

Navajo Heights School Curriculum Description



Grades 4 and 5

English Language Arts

Reading and Writing Workshop

The literacy block at Navajo is 90 minutes in length and includes skill introduction within whole group mini-lessons, guided reading in differentiated small groups, independent reading and practice within literacy stations, partner reading, writing and word work. Students also spend time conferencing with the teacher about their reading and writing progress. All of these components contribute to a balanced literacy program and are founded on the curricular plan designed by Lucy Calkins. Routines and expectations are established within the first few weeks of school so that students are confident in the logistics of the workshop. Students are assessed at the beginning of the year in order to determine their independent and instructional reading level. Running records are maintained throughout the year by the teacher as a way to monitor student progress. Essential to the Calkins' Reading Workshop is the idea of "building a reading life" which aims to instill reading with love and passion and helps students take control of their reading lives. Students can only become better readers by reading often. The Common Core Standards clearly point to deep, rich reading of complex text as a way of preparing students for college and career. Students will increase their independent reading while at school and should read outside of school approximately 45 minutes per day. All students are instructed on the use of reading journals.

Students will also write daily using the format of Calkins' Writing Workshop and Smekens' 6 Traits. Writing practice will develop student skills in narrative, realistic fiction, argumentative/persuasive, informational, historical fiction, poetry, literary essay, and memoir styles. Fifth grade students will also write research based argument essays.

Reading resources will include leveled books, mentor text, informational text, poetry and teacher read aloud and student choice book boxes. Time for Kids is used weekly to practice skills in informational text structures.

Each day students will have an opportunity to practice literacy independence in their "SOAR" time before and after the lunch period.

Vocabulary Instruction

According to Dr. Robert Marzano, vocabulary instruction has a profound effect on student comprehension of academic content. Navajo students are taught the the six steps in Marzano's approach to vocabulary development across all content material. In addition, students use **Wordly Wise**, to expand critical grade level vocabulary and improve reading comprehension.

Mathematics

Eureka Math

Eureka is a comprehensive program that helps produce students who are not merely literate, but fluent in mathematics. Carefully crafted by master teachers and math scholars and rigorously juried by experts in the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics, Eureka Math's PreK-12 curriculum develops mathematical knowledge in a sequence that follows the "story" of mathematics itself. The new standards and progressions set the frame. But the instructional shifts that teachers must make to achieve the rigor contained in the CCSS-M is what shaped every aspect of the curriculum. Nowhere are the instructional shifts more evident than in the fluency, application, concept development, and debrief sections that characterize lessons in the PreK–5 grades of Eureka Math.

Grade 4

Fourth grade mathematics is about (1) developing understanding and fluency with multi-digit multiplication, and developing understanding of dividing to find quotients involving multi-digit dividends; (2) developing an understanding of fraction equivalence, addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators, and multiplication of fractions by whole numbers; and (3) understanding that geometric figures can be analyzed and classified based on their properties, such as having parallel sides, perpendicular sides, particular angle measures, and symmetry. In Grade 4, students extend their work with whole numbers. They begin with large numbers using familiar units (tens and hundreds) and develop their understanding of thousands by building knowledge of the pattern of times ten in the base ten system on the place value chart

Grade 5

Fifth grade mathematics is about (1) developing fluency with addition and subtraction of fractions, and developing understanding of the multiplication of fractions and of division of fractions in limited cases (unit fractions divided by whole numbers and whole numbers divided by unit fractions); (2) extending division to two-digit divisors, integrating decimal fractions into the place value system and developing understanding of operations with decimals to hundredths, and developing fluency with whole number and decimal operations; and (3) developing understanding of volume.

Social Studies

The National Standards for Social Studies were established by the National Council for the Social Studies (**NCSS**). The standards continue to be focused on ten themes which are: 1. Culture, 2. Time, Continuity, and Change, 3. People, Places, and Environments, 4. Individual

Development and Identity, 5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions, 6. Power, Authority, and Governance, 7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption, 8. Science, Technology, and Society, 9. Global Connections, and 10. Civic Ideals and Practices. In addition to NCSS themes, Common Core English Language Arts standards are incorporated into the social studies curriculum. Students will learn about text types, text features, and expository text structures through their study of social studies topics. They will use expository writing to research topics.

Fourth Grade

Fourth grade students begin the year with a review of U.S. geography, regions, and map studies using the TCI program, Regions of our Country. After this review they launch into TCI History Alive! America's Past and a study of Native Americans of North America, Native American cultural regions, exploration of the New World in the 15th and 16th century, European explorers and expeditions, early English settlements, and colonial America.

Fifth Grade

Fifth grade students continue in the TCI program, History Alive, America's Past, studying the topics: early history of the slave trade and slavery perspectives, life in Colonial Williamsburg, tension between the colonies and Britain, mock debates on declaring independence, study of the Declaration of Independence document, Revolutionary War, branches of government, Bill of Rights, Manifest Destiny and settling the west, causes of the Civil War, life during the Civil War, and Industrialization.

Science

The National Research Council of the Natural Academy of Sciences released “A Framework for K12 Science Education”, in July 2011. In April 2013, the Next Generation Science Standards (**NGSS**) were released in final form.

Fourth Grade

The performance objectives in fourth grade focus on helping students to answer questions such as: “What are waves and what are some things they can do? How can water, ice, wind and vegetation change the land? What patterns of Earth’s features can be determined with the use of maps? How do internal and external structures support the survival, growth, behavior and reproduction of plants and animals? What is energy and how is it related to motion? How is energy transferred? How can energy be used to solve a problem?”

Fifth Grade

The performance objectives in fifth grade focus on helping students to answer questions such as: “When matter changes, does its weight change? How much water can be found in different places on Earth? Can new substances be created by combining other substances? How does matter cycle through ecosystems? Where does the energy in food come from and what is it used for? How do lengths and directions of shadows or relative lengths of day and night change from day to day, and how does the appearance of some stars change in different seasons?”

Fine Arts/Technology

Students at Navajo receive music and art instruction one time per week, for 45 minutes. Technology is offered in the Mac lab, 50 minutes per week. Library is a 30 minute period weekly. Students are allowed to visit the library each morning to check books in and out. Physical Education is offered three times per week for 35 minute periods. Health instruction is delivered in PE classes.

Band is optional for fourth and fifth grade students. Fifth grade band sectionals practice during the lunch/recess/Daily 5 time. Fifth grade band students will miss one recess per week. Fourth grade band sectionals are held after school as to not disrupt the academic day for this age group. Grade level and whole school band practice is held after school.