



4th Grade General Studies Purpose Statement Elizabeth Siegel, 4th Grade Teacher

4th Grade is a time when children grow tremendously and push to gain more independence. I aim to enable students to make smart choices by giving them clear guidelines and expectations. Strong organizational skills and schedule planning are coupled with an engaging and challenging curriculum to enhance their burgeoning sense of autonomy. Working in cooperative learning environments occurs in all subjects. Being prepared, productive, and respectful is essential to the journey of 4th Grade.

Our literacy program fosters a love for reading. Children are exposed to several different genres and authors. We investigate the elements of fiction and integrate our literature into both Social Studies and Science. Students lead literature discussions, make connections to the real world, and begin to make inferences and predictions and share their insights. In writing, the process and organization of multi-paragraph essays is a central focus throughout the year. Expository and narrative writing are focused on with multi-paragraph essays, and we write and analyze various types of poetry. Vocabulary acquisition, spelling, and keyboarding are all components of our writing curriculum.

Math in 4th Grade builds on the basic skills and knowledge learned in prior grades to delve into more conceptual mathematical problems. Conceptual understanding includes mathematical reasoning and problem solving, communication of mathematical ideas and understanding of number sense, place value, geometry, measurement, fractions, decimals, and data collection and analysis. Our math curriculum is strongly language based, relates to everyday experiences, and highlights the importance of math in real world situations. Over the year, students review and strengthen their concepts of and skills in place value, multi-digit addition, subtraction, and multiplication, multiplication and division facts, and dividing by one and two-digit divisors. Students learn multi-step problem solving using a five-step process of math writing. Students utilize graphs, charts, the newspaper, measurement tools, literature, and more to enable their learning. Students begin to understand the relationship between fractions, decimals, and percents, and work with improper fractions and multiplying fractions. Our study of geometry includes calculating area and perimeter and identifying various types of angles. Students create several different kinds of real world graphs, use coordinate grids and understand measurement systems.

Our overall Social Studies focus in 4th Grade is Washington State and the Pacific Northwest. History, geography, and government each take priority throughout the year. We begin our study of Washington by looking at some famous landmarks in the Seattle area and comparing the five major geographical regions of the state. Students have the opportunity to "Walk across Washington" at a scavenger hunt corn maze in late September. November brings the study of Washington State government and elections. We register to vote, learn about the three branches of

government, hold a mock election in the classroom, and learn about the election process. In January we jump into an introduction of Asia, particularly focusing on China, Korea, Japan, and India. This short unit culminates with a field trip to the International District. A highlight of the year is our annual daylong trip to Olympia in early February to visit our state's capital building, Supreme Court, and executive offices. Beginning in April, the class follows the path of Lewis and Clark and learns the geography of the United States. They are required to know the location of all 50 states and their capitals in June. Learning all of this is a lot of fun, and is a fantastic way to transition to U.S. history in 5th grade.

In Science we learn the vocabulary and methodology behind scientific testing and interconnected systems. The focus of our science curriculum is health and the human body. Students classify, observe, measure, infer, and experiment in their science investigations. Through content-based analysis, note taking, and reading comprehension student scientists look for starch, glucose, fat, and protein in various liquids and solids. The food chemistry unit is a great way for students to learn hands-on science techniques and learn about controlled tests in the lab. The class further investigates our own delicate integration while looking at the different systems of the human body and personal health for the SJCS Science Fair. From January through March we work in cooperative groups that study the different systems of the human machine. Science Fair is a huge event, and we present all our research in March.