the skills necessary to participate in plays beginning in first grade. They are encouraged to follow proper group and audience etiquette during discussions, sharings, and performance activities. Skills children can expect to develop include cooperation, personal responsibility, patience, vocal projection and enunciation, poise, the ability to take direction, and command of their bodies.



# FIRST GRADE

The first grade program reflects the growing cognitive abilities of students as they begin to take on greater responsibility for their own learning and become more independent thinkers and learners. Students leave first grade with the communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills needed to succeed in the upper elementary years.

## **Language Arts-Reading**

Our aim is to help students become independent readers with a lifelong love of reading. Wonders is an evidence-based reading program that empowers students to take an active role in learning and exploration. Students will enjoy unparalleled opportunities to express and assess themselves through reading and interacting with a broad selection of rich authentic literature, while developing their writing, oral communication, and critical thinking skills.

## **Spelling**

We use Sitton Spelling, a multi-faceted program that provides students with spelling, language, and word skills, and apply them to their everyday writing. Active learning and analyses of words enables students to discover spelling skills and concepts that extend their knowledge far beyond a memorized list of words. Spelling words are the result of a formative, “cloze story test” that assesses which words students have not yet mastered. Students then study words they have missed and encounter those words in subsequent tests to work toward long-term mastery. Students are held accountable for proofreading in their everyday writing. Using a reference, they proofread for assigned “Priority Words” and are expected to spell them correctly. We are creating everyday spellers.

## **Grammar**

Using Patterns of Wonder and Patterns of Power, first graders are invited to explore the conventions of writing using authentic mentor text. First graders come to recognize patterns and essential grammar conventions that writers and readers require to make meaning. After sharing an excerpt from a selected mentor text, students are invited to “wonder” and “notice” choices made by an author. Once a focus has been determined students spend time comparing and contrasting a specific convention, imitating the convention, applying what they have discovered, editing text, and finally celebrating their understanding.



# FIRST GRADE

## Writing

First Grade uses the Writer's Workshop Model. Each session begins with a whole class mini lesson about a writing strategy. Kids sit with an assigned writing partner while in the mini lesson. The mini lesson ends with the kids being sent off to try the newly learned strategy in their own independent work. As students work, the teacher confers, provides feedback, and leads small groups. Partway through independent work time, the teacher stands and delivers a mid-workshop teaching point. The workshop ends with students sharing their writing. In our Small Moments unit, students take the everyday events of their young lives and make them into focused, well-structured stories. They then learn to breathe life into the characters by making them talk, think, and interact. We use dialogue and details. In our Nonfiction Chapter Books unit, students enter the world of informational writing as they combine pictures and charts with domain-specific vocabulary and craft moves to create engaging teaching texts by writing about topics they are "experts" in. In our final unit, Writing Reviews, students create persuasive reviews of all sorts—pizza restaurant reviews, TV show reviews, ice cream flavor reviews, and finally book reviews that hook the reader, clearly express the writer's opinion, and bolster their argument in convincing ways.

## Math

Number sense, place value, addition and subtraction through three digit numbers with regrouping, fractions, multiplication, division, time, measurement, and geometry are explored throughout the school year. An emphasis is placed on understanding the skills and concepts introduced, interpreting information and developing multiple strategies for problem solving for each module/concept covered. Our program begins with concrete based examples which then build to abstract concepts and practice. Students use models, a wide variety of manipulatives, and integrate symbols to build understanding of the concepts covered. Rich, higher order thinking questions, application, and practice move students from basic understanding to conceptual understanding. Students have access to online resources, interactive lessons and digital tools. Our daily math program is supported by a continuous spiral review of all concepts learned throughout the year.

## Science

First grade uses Amplify Science, a Next Generation Science Standards-supported curriculum developed at UC-Berkeley. Each unit engages students in a relevant, real-world problem where learners investigate scientific phenomena, engage in collaboration and discussion and develop models and explanations to solve problems. Amplify engages hands-on activities, digital tools, and data collection notebooks. In each unit students take on the role of scientist or engineer. In our first unit, Animal and Plant Defenses, students become junior scientists at an aquarium and work with the aquarium staff to help explain to visitors how sea turtles will survive once rehabilitated and released back into the wild. Our second unit, Light and Sound, asks our students to become engineers and help create light and sound programs for a traveling puppet theater. Our final unit, Spinning Earth, investigates patterns in the sky.



# FIRST GRADE

## Social Studies

First Grade uses the Kids Discover Social Studies program by Houghton Mifflin. This program includes a wide array of history and geography materials that develop active inquiry skills among students. Topics are presented in a student-friendly magazine-style format that combines hands-on lessons with digital assets that allow students to experience content in a fun, bold and engaging manner. Topics include: Rules and Laws, Neighborhood Helpers, Maps and Globes, Where We Live, Weather, and U.S. symbols.

## Studio Art

First graders have art once a week over the course of a school year. The curriculum is designed to support student autonomy and to develop social and emotional learning skills by practicing artistic habits of mind that foster imagination, problem-solving, collaboration, development of art skills, and reflection. In addition to the media, concepts, and skills explored in kindergarten, first graders are introduced to drawing concepts like line, varied shapes, value, color, and pattern; weaving with more refined craftsmanship; building coiled clay creations; and learning the art of collagraph printmaking.

## Music

In first grade, music is experienced through singing, speaking, dancing, children's literature, unpitched percussion, and pitched percussion instruments. First graders also use movement, rhythm exercises, and singing games to develop the skill of audiation, which is also referred to as "inner hearing." Emphasis is placed upon the proper development of the singing voice, differentiation between beat and rhythm, and translation of rhythmic symbols (ta and ta-di) into sound through voice and unpitched percussion instruments.

## Theatre Arts

In first grade theatre arts, students continue to develop cooperation, personal responsibility, patience, vocal projection, poise, and the ability to take direction. The students focus on building a foundation of specific theatrical skills including physical movement and vocal production and learn how these skills directly impact their choices for a character. Physical and vocal warm-ups are offered to increase the student's understanding of these skills. They are encouraged to follow proper group and audience etiquette during discussions, sharings, and performance activities.

Students can expect to learn stage areas and directions as well as the 8 body positions used in blocking a play by participating in fun theatre exercises and games that directly learn these skills. Students participate in movement stories and how to tell stories with their bodies. Students learn auditioning by reading aloud short monologues and preparing songs in class to develop their vocal presentation skills. All first grade students learn to rehearse, block, memorize lines, learn choreography and music as well as work as an ensemble to produce an age appropriate play shared with family, friends and the Keystone community.





# SECOND GRADE

Students in second grade move from learning to read to reading to learn, and in this process they begin to develop the critical thinking skills necessary for evaluating the world around them. They develop increased independence, and are provided with opportunities to take charge of their learning and make choices about how to best display their knowledge.

## Science

Students continue with the Amplify curriculum and study units that include Plant and Animal relationships, Properties of Materials, and Changing Landforms. In all these units, students think and work like scientists to solve problems.

## Social Studies

As students begin to learn map skills, they plan and design their own imaginary map of an island, which must include a compass rose, map key/legend, title, and theme. Students learn about the five regions of the United States, and create flip books. Students will also study the states and their capitals and are assigned one state to research and produce a lapbook with information about their state.

## Math

Students build their skills and fluency in working with numbers, geometric figures and data. Among the skills covered:

- Place Value to 10,000: reading and writing numbers through at least 10,000, comparing and ordering whole numbers rounding numbers to the nearest 10, 100, 1,000
- Addition & Subtraction: fluently add and subtract multi-digit numbers through 1,000
- Data Analysis using graphs: pictographs, bar graphs, dot plots, solving problems using graphs
- Introduce multiplication and division concepts: arrays, skip counting, repeated addition; learning facts for 0, 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 11
- Fractions: representing Fractions using Equal shares, fractions of a whole, fractions on a number line; comparing fractions with same numerator and same denominator, using equivalent fractions
- Geometry: two dimensional figures (polygons and quadrilaterals), three dimensional figures (cube, pyramid, cylinder, cone, sphere)

## Reading

Reading lessons use Units of Study from Teachers College Reading & Writing Project at Columbia University. In these lessons, students learn to ask essential questions. Among them:

*How do I figure out words I don't know?*

*How can I use what I know as a writer to help me grow as a reader?*

*How can I study how the characters change and grow through the story and think about the lessons the author may have intended?*

*Why is voice important, my voice and the voices of the characters I am reading about?*

*How do authors play with words?*

*How do I keep track of all the important events happening in longer books?*

*How do I determine what a text is mostly about and use this information to develop my own ideas about the topic?*

# SECOND GRADE

## Music

Second grade music concentrates on taking vocal and rhythmic skills to a higher developmental level. Traditional songs from around the world are learned that encompass the notes of the pentatonic scale, (do, re, mi, sol, la). The repertoire also engages students in more challenging rhythmic motives (ta, ta-di, takadimi). Pitched and un-pitched Orff instruments are used to build rhythmic, note reading and group playing skills, while giving students the experience of self/group accompanied songs. By the end of second grade, students have a general knowledge of 4/4 meter, form, rhythmic and vocal ostinato, and different types of borduns.

## Studio Art

Second graders have art once a week over the course of a school year. The curriculum is designed to support student autonomy and to develop social and emotional learning skills by practicing artistic habits of mind that foster imagination, problem-solving, collaboration, development of art skills, and reflection. In addition to the media, concepts, and skills explored in earlier grades, second graders will learn how texture, repetition, radiation, emphasis, and unity are found in nature; experiment with color, including learning about painting tints and shades; how to collage while exploring positive and negative space; and the process of using clay scoring and slip to join clay together.

Students will draw inspiration from historical and contemporary artists and use personal sketchbooks to experiment and plan for future artworks. Through a combination of assignments and the ability to pursue their vision as artists, students will have the opportunity to generate new ideas and choose the materials with which to express them. Having choices encourages creativity and helps students practice their artistic habits of mind. Second-grade artwork is displayed throughout the year in the cafeteria in Founders Hall. In the spring, their work is part of the K-12 art show.

## Theatre Arts

Second grade theatre arts concentrates on reinforcing the foundational skills they learned in first grade. Students are then introduced to the process of creating theatre through creative writing, storytelling, improvisation, group structured play and creative dramatics. Students can expect to learn about solo performance through the creation of spontaneous 30 second monologues based on simple subjects. They are encouraged to follow proper group and audience etiquette during discussions, sharings, and performance activities. Improvisation develops their communication, social, and problem solving skills. Students are introduced to vocal expression through mimicry, projection, diction, and enunciation. Students are encouraged and supported in making bold choices in character development. Second grade students apply the skills they learn in class to rehearsal, blocking, memorizing lines, learning choreography and working as an ensemble to produce an age appropriate play shared with family, friends and the Keystone community.



# THIRD GRADE

Third grade students demonstrate increased responsibility for learning, managing time well, setting appropriate achievement goals, and beginning to understand their own learning styles. As lifelong learners and problem solvers, they are expected to be active and critical thinkers while working cooperatively with their peers.

## Language Arts

We use the workshop model for reading and writing to meet the needs of our accelerated learners. In both reading and writing workshops, the process - and not the product, is the focus. We are working to build lifelong readers and writers. Students meet as a whole class for a brief mini lesson where they are taught a strategy to try in their reading/writing. Students are then given independent work time to implement the strategy in their work. Students also work in small groups, partners, and with the teacher to confer about their individual reading and writing progress. We write a variety of poetry styles and use mentor poems for inspiration. Students learn skills all good readers need: to envision, predict, summarize, and ask questions while reading. In spelling, students practice high-frequency words and focus on homophones. Students also work on grammar, usage, and mechanics through direct teaching and practice in their own writing.

## Math

Third graders take on a challenging fourth-grade math curriculum, focused heavily on solving word problems. Students start the year with a review practicing with place values up to 10,000,000th place. With that foundation they move into using mental math to round and estimate and solve large addition and subtraction problems. Students then focus on multiplication as a means to add large numbers quickly and they multiply up to 2-digit by 2-digit numbers. This is followed by division, fractions, and measurement. Throughout the year multi-step word problems build algebraic thinking in the students. Math is supplemented with a huge variety of math games, math projects, and math art. In addition, students practice their multiplication math facts up to 12x12 all throughout the year in order to gain full proficiency.

## Science

Science in third-grade focuses on four major study areas: forces and magnetic forces; animal development and survival; the environments and traits of organisms; and weather and climate. Students follow inquiry-based learning methods, working to collect evidence and testing their understanding at each step of the way. Third grade scientists use a variety of methods in their learning including reading, writing, experimenting, and technology. An exciting part of the year for students is partaking in their first science fair project, where they put their lessons into action and share their scientific findings.



# THIRD GRADE

## Social Studies

Students focus on the history of Texas and analyze primary sources such as documents, maps, paintings, letters, journals, and video to make learning tangible. Students develop critical thinking skills by not just looking at what the primary source says or shows, but more importantly what it means. Students take on document-based questions, which ask them to interpret, analyze and synthesize information from primary sources. Students demonstrate mastery by writing essays citing primary sources to corroborate their thinking. Students also have the opportunity to visit historical sites in our city and bring their learning to life.

## Studio Art

Third graders have art once a week over the course of a school year. The curriculum is designed to support student autonomy and to develop social and emotional learning skills by practicing artistic habits of mind that foster imagination, problem-solving, collaboration, development of art skills, and reflection. Students learn how to hone their observational drawing skills and explore contour line drawing, employ one-point perspective; use various color schemes and the psychology of color; and begin to build more advanced clay creations. Students will draw inspiration from historical and contemporary artists and use personal sketchbooks to experiment and plan for future artworks. Through a combination of assignments and the ability to pursue their vision as artists, students will have the opportunity to generate new ideas and choose the materials with which to express them.

## Music

Third grade music focuses on vocal, rhythmic and dance development through International folk music. Students are also introduced to the study of recorder. Using the recorder, music literacy is reinforced as students begin to become more familiar with the note names on the staff in treble clef. Solo/ensemble playing are part of the learning process as well. In third grade students are introduced to low la, sol, high do, rondo form, a I-V bass line, and rounds.

## Theatre Arts

In third grade theatre arts, students continue to explore expressing themselves on and off stage. They are encouraged to be critical thinkers and creative risk takers when developing characters. Students continue to participate in improvisation to develop their communication, social, and problem solving skills. Students are introduced to vocal expression through vocal mimicry, working on projection, diction, and enunciation. Students are encouraged and supported in making bold choices in character development. They are encouraged to follow proper group and audience etiquette during discussions, sharings, and performance activities. Students apply the skills they learn in class to rehearsal, blocking, memorizing lines, learning choreography and songs as well as working as an ensemble to produce an age appropriate play shared with family, friends, and the Keystone community.



# FOURTH GRADE

Fourth grade prepares students to transition from Lower to Middle School. Students earn more responsibility, assume leadership roles, and hone study and organizational skills. The curriculum broadens and deepens with students' growing abilities to use higher level thinking and a higher level of independence.

## Language Arts

We use Readers and Writers workshop to integrate reading, writing, spelling, and grammar. Readers Workshop gives students opportunities to build their skills and apply their strategies in both fiction and nonfiction reading and to receive frequent, thorough feedback. Children will learn that if they apply strategies, work hard, revise their first understandings, and get help, their reading will get visibly and dramatically better. The units of study in this series offer a mix of fiction and nonfiction units. Writers Workshop provides opportunities to practice different types of writing (opinion/argument, information, and narrative), cycle through the writing process of planning, drafting, revising, and editing, and receive regular feedback.

## Math

Emphasizing application and computational fluency, this year's units are: Whole Number Operations (addition, subtractions, multiplication, division), problem solving, measurement, fractions, geometry, decimals, probability, "Hands on Algebra", robotics, and coding. The 4th graders keep a daily math journal consisting of notes, recorded strategies and practice problems for learned skills.

## Science

Using the Amplify Science curriculum, we think like scientists and engineers on units that include Energy, Vision and Light, and Earth's Features. Fourth graders also develop and complete formal science projects for our school science fair. Additionally, we use the National Geographic framework to build our explorer mindset through the attitudes, skills, and knowledge of explorers.

## Social Studies

The fourth-grade curriculum emphasizes history of the United States and includes units on: The First Americans – Native American/Indigenous People, Ancient Civilizations, Exploration and Early Settlement (Spanish, French, English) in the Americas, American Colonies (New England, Mid Atlantic, Southern), French and Indian War, and The American Revolution. Students will actively read and write and practice many types of note taking skills as they locate information, describe, explain, summarize and use charts and graphs. Much of our reading, discussing, evaluating and presenting is done in groups. We also use the document-based questions where students write multi-paragraph, evidence-based essays using historical documents and outlines to form an opinion and explain their reasoning.



# FOURTH GRADE

## Art

Fourth graders have art once a week over the course of a school year. The curriculum is designed to support student autonomy and to develop social and emotional learning skills by practicing artistic habits of mind that foster imagination, problem-solving, collaboration, development of art skills, and reflection. In addition to the media, concepts, and skills explored in earlier grades, fourth graders begin to learn how to create interest and movement in their compositions using juxtaposition and unity; practice expressive drawing approaches like shading, stippling, hatching, and washes; two-point perspective; and the art of traditional reductive printmaking.

Students will draw inspiration from historical and contemporary artists and use personal sketchbooks to experiment and plan for future artworks. Through a combination of assignments and the ability to pursue their vision as artists, students will have the opportunity to generate new ideas and choose the materials with which to express them. Having choices encourages creativity and helps students practice their artistic habits of mind. Fourth-grade artwork is displayed throughout the year in the cafeteria in Founders Hall. In the spring, their work is part of the K-12 art show.

## Music

Fourth grade students will continue to develop tuneful singing through simple songs in 3-4 part rounds and canons. Students will also learn arpeggiated borduns and I-IV-V bassline in Orff compositions. Popular song form (verse/refrain/bridge) will be introduced as well through the use of the Ukulele. Students will have the opportunity to combine the new concepts they have learned to create and compose individually and in group projects.

## Theatre Arts

In fourth grade theatre arts, students take on more responsibility and are encouraged to take healthy risks while rehearsing and performing on stage. They write original monologues, choreograph simple dances, and practice cold reading auditions. They are encouraged to follow proper group and audience etiquette during discussions, sharings, and performance activities. Fourth grade students apply the skills they learn in class to rehearsal, blocking, memorizing lines, learning choreography and songs as well as working as an ensemble to produce an age appropriate play shared with family, friends and the Keystone community.

## Digital Arts

The expectation for this class is to build digital literacy and sharpen creative thinking skills. Student artists will refine artistic abilities and learn how to apply what they've learned in traditional art classes within a digital space. Throughout the course, student artists will be exposed to a variety of digital tools in order to creatively express themselves with confidence. In addition to creative output, student artists will learn how to talk about their work as well as their peers' work in a respectful and constructive manner through critiques. Participating in art critiques sharpens both presentation and collaboration skills.



# OTHER LOWER SCHOOL SPECIALS

## Spanish

The Lower School program consists of kindergarten through fourth grade classes meeting once a week for 50 minutes. Although the pattern of learning a language has focused on listening, speaking, reading, and writing, here at Keystone we also incorporate drawings, images, and body language. We aim to create an atmosphere where students put ideas together and help them understand the context of the lesson. Most activities are student-led thus giving students the opportunity of ownership and confidence using the target language. New students are assigned a buddy to facilitate a smooth integration, and with repetition, they quickly gain confidence to engage in class activities. All interactions are grade appropriate to include songs, engaging activities, poems, crafts, games, skits, and SmartBoard presentations.

Students in Kindergarten and 1st grade learn to recognize sound structure, make comparisons, and imitate oral language. By combining language acquisition and learning techniques, students begin to absorb the language and use it confidently and naturally without concentrating on structure. The focus is on using the target language.

Kindergarten – 1st grade / Recognizing sound structure, making comparisons, and imitating oral language. By combining language acquisition and learning techniques, students begin to absorb the language and use it confidently and naturally without concentrating on structure. Focus is on using the target language.

2nd grade: At this level student-led learning is introduced. This valuable technique encourages motivation and allows students to own and guide the class using the target language. Vocabulary is introduced using familiar settings such as the rooms of a house. Numbers are introduced by mimicking a math class using addition and subtraction flashcards. The repetition and recycling of past concepts are incorporated to build on language already acquired. Focus is on using the target language.

3rd – 4th grades: Student-led learning continues in these grade levels. Repetition and recycling of past concepts are incorporated to continue building on language already acquired. The creation of real-life picture slides using SmartBoard technology brings authentic visualization into the classroom. Activities that combine listening, writing, and speaking skills are used to encourage students to use the target language. Focus is placed on using the target language.



# OTHER LOWER SCHOOL SPECIALS

## Library

The library at Keystone School nurtures connected readers and curious thinkers. Students are encouraged to be explorers in the library as they think, create, grow and share.

The curriculum, informed by the American Association of Libraries Standards, builds around three learning domains:

**Love of Literature:** Young learners engage with a diverse array of children's literature and authors and participate in activities to build personal and meaningful connections with books. Keystone School students are passionate and joyful readers. The library nurtures them by offering a diverse collection of books and hosting literary events throughout to build community and grow intellectual connectedness.

**Library & Literacy Skills:** Students will strengthen their skill for browsing as they explore and select appropriate materials for pleasure reading. Students will learn to use the library space, materials and resources responsibly, effectively and mindfully. They will practice proper book care and build responsibility through the circulation process.

**Information and Media Literacy:** Students learn to navigate print resources, online encyclopedias and databases for the purpose of research. They will also develop an understanding of the purpose of a variety of sources of information and how to cite sources. Learning Centers are offered during library classes to extend and apply the students' understanding of concepts and skills from each of the three domains.

The Keystone Library collaborates with classroom teachers and other specialists to create meaningful learning experiences.

## Leadership

The 4th grade Leadership class is an opportunity for students to study, practice, and develop individual and group leadership and organizational skills. These skills include but are not limited to citizenship, habits of mind, goal setting, effective communication, organization and time management, collaborative strategies and conflict resolution. In addition to focusing on our Keystone values, 4th grade leaders identify core values that are important and specific to them as an individual and use those values to create their own leadership credo, which serves as the springboard for their commitments and goals as leaders of the Lower School. Fourth grade leaders solve relevant and current school issues, applying their skill development through tasks such as project proposals, presentations, and organizing and executing a variety of divisional activities.





# OTHER LOWER SCHOOL SPECIALS

## **Physical Education**

From Kindergarten through Fourth Grade, the Keystone Physical Education program in Lower School promotes, through planned activities, the growth of each student in the following ways: physical, mental, emotional, and social. Students participate in PE class daily. Physical activity has been shown to vastly improve academic achievement and allow students to more fully absorb information being taught in all classes. At all levels of PE we foster fun, growth, competition, and sportsmanship. Our goal is to create lifelong enjoyment of physical activity in each student.

## **Wellness**

The Lower School Wellness program uses our school-wide values of curiosity, creativity, empathy, integrity, and service (known as our Cobra Code) to develop student insight and understanding of their physical and emotional health. Wellness activities and lessons are incorporated throughout the PE curriculum drawing connections to physical health and sportsmanship. While faculty are committed to embedding the Cobra Code into daily practices and lessons, specific lessons regarding emotional and relational well-being are also taught at each grade-level by the school counselor and Head of Lower School.

## **Integrated Technology**

The goal of the Innovation and Learning department is to implement tech integration that happens across the curriculum in ways that deepen and enhance the learning process. In particular, the department focuses on 4 components: active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts. Through tech integration lessons, students take responsibility for their learning outcomes, while teachers become guides and facilitators.



# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Outdoor Education, a hallmark of the Keystone experience in Middle and Upper Schools, is now a part of our Lower School curriculum.

This program includes the following goals:

- To provide students with opportunities to understand, expand, and apply real-world learning through outdoor experiences.
- To strengthen community by living our shared values of curiosity, service, creativity, empathy, and integrity while connecting with nature. (If these words sound familiar, and we hope they do, they're the concepts that make up our new Cobra Code.)
- To foster understanding of self, confidence, resourcefulness, and leadership in each student.
- To encourage an appreciation for healthy lifestyle choices and the environment.

We are taking at least one designated Outdoor Education field trip a year at each grade level, including Saturday family hikes throughout the year.

Our first overnight trip takes place in 4th Grade, with an excursion to Government Canyon, in northwest Bexar County. This trip will include a mandatory daylong trip to the state park and hike to the dinosaur tracks, and an optional overnight component that includes sleeping in tents.







THE KEYSTONE DIFFERENCE