



September 17, 2018

Dear Third Grade Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Welcome to Grade Three! Students in third grade participate in a variety of classroom experiences to expand their love of learning and develop their academic, social and physical skills. The following descriptions present a brief overview of the comprehensive program.

Language Arts: Students in third grade continue to develop and expand their literacy skills in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, speaking and listening by engaging in a variety of lessons and activities based on the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards and the Anne Arundel County Literacy Curriculum. They become more independent in utilizing before, during, and after strategies as they engage in fluent reading and comprehension of complex literary and informational texts. As writers, they engage in opinion, informative, and narrative writing while practicing handwriting skills. Students learn to compose pieces that incorporate language conventions. Students respond to text-dependent questions and write to source in all content areas. Technology skills are developed during the third grade year. Students develop a more sophisticated understanding about utilizing online resources and interact with a variety of computer applications as well as conduct research. Technology supports learning in all curricular areas.

Mathematics: Students develop mathematical thinking through the integration of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and the Standards for Mathematical Practice. These standards and practices require students to demonstrate skills and persevere when solving problems, explain their reasoning to others, choose appropriate mathematical tools, and be accurate with representations and explanations. The Standards for Mathematical Practices are incorporated into daily lessons and promoted through student discourse during lessons. The MCCR standards are a set of high-quality academic goals which provide rigor, focus, and coherence to prepare our students to be college and career ready by the time they graduate from high school. The mathematical concepts taught in Grade 3 include:

- Number and Operations - Development of Multiplicative Reasoning
- Number and Operations - Fractions
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Geometry
- Measurement and Data
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A variety of resources are employed to teach the mathematical skills that include, but are not limited to, *Ready Common Core*, *Teaching Student Centered Mathematics*, *Mastering the Basic Facts*, *Number Talks*, *Hands-On Standards*, web based resources such as Learn Zillion, and computer programs such as *FASTT Math*. Stretch-to-Go games are available to use at home through the *Fastt Math* website.

Students will acquire mathematical concepts and be able to apply them to various real-life situations. District assessments are given in conjunction with frequent check for understanding and teacher observation, to determine the mastery of these skills and practices. Parents may assist in their child's success in mathematics by checking homework and communicating regularly with the classroom teacher.

Science: The Science learning block is designed to help realize a vision for education in science, environmental literacy and engineering. Students actively engage in interdisciplinary applications and learning. Using the platform of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) students develop questions and investigate inquiries as scientists, environmentalists, engineers, and informed citizens. Throughout the learning block of Science students are encouraged to observe, collect and evaluate data and evidence to communicate conclusions and take informed action about topics being studied.

The topics are:

- Forces and Motion

- Ecosystems, Past and Present
- Life Cycles & Heredity of Organisms
- Weather & Climate
- Engineering Design

Environmental Literacy: Maryland Environmental Literacy Standards are integrated into curriculum through engaging units that connect students with their local natural world. In third grade students will be investigating environmental issues through social studies, science, and math. Students will evaluate local environmental issues, collect data and take action on a class selected problem.

Social Studies: Students investigate important concepts from the disciplines of social studies: geography, economics, civics, and history and investigate the concept of culture. Students learn about the geography, economics and government of Anne Arundel County. Students continue to practice the skills of social studies: sequencing events, analyzing cause and effect, analyzing perspective, reading and writing independently. They also listen to children’s literature to learn concepts of social studies. They complete short writing assignments, and read and construct maps, charts, tables and graphs. At the end of each unit there is a culminating performance based project that allows students to authentically apply the skills that they have learned.

The units studied are:

- Our Community
- People in Our Community
- Community at Work
- Environmental Action Project

English Language Acquisition Program (ESOL): English Language Acquisition (ELA) classes comply with the requirements of Title III ESSA. The goal of English Language Acquisition instruction is to enable English Learners to construct meaning from oral and written language, express complex ideas and information, as well as access instruction. In order to accomplish this goal, the ELA curriculum is based on WIDA English Language Development (ELD) standards:

- Social and Instructional Language
- The Language of Language Arts
- The Language of Math
- The Language of Science
- The Language of Social Studies

While the ELA teacher is responsible for English Language Development according to the WIDA ELD standards, the Maryland State Standards for College and Career Readiness, as well as National and State Content Standards, are the context used for teaching the language. All students who have been identified as eligible to receive English Language Acquisition services will take WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, the annual assessment to measure English Language Proficiency.

Technology: Students increase their creativity, communicate and collaborate with others and gather, evaluate and analyze information and data using computers. They solve problems and make decisions in a manner that demonstrates their understanding of the social, ethical, and human issues related to technology.

We are looking forward to a year of learning for your third grader. If you desire additional information, please contact your child’s teacher.

Sincerely,
Tracey L. Ahern
Principal