



# STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

## FOURTH GRADE

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It is my sincere hope that you will find this program overview helpful in understanding the curriculum and areas of emphasis of your child's grade level. While it is impossible to capture all the "richness" that goes into the daily education of our students, the overviews are designed to introduce the basic concepts and content standards.

The most important experiences are those that provide the opportunity to grow and be challenged. Many processes related to critical thinking and problem solving that are vital to student success happen every day. Another important aspect to our program is to continually evaluate, assess and improve the quality of the programs in the district. To that end, these program overviews have been reviewed and upgraded by teacher representatives in the district.

Our partnership with the parents of our district is paramount to the establishment of a desirable overall goal of success for every child. We will continue to maintain high expectations for our students and ourselves and we look forward to continued collaboration in the learning process of our students.

Thomas J. Lohwasser, Ed.D

### OVERVIEW FOR FOURTH GRADE

Fourth graders are embarking upon the beginning of their upper elementary years. The basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills they have acquired in earlier grades are now applied with more abstract and critical thinking and greater depth.

Fourth graders are now ready to take more responsibility for themselves. They need to learn to take risks, and experience failure as well as success.

This pamphlet reflects the average expectancy at this grade level. Due to the range of abilities and motivation among students, there will be some who will exceed these expectations and others who will not be able to achieve all of them. Individual needs will be met through enrichment and remediation in all curriculum areas.

Although we've isolated each subject area to describe essential components in our classrooms, learning often takes place through hands-on activities, cooperative learning, and theme-based approaches which integrate many subjects. Technology is used as a tool to reinforce and motivate learning.

Uppermost on our list of goals is the desire to instill in each youngster a love of learning and a positive attitude toward school. An optimal educational experience can be provided for your child if we all (parents, teachers, and administrators) work closely together.

### THE FOURTH GRADE CHILD

Every child is an individual who grows and develops at his/her own rate. A class of fourth graders includes a wide range of physical, academic, and social differences. There are, however, general characteristics and needs which apply to most children in fourth grade.

#### The Fourth Grade Child Will Probably:

- Become more independent and capable.
- Take responsibility for homework.
- Be interested in peers and teamwork.
- Begin to organize time and materials more effectively.
- Become less self-centered and more aware of others.
- Be motivated in areas of personal or academic interest.
- Have increased physical development and high energy.
- Seek approval of adults and peers.
- Develop a great variety of interests and a sense of humor.
- Possess a strong sense of justice.
- Be impressionable.
- Participate in school and community activities (eg., clubs, Scouts, sports).

### **The Fourth Grade Child Needs:**

- To feel secure.
- To feel accepted and understood by peers, parents and teachers.
- To have a well organized day.
- To have plenty of rest with at least 10 hours of sleep each night.
- To develop and maintain friendships.
- Encouragement to try new activities.
- To see projects and assignments through completion.
- Physical activity and leisure time each day.
- To learn value of quiet activities such as reading and games.
- Nutritious balanced meals with healthy snacks.

### **Parents Can Help By:**

- Talking with and listening to your child every day.
- Providing regular examinations by doctor and dentist. Please try to schedule appointments for after school.
- Developing regular habits for good nutrition and rest.
- Encouraging habits of cleanliness, tidiness, and punctuality.
- Giving your child regular responsibilities at home.
- Providing a regular study time and a distraction-free place for homework.
- Being supportive and positive when working with your child, accepting the errors; remembering that he/she is just learning.
- Having close contact with the teacher.
- Having a knowledge of the school's programs.
- Not over-scheduling your child with activities.
- Monitoring time devoted to TV, video, and other passive entertainment.
- Reading communications sent home from school.

The following is a short synopsis of the California Academic Content Standards for Language Arts, Mathematics, History/Social Science, and Science. Complete document available on the Internet at [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov) or at the Dixie School District.

## **LANGUAGE ARTS**

### **READING**

**WORD ANALYSIS, FLUENCY, AND SYSTEMATIC VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENTS:** Students understand the basic features of reading. They select letter patterns and know how to translate them into spoken language using phonics, syllabication, and word parts. They apply this knowledge to achieve fluent oral and silent reading.

- Word Recognition
- Vocabulary and Concept Development

**READING COMPREHENSION:** Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehensive strategies as needed, (e.g., generating and responding to essential questions, making predictions, comparing information from several sources). In addition to their regular school reading, by grade 4, students read one-half million words annually, including a good representation of grade-level-appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, on-line information).

- Structural Features of Informational Materials
- Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text.

**LITERARY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS:** Students read and respond to a wide variety of significant works of children's literature. They distinguish between the structural features of text and the literary terms or elements (e.g., theme, plot, setting, and characters).

- Structural Features of Literature
- Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

### **WRITING**

**WRITING STRATEGIES:** Students write clear and coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea. Their writing shows they consider audience and purpose. Students progress through the stages of the writing process (e.g., pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing successive versions):

- Organization and Focus
- Research and Technology
- Penmanship
- Evaluation and Revision

**WRITING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS):** Students write compositions that describe and explain familiar objects, events, and experiences. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the drafting, research, and organizational strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

- Write narratives on incidents that relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- Write responses to literature that demonstrate an understanding of the literary work.
- Write information reports that frame a key question about an issue or situation.
- Write summaries that contain the main ideas of the reading selection and the most significant details.

**WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS:** Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions that are appropriate to this grade level.

- Sentence Structure
- Punctuation
- Grammar
- Capitalization
- Spelling

### **LISTENING AND SPEAKING**

**LISTENING AND SPEAKING STRATEGIES:** Students listen critically and respond appropriately to oral communication. They speak in a manner that guides listeners to understand important ideas by using proper phrasing, pitch, and modulation.

- Comprehension
- Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication
- Analysis and evaluation of oral and media communication

**SPEAKING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS):** Students deliver brief recitations and oral presentations about familiar experiences or interests that are organized around a coherent thesis statement. Student speaking demonstrates command of standard American English and the organization and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.

- Make narrative presentations on an incident that relate ideas, observations, and/or memories
- Make informational presentations that frame a key question.
- Contain facts and details that help listeners focus.
- Incorporate more than one source of information.
- Deliver oral summaries of articles and books that contain the main ideas of the event/article and the most significant details.

## MATHEMATICS

By the end of fourth grade, students understand large numbers and addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers. They describe and compare simple fractions and decimals. They understand the properties of and the relationships between plane geometric figures. They collect, represent and analyze data to answer questions.

### NUMBER SENSE

- Students understand place value of whole numbers to millions and decimals to two decimal places, how these relate to simple fractions, and use concepts of negative numbers.
- Students extend their use and understanding of whole numbers to addition and subtraction of simple decimals.
- Students solve problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers, including the addition and subtraction of negative numbers, and understand the relationships among the operations.
- Students know how to factor small whole numbers.

### ALGEBRA AND FUNCTIONS

- Students use and interpret variables, mathematical symbols and properties to write and simplify expressions and sentences.
- Students know how to manipulate equations.

### MEASUREMENT AND GEOMETRY

- Students understand perimeter and area.
- Students use two-dimensional coordinate grids to represent points and graph lines and simple figures.
- Students demonstrate understanding of plane and solid geometric objects. They use this knowledge to show relationships and solve problems.

### STATISTICS, DATA ANALYSIS AND PROBABILITY

- Students organize, represent and interpret numerical and categorical data, and clearly communicate their findings.
- Students make predictions for simple probability situations.

### MATHEMATICAL REASONING

- Students make decisions about how to approach problems.
- Students use strategies, skills and concepts in finding solutions.
- Students move beyond a particular problem by generalizing to other situations.

## HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE

### CALIFORNIA: A CHANGING STATE

Students learn the story of their home state, unique in American history in terms of its vast and varied geography, its many waves of immigration beginning with pre-Columbian societies, its continuous diversity, economic energy, and rapid growth.

- Students demonstrate an understanding of the physical and human geographic features that define places and regions in California.
- Students describe the social, political, cultural, and economical life and interactions among people of California from the pre-Columbian societies to the Spanish mission and Mexican rancho periods.
- Students explain the economic, social, and political life of California from the establishment of the Bear Flag Republic through the Mexican-American War, the Gold Rush and California statehood.
- Students explain how California became an agricultural and industrial power.

## SCIENCE

### EARTH

Our universe is interactive and constantly changing.

- Minerals and Rocks covers how minerals and rocks can be identified, sorted, and classified. Some rocks change over time.
- Our Changing Earth covers how the Earth's surface changes over time by weathering, rapid changes to landforms, or by erosion.

### LIFE

Living things are diverse, interdependent and evolving. Living things change and adapt over long periods of time.

- The fossil record indicates that plants and animals have changed over time.
- Characteristics of living things are passed on through generations.
- Change through time is a natural process of ecosystems.

### PHYSICAL

The interactions of matter and energy shape our world. Magnetism and electricity are forms of energy that have related effects.

- Current electricity is used to transport energy.
- Electrical energy can be converted to heat, light, and motion
- Magnets and other electrically charged objects attract and repel each other.

### ENVIRONMENTAL

People are dependent on the Earth's dynamic natural systems and can participate in responsible actions to enhance or protect the quality of the environment. We strive to balance our use of water to meet the needs of all living things.

**INVESTIGATION AND EXPERIMENTATION:** Students will understand the concept that scientific progress is made by asking meaningful questions and conducting careful investigations.

Classroom teachers provide science instruction for hands-on experience. Fourth graders are encouraged to complete a project for the Science Fair.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The curriculum meets students' needs to develop physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially by participation in a variety of planned physical activities promoting sportsmanship and physical and athletic development. Classroom teachers and P.E. specialists provide the program. Practice for the fifth grade Presidential Fitness Test is offered to every fourth grade student. Specific training is provided to enable students to prepare for this test.

## MUSIC

Music in the Dixie District is an integral part of the curriculum and is district funded. In the Dixie District, we have aligned our music curriculum with the National Standards for Arts Education.

Music reading skills are continued in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade through instrumental instruction. These exploratory classes are a prelude to more extensive instrumental classes offered in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Students participate in periodic school-wide performances. The violin classes have on district-wide performance in the Spring.

## SUPPLEMENTAL VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art, music, drama, and dance are often integrated into the curriculum through such activities as simple dances, dramatizing literary selections, or singing in a group. Students view theatrical events and multi-cultural performances, and learn art and music appreciation skills.

Visual and Performing Arts instruction is supplemented by grants through the Council of Music and Art and through Dixie Children's Fund and PTA fund-raising activities.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is defined as an assigned activity that is primarily accomplished outside of regular class time. Such work shall be appropriate to the grade level, subject matters, and instructional objective(s); in general, the amount of time spent on homework shall increase as the student progresses through the grades.

### Purpose and benefits of homework can include:

1. Extend or make more meaningful concepts introduced at school.
2. Engage students in purposeful practice relevant to their learning.
3. Develop effective study habits.
4. Develop independent learning skills.

Each school follows the District Administrative Regulations and Policy as well as follows the site specific Homework Guidelines.

## REPORTING TO PARENTS

Open communication between parents and teacher is essential to each child's educational and developmental progress.

- A parent-teacher conference will be held in October/November. This will include a progress report card. Progress report cards will also be issued in January and May.
- Standards-based report cards are issued in December, March and June.
- Each teacher has a system for regular communication to parents to help them stay informed about what the class is learning.
- In addition, the teacher will contact parents on an individual basis as the need arises.
- Parents are encouraged to send a note, phone the teacher at school, or make an appointment for a conference whenever they have a concern, and to let the teacher know about significant changes or events (new glasses, loss of a pet, family emergency, change in living arrangements, etc.) that might affect the child's ability to learn.

## ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Teachers assess student progress regularly using a wide variety of tests and other strategies, including teacher observations, student tasks and projects, teacher-made tests, curriculum unit tests, and required district and state exams. Information from these various assessments help teachers provide the kinds of learning experiences that will help all students make significant progress toward the District's standards.

## STUDENT PROMOTION/RETENTION CRITERIA

The following multiple promotion criteria for reading, writing, listening/speaking, and mathematics applies to students in grades 2-5 for each trimester:

### Achievement Grades

Each student's overall classroom progress, quality of work, and participation must be:

- above "Not Passing" (grades 4-5)
- above "Requires Additional Instruction" (grades 2-3)

### Progress Toward Standards

Each student's "Progress Toward Standards" must be "Grade Level Proficient."

### California Standards Tests (CST)

Each student's English/Language Arts and Mathematics spring performance level score must be Proficient or above.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

The Dixie School District provide Special Education, English Language Development, counseling, psychological services, and a program for gifted and talented students.

## DISTRICT TESTING SCHEDULE

Testing	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Dixie/State Standards Testing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
STAR Testing: CA Standards Test (CST)			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Program				X	X	X	X	X	X
State Physical Fitness						X		X	
State Writing Assessment					X			X	
CA English Language Development Test	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

NOTE: Additional testing for various programs occurs throughout grade levels as needed.

## DIXIE ADOPTED BASIC TEXTBOOKS

Subject	Publisher
LANGUAGE ARTS	Houghton Mifflin <i>6+1 Traits of Writing</i>
MATHEMATICS	<i>Everyday Math</i> , The Wright Group
SCIENCE	<i>CA Science</i> , Pearson Scott Foresman, Project Learning
SOCIAL SCIENCE	<i>Harcourt Reflections</i>

## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

All students must have a written record of immunizations that is up to date prior to school entry.

The District Code of Conduct  
Be Safe.  
Be Responsible.  
Be Respectful.

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