

# ***Table of Contents***

Introduction .....Page 2  
Mission Statement .....Page 2

## **Grade Level Course Descriptions**

Kindergarten .....Page 3-4  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade .....Page 5-6  
2<sup>nd</sup> Grade.....Page 7-8  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade .....Page 9-10  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade.....Page 11-12  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade .....Page 13-14  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade .....Page 15-16  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade.....Page 17-18  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade .....Page 19-20

## **Special Areas**

Art .....Page 21-22  
Music.....Page 22-23  
Physical Education.....Page 24  
Health .....Page 24  
Technology .....Page 25  
Family & Consumer Science .....Page 25  
Library.....Page 26-27

## **Other Services & Plans**

NYS Standardized Assessments.....Page 28-29  
Response to Intervention (RTI).....Page 29-30  
Academic Intervention (AIS).....Page 30-32  
    Reading, Writing, Math, Speech and Language  
Special Education.....Page 33  
Guidance Plan .....Page 33-34  
Character Education .....Page 35

## Introduction

---

Dear Parents,

This Course Description Outline has been developed to help parents understand what is expected of students at each grade level in the core subject areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Special Areas. It provides a listing of the K-8 New York State Content Standards, and many of the specific skills and concepts to be taught at each grade level and special area. Educators and classroom teachers have been involved in the development and/or review of this document. The expectations were designed to ensure that students receive seamless instruction, from one grade to the next. More importantly, this Course Description Outline sets high expectations so we can better prepare all Kindergarten through Eighth grade students for the challenges they will face in a global 21st century.

These overviews reflect the most current curriculum established for each grade level; however, the format remains flexible so that change can evolve using the established criteria identified below and will be adapted to any changes in the state standards and or district requirements.

It is recognized that effective educational programs depend on a strong partnership between parents, the community, and the school. We believe that parental involvement enriches the academic experiences of children. Your participation is encouraged and welcomed, and you are invited to contact us if you have any suggestions or questions.

To learn more about the Wynantskill Union Free School District Curriculum Framework, visit [www.wynantskillufsd.org](http://www.wynantskillufsd.org)

*Many thanks for your commitment to your child's education,  
Administration in conjunction with Educational Planning Committee*

## **Mission Statement** *Wynantskill Union Free School District*

---

*This mission statement expresses the purpose for which our school district exists and the specific functions it performs as an organization.*

The mission of our community based school is to create a safe, compassionate, progressive learning environment that recognizes individual needs and encourages all students to strive for personal and educational excellence. As a small suburban school district rich with pride, we believe that by working together we can: create a dynamic program based on character, tolerance, and diversity; provide opportunities for all to reach their fullest potential; empower all to achieve personal excellence; and encourage a life-long love of learning.

# Kindergarten Course Description

**English Language Arts (ELA)** Students will explore and use language to communicate with a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes. Students will continue to transition from oral literacy to written literacy during the kindergarten year.

## Reading

Reading is taught throughout the day in a variety of ways including shared reading, morning messages, read alouds, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time, and literacy centers.

Students will:

- Identify ALL upper and lowercase letter/sounds and apply this knowledge in their reading and writing
- Identify parts of a book (front, back, title, cover, title page and page)
- Follow the directionality of text: left to right and top to bottom
- Develop 1:1 (word to word) correspondence
- Develop reading comprehension skills (main idea, sequencing, simple cause and effect) and use pictures in a story to construct meaning
- Learn basic sight words
- Read and comprehend a level C book by the end of the year assessed by Rigby Assessments

## Writing

- Personal Narrative
- Lists and Labels
- Author Study- Donald Crews
- Touchstone Texts
- Functional Writing

## Math

Students will recognize various ways to accomplish a task, and to use the best tools and strategies for solving problems. Students will work in whole group, small group and daily centers to gain an understanding of the following:

### Number Sense and Operations:

- Counting number 1-20
- Identify, draw and writing numbers 1-10
- Counting backwards from 10
- Determining sums and differences by various means
- Creating addition and subtraction verbal word problems

### Algebra

- Recognize, describe and create simple patterns that repeat by using manipulatives

### Geometry

- Sort, classify and describe simple shapes to investigate symmetry
- Explore vertical and horizontal lines

- Understand and use ideas such as; over, under, below, on, besides, next to and between

**Measurement**

- Use non-standard measurements to compare lengths of objects by discussing longer than, and shorter than
- Relate specific times such as, morning, noon, afternoon, and evening to activities

**Probability and Statistics**

- Sort, organize, gather and represent data on a pictograph for quantities up to 10

**Science**

The program is designed to provide students with hands-on inquiry based learning experiences. Each student will also have a chance to be the Scientist of the Week and will demonstrate and explain an experiment of their choice to his/her peers.

Topics Include:

- Identifying similarities and differences between living and non-living things
- Describing and comparing human and animal habitats
- Naming parts of human and animal bodies and their function
- Naming parts of a flower and/or plant
- Identifying ways plants are used for food
- Observing, describing, and documenting the growth of living things

**Social Studies**

The social studies program at the kindergarten level focuses on helping students develop awareness of themselves as growing individuals. Children learn about values, ideas, customs, and traditions. Children also begin to learn about their role as citizens by accepting rights and responsibilities in the classroom and by learning about rules and laws.

Topics Include:

- Self and Others
- My Family and Other families
- My School and Community
- My Neighborhood
- Maps
- Basic Needs and Wants

# First Grade Course Description

**English Language Arts (ELA)** is the foundation for students to become independent readers and writers. Language arts is composed of several interrelated areas: reading, writing, spelling, listening, and speaking.

## Reading

The emphasis in first grade shifts from reading the mastery of letters and words to reading as a way of getting to the meaning of a text. Students are expanding their fluency and vocabulary by listening and speaking in this grade. The focus is for students to become independent readers who self monitor their reading for understanding.

Students will:

- Self monitor and use reading strategies to figure out unknown words
- Read for meaning at a level I book by the end of the year as assessed by Rigby Assessments
- Read grade level sight words
- Sound-to-letter and phonic connections and patterns
- Understand and identify prefixes and suffixes

## Writing

- Launching- Personal Narratives
- Non-Fiction
- Poetry
- Friendly Letters
- Realistic Fiction
- Author Study- Mem Fox

## Math

First grade math consists of multiple hands on manipulatives to help with the understanding of everyday math that is happening all around them. The curriculum allows students to construct an understanding of mathematics from their own experiences, and includes practical routines to build arithmetic skills, that are essential for building number sense, estimation skills, and flexibility in a problem-rich environment. Important concepts or skills recur with variation throughout the curriculum, and concepts are introduced and revisited in a variety of formats providing considerable practice. Students work in large group, small group, centers and individually to gain the knowledge and understanding of the many concepts introduced.

### Number Sense and Operations:

- Number Sense 0-100
- Place Value to 100
- Addition and Subtraction of one-digit numbers and two-digit numbers with and without re-grouping

### Algebra

- Determine and discuss patterns

### Geometry

- Identify, describe and sort basic shapes and patterns

- Understand and identify symmetry

### **Measurement**

- Use non-standard and standard units of measure
- Know vocabulary and recognize coins (penny, nickel, dime, quarter) and recognize the cent notation and amounts up to 25 cents
- Tell time to the hour, using both digital and analog clocks

### **Probability and Statistics**

- Gather and interpret data on graphs and charts

## **Science**

Students will focus on exploring the natural world. The program is relevant to student everyday lives and promotes students development of appropriate problem-solving skills through exploration and observation of the world we live in.

Topics Include:

- **Weather and Seasons-** Students will have the opportunity to explore various weather features including; water cycle and cloud and discover how weather affects their lives
- **Comparing and Measuring-** Students will understand that they may compare and measure using both standard and non-standard unit of measurements
- **Organisms-** Students will begin to understand the diversity of life around them by observing various plants and animals
- **Scientist of Week-**Students will use the Scientific Method to help organize their thoughts when sharing an experiment that they have investigated.

## **Social Studies**

Social Studies is integrated throughout the literacy program. Students will focus on learning about their roles as members of a family and school community. The development of identity and social interaction are stressed. Students learn about families now and long ago, as they study different kinds of families that have existed in different societies and communities. Students also begin to locate places on maps and globes and learn how maps serve as representations of physical features and objects.

Topics Include:

- My Family and Other Families
- Now and Long Ago
- Places in my Community and Local Region
- Challenge of Meeting Needs and Wants
- Rights, Responsibilities, and Roles of Citizenship

## Second Grade *Course Description*

**English Language Arts (ELA)** fosters independence through daily centers and reading leveled books that allow students to implement the proper reading strategies.

### Reading

Throughout second grade students are monitored to utilize reading strategies, make predictions, draw conclusions and respond to what they have read.

Students will:

- Use reading strategies to self monitor independent reading
- Read for meaning and understanding
- Draw conclusion from the text
- Gain a deeper understanding of phonic elements and word patterns
- Will read a level M text by year end as assessed by Rigby or Fountas and Pinnell assessments

### Writing

- Launching- introduction of writing unit
- Poetry- reading, writing, and composition of individual student generated poems
- Letter Writing- formal and informal letter writing
- Author Study- Gail Gibbons
- Folktales, Fables and Fairy Tales

### Math

Students recognize that there are various ways to accomplish a task, and to use the best tools/strategies for solving problems.

#### Number Sense

- Number Sense to 1,000
- Place Value to 999
- Addition and Subtraction of two-digit numbers with and without regrouping
- Write Number Sentences
- Demonstrate fluency for facts up to 18

#### Algebra

- Extend and Create numeric patterns

#### Geometry

- Experiment, identify, compose and decompose two-dimensional shapes
- Explore line symmetry

#### Measurement

- Know and recognize coins (penny, nickel, dime, quarter) and bills (\$1,\$5,\$10,and \$20) and identify combinations to make one dollar
- Tell time to the half hour and five minutes using both digital and analog clocks
- Use standard and non-standard units to measure both vertical and horizontal lengths, and to compare and order objects

**Probability and Statistics**

- Collect, display, discuss, compare and formulate bar graphs, pictographs, and tally graphs

**Science**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of scientific method through hands on inquiry based units of study.

Topics Include:

- **Balancing and Weighing**-Students will observe the relationships between balancing and weighing
- **Changes of State**- Solids, liquids and gases
- **Life Cycle**- Butterfly- Growth and change characteristics of living things
- **Research Projects** – Penguins

**Social Studies**

Students explore rural, urban, and suburban communities, concentrating on communities in the United States. Students will demonstrate an understanding of their own community and its location. Students continue to learn how to locate places on maps and globes and how different communities are influenced by geographic and environmental factors. They also study about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in their communities.

Topics Include:

- My Community and Region Today
- Rights, Responsibilities, and Roles of Citizenship
- Symbols of Citizenship
- Making and Changing Rules and Laws
- Junior Achievement

# Third Grade Course Description

**English Language Arts (ELA)** Students continue to develop and build upon the foundations of literacy.

## Reading

Students learn to further their word attack skills and comprehension of the book as a whole. Small group discussions, comprehension questions and a mixture of phonics are at the core of our third grade program.

Students will:

- Learn how to focus on comprehension of plot and themes of both non-fiction and fiction genres
- Gain knowledge about phonic elements and patterns
- Learn to use strategies such as, predicting, questioning and analyzing.
- Read and understand a level P text by year end as assessed by Rigby or Fountas and Pinnell assessments

## Writing

- Personal Narrative
- Procedural/Directions
- Brochure
- Touchstone Text
- Literary Non-Fiction
- Biography
- Author Study-Patricia Polacco
- Introduction to cursive handwriting

## Math

The focus is on concept and practice of each skill. Techniques involve small group work technology-based activities and differentiated instruction to reach a variety of learning styles.

### Number Sense and Operations

- Number Sense to 1,000
- Use a variety of strategies to add and subtract 3-digit numbers with and without regrouping
- Develop fluency with single-digit multiplication facts and use strategies to solve multiplication problems with factors up to 12x12
- Demonstrate fluency and apply single-digit division facts

### Algebra

- Compare whole numbers and unit fractions
- Describe and extend numeric and geometric patterns

### Geometry

- Define and identify two and three-dimensional shapes

**Measurement**

- Measure length, weight, and capacity using customary measures
- Count and represent combined coins and dollars
- Relate unit fraction to the face of the clock, and tell time to the minute using digital and analog

**Probability and Statistics**

- Collect, construct, identify and state data using surveys, frequency tables, pictographs, and bar graphs

**Science**

Students are involved in hands-on, inquiry based units of study that allow the third graders to be scientists. Students explore concepts, predict results, observe and record properties, interpret information, and draw scientific conclusions.

Topics Include:

- **The Study of Matter**
- **Structures and Building**
- **Chemical Test**-Students develop a variety of skills as they explore the basics of chemical analysis
- **Plant Growth and Development** -Students examine in depth the life cycle of a plant
- **Systems and Interactions**

**Social Studies**

Students will develop an understanding of various communities around the world including, political, economic, historic, geographical, social and cultural issues. Students will learn about historic chronology by placing important events on timelines and locate world communities. Students will also begin to compare the roles of citizenship and the kinds of governments found in various world communities.

Topics Include:

- Compare and Contrast Countries and Continents
- Organization of Governments Around the World
- Read and Interpret Maps, Globes and Charts
- Enhance Awareness of Basic Landforms

# Fourth Grade Course Description

**English Language Arts (ELA)** Students continue to develop proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

**Reading**

A balanced literacy approach is used which includes, read alouds, shared reading, guided reading, literature study, and independent reading to help our students gain a deeper understanding of the text.

Students will:

- Learn how to comprehend a variety of texts including content area and a variety of genres
- Learn to apply strategies such as predicting, questioning, monitoring, summarizing and visualizing when reading.
- Read and understand a T level text by the year end as assessed by Fountas and Pinnell assessments.

**Writing**

Students will continue to develop the craft of writing. Writing is used across the curriculum. Students will record observations, explain their thought process, and provide evidence to support their opinions in all subject areas. Writer’s notebooks are also used as a springboard for ideas. Both fiction and non-fiction pieces will be created, along with focusing on the necessary elements for each genre.

- Launching
- Compare/Contrast Articles
- Essay Writing
- Touchstone Texts
- Poetry
- Biography

**Math**

Students will build upon the mathematical foundation that they have constructed in previous years. While students learn to manipulate numbers, they continue to learn how to relate these skills to real-life situations.

**Number Sense and Operations**

- Number Sense to 10,000
- Develop an understanding of decimals as part of a whole and compare and order decimals to the hundredths place
- Adding and Subtracting numbers up to 10,000
- Multiply two-digit numbers by one-digit numbers and two-digit by two-digit numbers with and without regrouping
- Divide two-digit dividends by one-digit divisors

**Algebra**

- Compare and order decimals and fractions
- Describe and Extend numeric and geometric patterns

**Geometry**

- Analyze characteristics, properties and relationships of geometric shapes

**Measurement**

- Select appropriate tools and units(customary and metric) for measuring
- Make change, using combined coins and dollars
- Calculate elapsed time in hours and half hours, days and weeks

**Probability and Statistics**

- Design, collect, represent, predict and read data using surveys, tables, bar graphs, pictographs and line graphs

**Science**

Students will increase understanding of important scientific concepts, while developing positive attitudes towards science. Students use a learning cycle called “Focus-Explore-Reflect-Apply.” Our focus is often on helping students develop their critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Topics Include:

- **Electric Circuits**-Student answer their own questions about properties and uses of electricity.
- **Magnets**
- **Earth, Moon and Sun**
- **Ecosystem** -Students observe the interrelationship that link plants, animals and the physical world.
- **Motion and Design**-Students explore physics of motion and apply those concepts simple vehicles.

**Social Studies**

Students will focus on the structure and function of the different branches and roles of civic leaders of New York State. Students will continue to build on the understanding of families, schools and communities and evaluate different types of text by using critical thinking skills and understand their rights as citizens and what they can do to be contributing members in society.

Topics Include:

- Native American Indians of New York State
- Three worlds (Europe, the Americas, Africa) meet in the Americas
- Colonial and Revolutionary periods
- The Revolutionary War in New York State
- The New Nation
- Industrial Growth and Expansion
- Urbanization: Economic, Political, and Social Impacts
- Government
- Purposes of Government
- Local and State Governments

# Fifth Grade Course Description

---

## English Language Arts (ELA)

Reading, writing and spelling are integrated and inclusive ELA subjects.

### Reading

In fifth grade comprehension skills, story analysis, vocabulary development, oral and independent reading are the focus of our program. A wide variety of literary pieces and literature genres will be explored and read by the students.

Students will:

- Participate in shared readings of trade books that correlate with other core subjects
- Use various reference and interpretation skills to promote further understanding of all subjects.
- Read and understand a level W text by year end as assessed by Fountas and Pinnell assessments.

### Writing

- Memoir
- Editorial
- Formal Letter and Business Letter
- Non-Fiction
- Author Study- Cynthia Rylant
- Picture Book Study
- Feature Article

### Math

Students will gain skill and practice as they learn to apply math skills to real life applications such as, writing checks, keeping a bank account, and buying and selling stocks. This enables our students to learn more mathematical content and become life-long mathematical thinkers.

#### Number Sense

- Number Sense from millions
- Compare and order decimals and fractions
- Add, Subtract, multiply and divide decimals
- Add, Subtract, multiply and divide fractions and mixed numbers with unlike denominators
- Read, write and order decimals to thousandths
- Multiplication of three-digit by three-digit numbers
- Division of three-digit numbers by one- and two-digit numbers
- Estimate and round numbers to the nearest hundredth and up to 10,000

#### Algebra

- Recognize, use, and represent algebraically patterns, relations and functions

#### Geometry

- Analyze characteristics, relationships and properties of geometric shapes

- Coordinate Geometry

**Measurement**

- Measurement Customary and Metric units
- Calculate elapsed time in hours and minutes
- Measure and draw angles using a protractor

**Probability and Statistics**

- Record and experiment with possible outcomes and record results
- Collect, display, calculate and formulate data from a variety of sources (newspapers, magazines, polls, charts and surveys) to create and experiment with line graphs

**Science**

The students will be engaged in real life experiments and technology build on their prior knowledge of testing procedures, collecting and analyzing data, and drawing conclusions.

Topics Include:

- **Human Body Systems Unit**
  - Digestive System
  - Respiratory System
  - Circulatory System
  - Musculo-skeletal System
- **Land and Water**
- **Forensics**

**Social Studies**

Students will focus on geographic, economic, and social/cultural understandings related to the United States, Canada, and nations in Latin America today.

Topics Include:

- Ancient America
- Native Americans
- Explorers
- Colonial Heritage
- American Revolution/Independence
- US Constitution
- Civil War
- Intervention and Change
- World Power
- Americans Today

# Sixth Grade Course Description

## English Language Arts (ELA)

The curriculum explores different genres in literature. There is heavy emphasis on the writing process, providing students with a basic understanding of writing mechanics, grammar, and voice.

Students will:

- Explore different genres of literature including:
  - plays, poetry, fiction, non-fiction
- Create works/peer editing—creative writing, original plays
- Develop public speaking skills through presentations of reports, persuasive presentations of student choice, video recordings of works
- Discovery method of learning—discovering rules, sorting words, finding patterns, group work

## Math

Students are encouraged to see math as a form of communication. Their understanding is enhanced through the incorporation of hands-on materials, group interaction, small group instruction and reinforcement, and the use of technology. Topics include:

### Number Sense and Operation

- Read and write whole numbers to trillions
- Locate rational numbers on a number line (including positive and negative)
- Absolute value of rational numbers (including positive and negative)
- Exponential Form
- Comparing decimals, fractions, percents
- Computations with fractions
- Ratios & percents

### Algebra

- Represent problem situations algebraically
- Translate two-step verbal expressions into algebraic expressions
- Solving Equations

### Geometry

- Perimeter, area, circumference, volume
- The 4 Quadrants of the Coordinate Plane

### Measurement

- Customary and metric units of capacity
- Customary and metric conversions

### Probability and Statistics

- Measures of Central Tendency
- Independent and Dependent Events
- Surveying & Graphing

## Science

Students are engaged in many hands-on activities that help them construct explanations and formulate questions related to everyday observations. The two main units of study help students compare the way a variety of organisms carry out basic life functions, and demonstrate how energy can be transformed from one form to another.

Topics Include:

- **Organisms:** From Macro to Micro – Exploring the relationships between organisms as well as the life cycles and life processes of protists, plants, and animals
- **Electrical Circuits and Design** – Exploring the transfer of energy from one form to another with a focus on electrical energy, electrical components, and electrical systems.

Students use text books, the internet, Gizmos (Cell Division, Pollination: Flower to Fruit, Circuits) and the library as resources to scientific information, and learn to present their information using Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

## Social Studies

The curriculum emphasizes the interdependence of all people, keying in on the Eastern Hemisphere providing students with a basic understanding of the geographic, social, economic and political elements primarily of ancient civilizations in this part of the world.

Topics Include:

- History of Eastern Hemisphere nations
- Geography of Eastern Hemisphere nations
- Economies of Eastern Hemisphere nations
- Governments of Eastern Hemisphere nations

*Sixth grade students participate in a series of four to ten week courses. The courses listed below are designed to help create a successful transition to Middle School.*

## Study Skills

This course is designed to improve students study skills, thereby enabling them to be active organized learners and to be successful in their content subjects. Students learn the effectiveness of using their agendas and how to prioritize assignments.

## Keyboarding

This second quarter course is designed to increase student keyboarding knowledge and skill through drill practice and reinforcement of correct techniques.

## Family and Consumer Science (FACS)

This is a course that provides students the opportunity to learn skills in all areas of Family and Consumer Sciences Education. Emphasis is on leadership, family, consumer economics and resource management, housing and living environments, nutrition and foods, textiles and apparel, and career preparation.

## Second Language

Students explore the Spanish language and connect to the communities and cultures where Spanish is spoken. Students begin to develop basic communication skills. This course is the introduction to second language in Middle School.

# Seventh Grade Course Description

## English Language Arts (ELA)

The seventh grade English language arts program will encompass a variety of areas of learning including reading, writing, listening and speaking for understanding, critical analysis, social interaction, and evaluation.

- Daily Reflective Journaling
- Informative Essays
- Poetry Creation and Exploration
- Author Study Related to Novel Units
- Character Analysis in Short Stories
- Literature Terms: Comprehension of and Relationships to Short Stories.
- Book Critiques
- Novel Units :1-2 novels per quarter

## Math

The Math curriculum continues to build on the concepts taught in previous grades. Students will develop a method of inquiry and application of problem solving that can be applied to real life situations and all curriculum areas.

### Number Sense

- Integer operations, greatest common factor, least common multiple, prime factorization, order of operations
- Exponents – squares, square roots, scientific notation, exponent rules
- Number Theory – Real Number System

### Algebra

- Evaluating expressions, solving equations and inequalities

### Geometry

- Surface area and volume of 3 dimensional figures, calculating radius or circle, drawing central angles of circles

### Measurement

- Rates, Ratios, Proportions – customary and metric conversions, unit prices, scales

### Probability and Statistics

- Experimental vs. theoretical, interpreting data to make predictions
- Data Analysis – central tendency, constructing and interpreting graphs

## Science

Students will review and reinforce science skills previously learned as well as further exploring the use of lab equipment and scientific method.

Topics Include:

- **Metrics and Measurement/Lab Equipment/Lab Safety Review**
- **Catastrophic Events-** Students engage in exploration of storms Earthquakes and volcanoes.

- **Rocks and Minerals**
- **Weathering and Erosion, Glaciers**
- **Properties of Matter**- Students learn about three main characteristics of property matter, mix and solutions, compounds and chemical reactions.

### **Social Studies**

Seventh grade social studies focus is on a chronologically organized study of United States and New York State History. This course traces the human experience in the United States from Pre-Columbian times to the present, and tying Political, Geographic, Economic, and Social Trends in United States History to parallel trends and time frames in New York State History.

Topics Include:

- The Global Heritage of the American People Prior to 1500
- European Exploration and Colonization of the Americas
- A Nation is Created
- Experiments in Government- Foundations of Our Constitution
- Life in the New Nation

### **Second Language**

Learning a second language allows a connection to communities and cultures all over the world. Students begin to explore Spanish and develop basic communication skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students will be able to comprehend simple statements and questions as well as comprehend the main idea of extended but simple messages and conversations.

Topics Include:

- Personal Identification
- Education
- Meal Taking/Food and Drink
- Shopping
- Health and Welfare
- Physical Environment
- Leisure

# **Eighth Grade Course Description**

---

## **English Language Arts (ELA)**

The eighth grade English language arts program will encompass a variety of areas of learning including reading, writing, listening and speaking for understanding, critical analysis, social interaction, and evaluation.

Students will:

- Create Narrative Writing
- Develop Persuasive and Expository Essays
- Write Business Letters
- Participate in Play Reviews and Writing
- Learn Greek Mythology
- Research Paper Writing
- Write Literary Response using text support
- Integrate Social Studies: WW II
- Read Novel Units: 1-2 novels per quarter

## **Math**

Eighth grade math curriculum continues to build on the concepts taught in previous grades. Students will develop a method of inquiry and application of problem solving that can be applied to real life situations and all curriculum areas.

### **Number Sense**

- Percents – large and small, discount, tax, tip, and commission
- Evaluate expressions with integral exponents
- Develop and apply the laws of exponents for multiplication and division

### **Algebra**

- Polynomials – operations and factoring
- Equations – translating verbal statements, solving multi-step

### **Geometry**

- Geometric Relationships – identifying pairs of angles, finding missing angles
- Geometric Transformations – reflections, translations, rotations, dilations
- Linear Functions – use graphs to describe functions and patterns, slope, rate of change, functions rules
- Inequalities – solve and graph
- Right Triangle Trigonometry
- Constructions

### **Measurement**

- Solve equations/proportions to convert to equivalent measurements with metric and customary measurement systems

**Science**

Students will exhibit mastery of lab equipment and understanding of scientific method and investigation.

Topics Include:

- Physics - Energy, Machines and Motion- Students explore in-depth 3 physical concepts; energy, machine and motion
- Forms of Energy
- Earth in Space-Students explore Earth's role in the Sun, Earth, Moon system, The Solar System and Earth's history

**Social Studies**

Eighth grade social studies focus is on a chronologically organized study of United States and New York State History. The course is divided into 11 units, tracing the human experience in the United States from Pre-Columbian times to the present. Political, Geographic, Economic, and Social Trends in United States, History to parallel trends and time frames in New York State history are also studied.

Topics Include:

- Division and Reunion- Civil War
- An Industrial Society
- The United States as an Independent Nation in an Increasingly Interdependent World
- The United States Between the Wars
- The United States Assumes Worldwide Responsibilities
- The Changing Nature of the American People from World War II to the Present

**Second Language**

The purpose of second language study in the middle school is the negotiation of meaning. Students are given opportunities to simulate real life situations and to use language that will accomplish a real communicative purpose such as socializing, providing and obtaining information, expressing personal feelings and opinions and getting others to adopt a course of action.

Topics Include:

- Family Life
- House and Home
- Community and Neighborhood
- Earning a Living
- Public Services
- Travel

## *Acceleration Course Descriptions*

---

The district offers accelerated coursework through Spanish 8, Algebra 1 and Studio in Art for students in grade eight. Successful completion of the course will result in one high school credit. The course descriptions include:

**Spanish 8-** At the end of the language sequence, students will take the New York State Proficiency exam.

**Algebra 1-** This course is the foundation for all future Math courses. Topics include reasoning and problem solving, solving and graphing equations and inequalities, functions, systems, sets, statistics and data analysis, probability, and quadratic equations.

**Studio in Art-** This course offers students the chance to explore a variety of medium in two-dimensional and three-dimensional art. Students work with a variety of techniques learning to enhance their drawing and painting skills. Mediums include drawing, charcoal, painting, clay and mixed media. Students are expected to maintain a portfolio of work for review on a quarterly basis.

We also offer Honors English and Creative Writing electives to selected students.

## *Art Course Descriptions*

---

The art department provides instruction in a variety of materials for the K-8 population. There is a strong focus on drawing, self expression, art history, and coordinated curriculum with classroom teachers. Students are encouraged to discuss experiment and find their individual voices through art.

### **K-2**

- Recognize basic shapes and creative line
- Use observational skills to draw
- Create patterns
- Experiment with a variety of painting techniques and mediums
- Experimentation with different kinds of sculpture including clay
- Practice with printmaking
- Begin to learn about proportion
- Recognize primary and secondary colors and color mixing
- Begin to develop an opinion and learn about artists and art history

### **3-5**

- Use line to create foreground, middle ground, and background
- Consider shape relationship of positive and negative space
- Create simple contour and gesture and drawings
- Create 3-dimensional creations out of clay
- Use measuring devices to draw

- Explore a variety of brushing techniques
- Explore printmaking
- Continue to explore and develop opinions of art and art history
- Begin to mix tints and shades
- Create 3-dimensional form using clay
- Use printmaking to create a series

**6-8**

- Use a variety of drawing techniques to create the illusion of depth
- Use 1 point perspective to create the illusion of depth
- Drawing symmetrical and asymmetrical drawings
- Draw from observation
- Draw from live models
- Create a drawing with radial balance
- Employ color theory in work
- Experiment with brush techniques
- Practice color mixing and color blending
- Use subtractive and additive techniques to build clay sculptures
- Create relief prints
- Create mono-prints
- Create figure and gesture drawings

## *Music Course Description*

---

**General Music**

General music classes are offered to all students in grades kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The goal of the music program is to help students develop musical skills that will allow the student to understand and enjoy music. This is accomplished by having students create, perform and participate in the arts. The students learn how to respond and how to analyze works of art while understanding the cultural dimensions and the contribution of the arts. In addition, students learn how to use art materials and resources, by becoming the musician.

**K-2**

- Elementary students learn the foundations of music through songs, games and singing
- Students learn the language of music-note and rhythm reading
- Music of various cultures is explored

**3-5**

- Students in grades 4 and 5 begin studying the recorder
- Orchestra instruments introduced
- Musical theater is studied and students dramatize plays in class
- European and American musical styles are introduced

**6-8**

- Analyze historical, social and cultural influences of various musical styles
- Use correct terminology to talk the language of music
- Use notation, creative movements, and vocal skills to communicate musical ideas
- Improvise on instruments and performing original composition

**Performance Groups**

The skills learned previously in general music are expanded upon with our performing groups. Students may begin a band instrument in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. They receive a weekly lesson on their instrument in addition to the full band ensemble experience. Students continue with the ensemble experience with our various instrumental ensembles through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. These ensembles include; 5/6 band, 6-8 band, 6-8 jazz band and various small ensembles. Chorus is also offered and begins in 6<sup>th</sup> grade with the performance group incorporating students in grades 6-8.

**Chorus**

- Learn basic singing skills
- Demonstrate musicality
- Understand the elements of music
- Demonstrate concert etiquette
- Analyze historical, social and cultural influences on music

**Band**

- Assemble and care of instruction
- Develop the elements of a quality sound
- Demonstrate musicality
- Understand the elements of music
- Improvising and composing music
- Practice habits
- Experience large group performance skills
- Analyze historical, social and cultural influences on music

**Performance Opportunities**

The Gardner Dickinson School offers many performance opportunities for our musicians. Including:

- Winter Concert
- Spring Concert
- Arts Festival
- Graduation Band
- NYSSMA Piano Festival
- NYSSMA Solo/Ensemble Festival
- All-County
  - Elementary Chorus and Band
  - Junior High Chorus and Band
- Small Ensembles
- Music in Our School in Albany

## *Physical Education Course Description*

---

The Physical Education program provides a safe, positive, and enjoyable learning environment. Initially, students participate in locomotor, manipulative, and gross motor activities. Activities include creative tag games, rhythmic activities, exciting relays, parachute games, scooters, hula hoops, ball activities, and individual fitness assessments.

As the students grow and develop into 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade; the students engage in lead up sports, cooperative activities, and are introduced to lifetime sports such as jogging and volleyball. Cooperative games and project adventure activities are introduced. Individual fitness assessments are administered.

In middle school, the students dress for Physical Education. They understand the importance of warming up and cooling down. They have explored a variety of sports and lifetime activities. They continue to strengthen their fitness levels. They empower themselves to lead a healthy life through the knowledge and skills they have acquired.

## *3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Health Course Description*

---

Students are introduced to a wide range of topics from dental hygiene to bicycle safety. After discussion, the students engage in hands on activities. Students are encouraged to engage in these healthy practices outside of school

## *6<sup>th</sup> Grade Health Education Course Description*

---

Students engage in a variety of activities and projects. These include role play, video, contests, physical fitness labs, and group projects. The students are empowered to lead a healthy life in the Wynantskill community.

## ***Seventh and Eighth Grade Technology Course Descriptions***

---

Technology is an integrated and integral component of the curricular program and educational process. The program incorporates an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach that facilitates an engaging, authentic, real-world learning environment. Students gain critical abilities that extend beyond the subject material and foster growth in everyday life skills. This curriculum provides students with the technological skills, processes and concepts needed for the 21st Century.

Students will be introduced to the following innovative technology concepts and skills:

- Cyber Bullying & Internet safety
- Composing an E-mail
- Keyboarding
- Animation
- Microsoft Office Suite- Software Applications
- Construction/ Creating a Webpage
- Validity of Internet Sites
- Utilizing the Internet as a Research Tool
- Components of a Computer
- Introduction to Robotics
- Bridge Construction
- Roller Coaster Design

## ***Seventh and Eighth Grade Family and Consumer Science Course Description***

---

The mission of Family & Consumer Sciences Education is to prepare students for family life, work life, and careers in Family & Consumer Sciences by providing opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed for:

- Becoming responsible citizens and leaders in family, community, and work
- Promoting optimal nutrition and wellness across the life span
- Managing resources to meet the material needs of individuals and families
- Balancing personal, home, family, and work lives
- Using critical and creative thinking skills to address problems in diverse family, community, and work environments
- Successful life management, employment, and career development
- Functioning effectively as providers and consumers of goods and services
- Appreciating human worth and accepting responsibility for one's actions and successes in family and work life

## *Library Course Description*

---

### **Kindergarten:**

- Understand the concept of what a library is and how one is used
- Introduction to appropriate library etiquette
- Initially choose books from pre-selected groups of books with the goal of independent selection from shelves by mid-year
- Identify parts of a book (cover, spine, call number)
- Recognize and define book title, author, and illustrator
- Understand the proper form of authors' names (last, first), how to alphabetize them, and how this relates to fiction of the shelves
- Understand the difference between fiction and nonfiction materials and where they are respectively located in the children's area
- Build an appreciation for quality literature through deliberate exposure and meaningful activities

### **Grade 1**

- Choose and locate leisure reading materials from shelves including picture books, easy readers, and juvenile nonfiction
- Identify table of contents and call number of books
- Understand what a call number is and how it functions; create call numbers for fiction and biography
- Introduce concept of researching and reinforcing information for classroom based activities
- Author study
- Introduction to Caldecott books and other quality literature
- Fiction vs. non-fiction concepts
- Role-play being an author through the generation of student made books which include titles, authority, and call numbers

### **Grade 2**

- Identify sections and library terms
- Locate books that are "just right" for each reader's ability and interest
- Author/Genre Study
- Literature appreciation
- Extract research report information from a variety of resources
- Practice author name form (last, first) and how to generate fiction, biography, and poetry call numbers and reading for content
- Reinforce classroom topics and use of specific age-appropriate internet sites and electronic resources

### **Grade 3**

- Expanded study of genres
- Introduction to Dewey Decimal System
- In depth study of 398.2 the distinctions between folk tales, fairy tales, and tall tales
- Locate information using encyclopedias, dictionaries, and globe

- Identify table of contents and index in books
- Expand appreciation for a wide variety of literature and reinforce classroom topics
- Introduction to OPAC (On- line Public Access catalog)

**Grade 4**

- In depth study of genres
- Copy right and plagiarism
- Introduction to the reference section including encyclopedias, dictionaries/thesauri, atlases, and almanacs
- Further instruction regarding OPAC and Dewey Decimal System
- Introduction to online databases and resources including very structured lessons regarding search strategies, information authority, and data extraction
- Follow simple standard format to create bibliography from a variety of resources
- Identify, locate and use indexes and glossaries

**Grade 5**

- Fine tune knowledge of the Dewey Decimal System and understand of bibliographic citation
- Instruction on when and how to use reference materials including atlases, almanac, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and thesauri.
- Introduction to the Big 6 Skills Approach and use of specialized reference resources both print and electronic
- Practice simple research tasks

**Grade 6**

- Use The Big 6 Skills for task definition, information seeking strategies, and synthesis
- Utilize the Project Tracker Template

**Grade 7**

- Core subjects Research
- Literature Appreciation based curriculum
- Anomalies Research
- Music research
- Art/Technology Projects
- Reinforce/review library skills

**Grade 8**

- Literature Appreciation based on curriculum
- Core subjects Research
- Modern Musicians/Broadway Musicals
- Write/Illustrate Own Children's Books
- Creative Group Project ( roller Coaster Theme Park)

## *NYS Standardized Test*

To provide schools, teachers, and parents with an assessment of student achievement, New York State has developed the New York State Testing Program. The New York State tests are designed to measure how well students have mastered necessary skills and to monitor the effectiveness of instructional programs. The testing helps assess both student achievement and the progress of our school. Please check the district website for test dates.

*The standardized test:*

- Measure a student's knowledge and overall achievement
- Measure a student's mastery of specific skills
- Provide information to schools that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs
- Monitor the performance of schools and school districts for the purpose of accountability to the public

*What kinds of responses are students asked to provide on these assessments?*

The tests require students to show basic skills in English language arts and mathematics and to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned. Grades 5 and 8 take a Social Studies standardized test and Grades 4 and 8 take a Science Performance and Written standardized test. In some cases, students select the correct response from among four choices. At other times, students are required to write out an answer.

For the **English Language Arts Test**, students are tested on their reading, listening, and writing abilities by reading and listening to passages and answering questions based on those passages.

For the **Mathematics Test**, students solve problems and demonstrate an understanding of basic concepts and procedures. They must often support their answers by showing the steps they used to solve problems and by explaining the mathematics processes and concepts involved.

The Grade 4 **Elementary-Level Science Test** and the Grade 8 **Intermediate-Level Science Test**, is designed to measure the content and skills contained in the *Elementary-Level Science Core Curriculum, Grades K–4* and the content and skills contained in the *Intermediate-Level Science Core Curriculum, Grades 5–8*. Both tests consist of two required components: a Written Test and a Performance Test. The Written Test consists of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The Performance Test consists of hands-on tasks set up at three stations.

The Grade 8 **Intermediate-Level Science Test** is designed to measure the content and skills contained in the *Intermediate-Level Science Core Curriculum, Grades 5–8*. The New York State Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test consists of two required components: a Written Test and a Performance Test. The Written Test

consists of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The Performance Test (Form A) consists of hands-on tasks set up at three different stations.

The New York State Grade 5 **Elementary-Level Social Studies Test** is designed to measure student achievement of the content, concepts, and skills in the K–4 social studies curriculum. The test comprises two test booklets. Booklet 1 contains a total of 35 multiple-choice questions and several short-answers, constructed-response questions. Booklet 2 contains a document-based question.

The New York State Grade 8 **Intermediate-Level Social Studies Test** is designed to measure student achievement of the content, concepts, and skills included in a chronologically organized study of United States and New York State history. The test comprises of two test booklets and is to be administered in two consecutive school days specified by the Department. Booklet 1 contains a total of 45 multiple-choice questions and several short-answers, constructed-response questions. Booklet 2 contains a document-based question.

The Education department offers many important resources for parents. You can find more information about New York State Learning Standards at Resources for Parents; <http://usny.nysed.gov/parents/>, and <http://www.nysparents.com/nys/>.

## ***Response to Intervention (RTI)***

---

RTI is used as a method for identifying at-risk learners at an early stage, matching them to appropriate research-based interventions, and flexibly, providing these students with additional supports as needed. The RTI model encompasses three tiers of intervention: Tier I, universal strategies for all children; Tier II, interventions individualized to the needs of at-risk learners; and Tier III, intensive interventions for students with severe, chronic academic or behavioral needs.

To ensure success, The Wynantskill Union Free School District took the following steps to implement RTI into the district.

- Assembled an RTI Team
- Staff Development about the RTI model
- Obtained resources that can be used to support student intervention planning and progress-monitoring
- Coordinated a three part phase model of teacher release time to discuss student screenings and interventions
- Universal Screening for all students

RTI is both an early intervention strategy within the general education of all students as well as a pre-referral process by which students may be identified to receive special education and related services.

Tier I: Interventions are universal, and available to all students. Teachers deliver these interventions in the classroom. Tier I intervention are those strategies that instructors are likely to put into place at the first sign that a student is struggling.

Tier II: Interventions are individualized, and tailored to the unique needs of struggling learners. They are reserved for students with significant skill gaps who have failed to respond successfully to Tier I strategies.

Tier III: Interventions are the most intensive academic supports available in school and are generally reserved for students with chronic and severe academic delays or behavioral

## ***Reading Intervention***

The Reading Department provides additional instruction in the following strategies and skills that our students need to utilize as they develop into proficient readers. The Reading Department utilizes a variety of delivery methods depending on student needs. These can include:

- Small groups within the classroom
- Small groups out of the classroom
- Individual attention
- Whole class instruction

Reading strategies and skills that the Reading Department instructs, develops, and monitors use of in our k-8 students are:

### **K-2 Strategies/Skills/Behaviors**

- Recognize basic sight words
- Use picture and visual cues
- Recognize when reading doesn't make sense/self-monitors
- Re-read for meaning
- Read with expression and fluency
- Self correct; corrects mistakes without any help or hints
- Uses letter and sound cues
- Recognize known word parts, word families, and word chunks
- Attends to story elements (characters, plot, settings)
- Will identify main idea
- Will retell story in correct order

### **3-8 Strategies/Skills/Behaviors**

- Use visual cues to figure out unfamiliar words
- Use meaning/context to figure out unfamiliar words
- Use knowledge of language structure to figure out unfamiliar words
- Self-corrects: corrects mistakes while reading without any help or hints
- Monitors for meaning: recognizes when reading doesn't make sense
- Adjusts reading rate to match type of text
- Attends to story elements (setting, characters, problem, solution)
- Is able to use text features (table of contents, index, headings, captions) to locate information
- Makes connections to the text (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world)
- Is able to make inferences

### ***Math Intervention***

---

Math support is provided to encourage and sustain professional growth of teachers and enhance instruction and student learning. The focus is on problem solving, and skill building with a combination of whole-group, small-group, and independent activities. A stronger mathematics curriculum that strikes a balance among concepts, skills, and problem solving is a vital part of preparing our children for the 21st century.

This is done through the following:

- Collaborate with individual teachers through co-planning, co-teaching, and coaching;
- Assist administrative and instructional staff in interpreting data and designing approaches to improve student achievement and instruction;
- Ensure that the curriculum is aligned with state standards
- Promote teachers' delivery and understanding of the curriculum through collaborative long-range and short-range planning through the use of curriculum mapping
- Facilitate teachers' use of successful, research-based instructional strategies, including differentiated instruction for diverse learners
- Collaborate with administrators to provide leadership and vision for a school-wide mathematics program

### ***Speech and Language Intervention***

---

According to the American Speech Language Hearing Association, the school-based speech-language pathologist's (SLP) goal is to remediate student communication problems within the educational setting. The SLP conducts extensive assessments and thorough evaluations to provide information regarding eligibility, intervention, and dismissal from services. Evidence based practices that reflect current research and procedures are utilized to provide effective and efficient speech and language remediation.

At Wynantskill Union Free School District, the speech language pathologist provides support to the students and classroom teachers through a variety of models. The intensity and frequency of support increases with each model provided. The types of support the Speech Language Pathologist provides are consultation, prevention of communication disorders, speech improvement services and speech therapy provided as outlined on a student's Individualized Education Plan.

**Consultation:**

Under this model, the Speech Language Pathologist serves as a resource or liaison for general/special education teachers. The clinician may be asked to conduct an informal observation in the classroom in order to generate ideas which will assist the teacher in meeting a child's individual needs. The Speech Pathologist will share resources and materials with the general educator to assist in providing instruction that will meet each child's needs under Response to Intervention.

**Prevention:**

The Speech Language Pathologist will work with a small group of children in the classroom through prevention services. The goal of this model is to integrate targeted, language rich lessons into the curriculum to strengthen and develop language foundation skills in order to secure a strong foundation to build upon. The clinician also works with the teacher within the classroom to implement language rich strategies and lessons to benefit all children in that environment.

**Speech Improvement:**

Children who may have a few isolated speech sounds in error may be eligible to participate in speech improvement services. These children engage in sessions one to two times per week in a group with peers to learn correct articulator placement to achieve their best sound production.

**Speech Language Therapy**

The Speech Language Pathologist also implements goals and objectives in accordance with Individualized Education Plans. Goals and objectives can focus on improving articulation, receptive and expressive language delays, fluency disorders, voice disorders, enhancing literacy skills, improving social skills, auditory processing, language processing, and remediation any language based deficits that impede a child from achieving success in the classroom.

## *Special Education*

The Committee on Special Education (CSE) provides services to students who have disabilities that impact learning. Determinations for disability status are conducted via multi-disciplinary evaluations by a School Psychologist as well as clinicians of any appropriate related areas (Speech/Language, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, etc.).

Services are delivered within the classroom setting unless otherwise stated on the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). These services may include Special Education Consultant Teacher time, Speech/Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Counseling, or Nursing at frequencies determined by the Committee.

Referrals to the CSE on behalf of a student can only be made after detailed documentation of various "pre-referral strategies" (differentiated instruction, remedial services, RTI, AIS, etc.) that resulted in student outcomes which have not reflected adequate academic growth.

Questions or concerns about services and CSE processes can be directed to the CSE Office: 283-4600 ext 15 or 16.

## *Guidance Plan*

The Wynantskill Union Free School District adheres to the philosophy that the school counseling program is an essential part of the overall educational process. The program is based on the belief that educational, career and personal objectives are attainable for all students. The school counseling program is coordinated by the school counselor. Implementation is a collaborative effort among administrators and teachers with parents and the community.

The mission of the Gardner Dickinson School Counseling program is to provide a developmental and preventive program that promotes student learning by supporting positive personal, social and emotional growth of all students. We promote student adjustment and academic success through individual and group counseling along with consultation and collaboration with parents and teachers. The comprehensive school counseling program identifies standards within three domains: academic, career and personal/social. The school counseling program supports children in meeting the standards in each of these domains.

***Academic Development*** Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.

- Improve Academic Self Concept
- Acquire skills for improving learning
- Achieve School Success
- Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial post secondary options including college.

- Improve Learning
- Plan to Achieve Goals
- Students will understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community.
  - Relate School to Life Experience

#### ***Career Development***

- Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.
  - Develop Career Awareness
  - Develop Employment Readiness
- Students will employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction.
  - Acquire Career Information
  - Identify Career Goals
- Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training and the world of work.
  - Acquire knowledge to achieve career goals
  - Apply Skills to Achieve Career Goals

#### ***Personal/Social Development***

- Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.
  - Acquire Self-Knowledge
  - Acquire Interpersonal Skills
- Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals.
  - Self-knowledge Application

#### ***Students will understand safety and survival skills.***

- Acquire Personal Safety Skills

## *Character Education*

The objective of character education in the Wynantskill UFSD is to shape, nurture and develop the total child. Character development improves school and classroom climate by focusing on basic principles of character. Our major goal is to identify procedures that instill in children the development of character as a way of life infused into everyday practices. This goal is achieved through daily actions and integration of the following principles of character education into the curriculum at all levels including the arts and music, various clubs and special events.

- **RESPECT:** Showing concern and esteem for yourself and others
- **KINDNESS:** Showing regard for the well being of others and their property
- **TRUST:** Showing confidence and belief in the truthfulness of others
- **CONFIDENCE:** Believing in yourself and standing up for what is right
- **COURAGE:** To have the determination to do the right thing
- **APPRECIATING DIFFERENCES:** Understanding that we are all different and all special
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** Showing accountability for one's actions and doing what others expect
- **CITIZENSHIP:** Participating as an active member in the committee

Character traits that build good citizenship are integrated into our daily curriculum through discussions, books read, positive reinforcement of responsible and kind behavior, daily activities, classroom jobs, rules, and modeling. The award-winning SECOND STEP violence prevention program is also integrated into the elementary curriculum to help students learn and practice vital social skills, such as empathy, emotion management, problem solving, and cooperation. These essential life skills help students in the classroom, on the playground, and at home. Areas of emphasis are cooperation, honesty, respect for self and others, community, trust, management, responsibility and conflict resolution. Topics also include safety, nutrition and hygiene.

*Watch your thoughts; they become words.  
Watch your words; they become actions.  
Watch your actions; they become your CHARACTER!  
Watch your CHARACTER; it becomes your destiny.*

*- Frank Outlaw*