



SEQUOYAH SCHOOL

A K-12 independent school

Curriculum Map

For more than 60 years, Sequoyah School has been dedicated to providing an education that challenges the mind, nurtures the heart, and celebrates human dignity. Sequoyah's curriculum emphasizes deep understanding of concepts and mastery of important skills. This is accomplished through an integrated curriculum in which students investigate essential questions. Units of study culminate in exhibitions and performances that demonstrate student learning. In addition, students design and implement service projects that apply learning and benefit the community.

The Curriculum Map outlines the introduction of concepts and skills over time and across subjects. Many skills and concepts overlap from classroom to classroom. The Map is designed to support both teachers and parents in attending to the individual needs of students.

Glossary

CURRICULUM UPDATE

A bi-monthly letter from classroom teachers and specialists describing learning objectives and activities

EMERGENT CURRICULUM

Topics of study that arise spontaneously from current events and/or student curiosity; teachers help give shape to these projects

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Open-ended questions designed to facilitate higher-order thinking through inquiry and discussion, with emphasis on preparing each student to support their ideas by drawing upon learning from texts and experiences

HABITS OF MIND

A framework of dispositions that guides teaching and learning

INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

An interdisciplinary exploration of academic content

PLACE-BASED LEARNING

Curriculum inspired and guided by learning that happens in a particular place or environment

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

A process of learning about and solving real-world problems through an interdisciplinary approach

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

Centering curriculum projects on local or societal challenges so students can learn about issues and collaboratively design thoughtful solutions

SUBJECT AREAS

Language Arts

The Language Arts program utilizes a workshop approach to help students to develop a love for reading and writing, the skills to construct meaning from text, and the confidence for public speaking and self-expression. Students celebrate the work of great authors, while working to become published authors in various forums, including Sequoyah's schoolwide literary journal, *Talon Tales*.

Math

The Math curriculum seeks to inspire students to recognize the beauty and relevance of mathematics, while preparing students to master the necessary skills while becoming patient and creative problem solvers. The program emphasizes five essential aspects of mathematical thinking: numbers and numeration; operations and computing; data and chance; measurement and geometry; and patterns, functions and Algebra. In the younger classes (K-2), instruction emphasizes conceptual understanding and application through the use of real materials. In the older classes (3-8), students build upon their conceptual understanding while developing fluency through a variety of computational strategies, problem solving, and application.

Science

The Science program helps students cultivate their innate proclivity to experiment and observe, while supporting the development of analytical skills through inquiry. Students use their curiosity to explore both the physical and life sciences.

Social Studies

The Social Studies program begins with a focus on individual identity and then expands outward to local communities, Los Angeles, California, the nation, the world, and yes, the cosmos. Teachers build upon emergent opportunities to encourage the collaborative study of individuals and groups within society.

Library & Research & Technology

Asking questions and knowing how to investigate those questions are essential habits of lifelong learners. Research and technology skills are integrated into the curriculum.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

READING

What do I enjoy about reading?

What makes a good story, poem, or argument?

How can I analyze and use words effectively?

How can I read for main ideas and details?

Who are my favorite authors?

WRITING

How can I use words to express myself?

How can I write a strong paragraph, story, poem, lyric, or essay?

ORAL COMMUNICATION

How does it feel to share my ideas?

How can I be an effective speaker and an active listener?

NUMBERS & NUMERATION

What are numbers?

Where can I find patterns?

What are different ways to count?

OPERATIONS & COMPUTATION

What different ways I can solve, model and explain the problem?

Which ways are most efficient for me?

DATA & CHANCE

How can I collect and analyze data to solve problems?

How can I visualize data?

MEASUREMENT & GEOMETRY

How can measurement help me?

What is the most effective way to measure?

How can I represent quantities visually and shapes numerically?

In what ways can I recognize and apply math concepts in the world around me?

PATTERNS, FUNCTIONS & ALGEBRA

How do I solve for an unknown?

How do we utilize equations to solve problems?

How can I persevere to make sense of and solve problems?

How do I develop research questions?

How and why do I practice different forms of data collection?

How can I use data to help me recognize patterns and draw conclusions?

How do I design experiments?

How do I select and use scientific tools?

When and why do I incorporate controls and variables?

How can we understand people who are different from us?

What is the relationship between people and their environments?

How do we balance the needs of our community with those of the environment?

How can cultures from various times and places inform the way we see the world?

How does understanding history help us make decisions today?

How should public policy balance individual freedom with group needs?

How do I use the library to learn?

How do I find books and other resources?

How do I use and cite sources?

How can I determine authorship, credibility, and bias; and how do they inform my work?

5-6 BAMBOO FOREST / POND

READING Develop phonological awareness (syllables, rhyming words, sight words); letter-sound and sound-to-letter recognition; and comprehension of narrative; recognize basic elements of plot, characterization, setting, and conflict

WRITING Independently communicate ideas through dictation, pictures, labeling, and writing; develop stories with plots (beginning, middle, end); focus on uppercase and lowercase letters; use invented spelling to develop understanding of phonics

ORAL COMMUNICATION Describe observations, thoughts, and feelings; respond to other students' ideas; practice asking questions; retell; learn to act out stories; recite short passages with expression; practice active listening

NUMBERS & NUMERATION Count by 1s, 2s, 3s, 10s, and 100s; use mental addition and subtraction; understand place values 100 and basic fractions; create numeric expressions to give equivalent names for numbers; compare and order whole numbers up to 1,000

OPERATIONS & COMPUTATION Model and represent sums and differences with 10, use different strategies (100 square, manipulatives, number lines, mental math) to add and subtract single-digit numbers; compare numbers using >, =, < up to 20

DATA & CHANCE Collect and organize data into bar graphs and draw conclusions

MEASUREMENT & GEOMETRY Explore non-standard methods for measurement and comparison of length, width, height; time to nearest half-hour, days of week, coin values; temperature; identify and describe shapes; find symmetry

APPLICATION Use counting, tallying, and graphing during social studies and science units, and to help check the inventory of kitchenware and other materials to demonstrate counting, addition, and subtraction; help count in the classroom, e.g. inventory of class materials

CONCEPTS How are things similar and different? Experimentation and observation of characteristics

SKILLS Use multiple senses to observe; practice using scientific drawing during observation; focus on details; use tools such as magnifying lenses; practice mixing combinations of liquids and solids; learn to categorize into groups

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Through their desert study at Anza-Borrego, students use multiple senses to observe plants and animals and study the night sky. In Gardens for Learning, students explore plants and trees on campus, study seeds and how they grow, examine types of soil, and learn efficient watering methods.

CONCEPTS Comparative study of self and family, including family traditions, importance and awareness of feelings; teamwork

SKILLS Participate in group discussion, use new vocabulary in writing; use tables, graphs, and charts to visually represent data and recognize patterns and trends

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students explore the social and emotional landscape of home and school through the arts, storytelling and thematic activities; examples include geothentic storytelling from home and class installations about feelings.

CONCEPTS Library organization; available sources

SKILLS Locate appropriate fiction and nonfiction sources in the library; learn to listen attentively; illustrate and communicate original ideas and stories using digital tools (digital stories, drawings, photos and video, audio); demonstrate the safe and cooperative use of technology

6-7 BACKYARD

READING Develop encoding and decoding skills, beginning fluency, and accuracy; continue comprehension practice by recognizing and analyzing basic elements of plot, characterization, setting, and conflict

WRITING Learn the basic steps of the writing process through personal narrative, informational essays, and fictional writing; collect ideas for possible stories; develop ideas for narrative focusing on descriptive details; construct and edit paragraphs through development of main ideas, supporting details, and elements of plot, characterization, setting, and conflict; use phonetic spelling; basic punctuation

ORAL COMMUNICATION Describe observations, thoughts, and feelings; respond to other students' ideas; practice asking questions; retell; recite short passages with expression; practice active listening; participate in reader's theatre

NUMBERS & NUMERATION Count by 1s, 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s, 10s, 25s and 100s to 1,000,000; find multiples of 2, 5, and 10; count backward by 1s from any number; use mental math; understand place values to 10,000, Roman numerals, and basic fractions

OPERATIONS & COMPUTATION Compare and order numbers to 1,000,000; add and subtract 4-digit numbers; use basic multiplication and division; know multiplication and division facts up to 10s; demonstrate multiple strategies for computing problems

DATA & CHANCE Collect and organize data to create graphs; use graphs to answer questions; describe events using basic probability terms; find the range, median, mean, and mode and make inferences

MEASUREMENT & GEOMETRY Measure length and width using standard units; read and write monetary values in dollars and cents; read time to the minute; describe and compare shapes; recognize patterns and attributes; count unit squares to find the areas of rectangles; use geometric terms to describe lines and shapes

APPLICATION Practice using different strategies to solve a Problem of the Week and continue using multiple types of math materials to demonstrate understanding of counting, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and fractions; write and present math problems based on social studies or science project work

CONCEPTS What type of changes happened? Cause and effect; classification of plants, animals, and minerals; plant and insect anatomy; garden habitats, sunlight and shadows; seasons and cycles; astronomy; sound; physical and chemical changes

SKILLS Continue to practice observational skills; learn to create charts and graphs, as well as design experiments; make plans for developing habitats

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Land and ocean habitats are a central focus. Students take trips to local destinations to study the ocean and other water-based ecosystems. They also study, design, create, and maintain habitats on campus. On their trip to Anza-Borrego, students take on leadership roles and help younger students.

CONCEPTS Community; change; celebration of cultural similarities and differences

SKILLS Collaborate with different-age students; learn to use maps in the classroom and the community; conduct surveys and interviews to learn about the community; make concept webs; learn to interpret and present findings visually; observe change

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students visit galleries, parks, organizations, and exhibits in the neighborhood. Visits may be to a nearby convalescent home where students share stories and artwork, or to Arlington Garden to join in planting and harvesting.

CONCEPTS Research; main ideas

SKILLS Practice asking questions and narrowing keywords; identify and use parts of a nonfiction book (e.g., table of contents, glossary, index); note taking; paraphrasing; demonstrate the ability to navigate in virtual environments such as e-books, simulation software, and websites; find and evaluate information using digital resources; demonstrate the safe and cooperative use of technology

7-8 NEST

READING Continue to build encoding and decoding skills, develop fluency and accuracy through independent and class reading; continue recognizing and analyzing basic elements of plot, characterization, setting, and conflict; recognize correct sentence structure and sight words; learn vocabulary according to individual level

WRITING Learn the basic steps of the writing process through personal narrative, informational essays and fictional writing; continue development of descriptive moments in stories, while collecting ideas for future stories; create multi-paragraph compositions with a topic sentence, supporting details, and opening and closing statements; create fictional pieces that include characters with developed traits and motives; setting, conflict, and a developed plot

ORAL COMMUNICATION Learn the basic practices of Literature Circles and Author's Chair; create oral presentations that focus on clarity and projection, while staying on topic and making eye contact; respond appropriately to others; ask clarifying and analytical questions

NUMBERS & NUMERATION Count forward and backward by 1s, 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s, 10s, 25s and 100s to 1,000,000; find multiples of 2, 5, and 10; count backward by 1s from any number; use mental math; understand place values to 10,000,000; basic fractions, and decimals to hundredths; find multiples of whole numbers less than 10; find whole number factors

OPERATIONS & COMPUTATION Compare and order numbers to 1,000,000; add and subtract 4-digit numbers; use basic multiplication and division; know multiplication and division facts up to 10s; demonstrate multiple strategies for computing problems

DATA & CHANCE Collect and organize data to create graphs; use graphs to answer questions; describe events using basic probability terms; find the range, median, mean, and mode and make inferences

MEASUREMENT & GEOMETRY Measure length and width using standard units; read and write monetary values in dollars and cents; read time to the minute; describe and compare shapes; recognize patterns and attributes; count unit squares to find the areas of rectangles; use geometric terms to describe lines and shapes

APPLICATION Practice using different strategies to solve a Problem of the Week and continue using multiple types of math materials to demonstrate understanding of counting, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and fractions; write and present math problems based on social studies or science project work

CONCEPTS How do living things need to survive? Habitats and adaptation; ecosystems; weather systems; mammals; marine biology; buoyancy; electricity; magnetism

SKILLS Continue to practice observational skills; learn to create charts and graphs, as well as design experiments; make plans for developing habitats

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Land and ocean habitats are a central focus. Students take trips to local destinations to study the ocean and other water-based ecosystems. They also study, design, create, and maintain habitats on campus. On their trip to Anza-Borrego, students take on leadership roles and help younger students.

CONCEPTS Urban environments and wildlife; mammals and survival; ocean habitats of the Southern California coast; cultural diversity; folk tales; Greek myths; current events

SKILLS Collaborate with different-age students; learn to use maps in the classroom and the community; conduct surveys and interviews to learn about the community; make concept webs; learn to interpret and present findings visually; observe change

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students visit galleries, parks, organizations, and exhibits in the neighborhood. Visits may be to a nearby convalescent home where students share stories and artwork, or to Arlington Garden to join in planting and harvesting.

CONCEPTS Book structure; multiple perspectives; interpretation; investigation; directed research; online electronic sources

SKILLS Use an encyclopedia, a dictionary, and a table of contents; create questions and determine keywords to find specific information; create concept webs to find connected ideas and topics; identify, research, and collect data using digital resources; demonstrate the ability to navigate in virtual environments such as e-books, simulation software, and websites; create original animations or videos; create a website portfolio

8-9 TREEHOUSE

READING Develop greater independence with book selection, practice fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation; identify main ideas and supporting details; summarize plot, characterization, setting, and conflict; determine themes and genres; develop independence through the selection of level-appropriate, high-interest texts

WRITING Become more independent in the writing process through personal narrative, informational essays and fictional writing; continue development of descriptive moments in stories, while collecting ideas for future stories; create multi-paragraph compositions with a topic sentence, supporting details, and opening and closing statements; create fictional pieces that include characters with developed traits and motives; setting, conflict, and a developed plot

ORAL COMMUNICATION Learn the basic practices of Literature Circles and Author's Chair; create oral presentations that focus on clarity and projection, while staying on topic and making eye contact; respond appropriately to others; ask clarifying and analytical questions

NUMBERS & NUMERATION Count forward and backward by 1s, 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s, 10s, 25s and 100s to 1,000,000; find multiples of 2, 5, and 10; count backward by 1s from any number; use mental math; understand place values to 10,000,000; basic fractions, and decimals to hundredths; find multiples of whole numbers less than 10; find whole number factors

OPERATIONS & COMPUTATION Compare and order positive and negative numbers; add and subtract 4-digit numbers; multiply and divide by 2-digit numbers; know addition, subtraction, and multiplication facts up to 12s

DATA & CHANCE Collect and organize data to create graphs; use graphs to answer questions; describe events using basic probability terms; find the range, median, mean, and mode and make inferences

MEASUREMENT & GEOMETRY Measure length and width using standard units; read and write monetary values in dollars and cents; read time to the minute; describe and compare shapes; recognize patterns and attributes; count unit squares to find the areas of rectangles; use geometric terms to describe lines and shapes; measure the perimeter and area of shapes; plot coordinates on a grid

PATTERNS, FUNCTIONS & ALGEBRA Extend, describe, and create numeric patterns; describe rules for patterns and use them to solve problems; use words and symbols to describe and write rules for functions that involve the four basic arithmetic operations and use those rules to solve problems

CONCEPTS How do water use and food production affect the people and land of California? Watershed systems; hydrological cycle; chemistry of water molecule; garden ecology; plant anatomy and physiology; human anatomy and nutrition; scientific process

SKILLS Form questions for experiments; design and conduct experiments; use tools to collect and analyze data; draw conclusions and make recommendations

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students use conclusions from scientific work relating to water and food issues on campus and make recommendations to the school community. Often students have implemented some of these recommendations as service projects.

CONCEPTS History of California's water use and food production; land use; California geography; immigration; civil rights

SKILLS Organize, prioritize, and ask questions; study cause and effect; create timelines; read and create maps; practice identifying current and historical perspectives and stakeholders; use concept webs; take notes for main ideas and details; summarize information; analyze different types of media; synthesize information in creative projects

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students visit the Los Angeles Aqueduct, reservoir, St. Francis Dam disaster site, Arroyo Seco, Eaton Canyon Natural Area, water treatment facilities, and local farms. Students make decisions about how to improve resource use at Sequoyah and make presentations to the school and surrounding community.

CONCEPTS Classification of ideas and sources

SKILLS Understand and use the Dewey Decimal classification system, the Sequoyah Library catalog, and online electronic research databases; develop note-taking strategies for research; learn to support research; understand copyright and fair-use rules; practice using nonfiction and reference books; develop keywords for print or digital reference sources; identify, research, and collect data using digital resources; demonstrate the ability to navigate in virtual environments such as e-books, simulation software, and websites; create original animations or videos; create a website portfolio

9-10 EGRET'S PERCH

READING Continue to develop a love of literature through independent reading; read with appropriate fluency, accuracy, intonation, and expression; comprehend main ideas, common words, and root words, while drawing inferences and making connections; summarize and critique fiction for plot, characterization, setting, conflict, themes, and genres; share book critiques and recommendations

WRITING Take greater ownership in writing essays with clear opening and closing statements; topic sentences, and supporting ideas and details; continue writing stories with plot, character, conflict and setting development; learn the basics of biography writing; write and edit attention to content, organization, style, and mechanics

ORAL COMMUNICATION Share comprehension of text through Literature Circles and Author's Chair; create oral presentations with organized ideas and present with clear enunciation, posture, and eye contact; participate in discussions; respond to others; ask clarifying and analytical questions

NUMBERS & NUMERATION Understand place values, decimals to hundredths and some thousandths; use mental math; identify prime numbers; find factors of numbers; represent equivalent names for decimals and fractions

OPERATIONS & COMPUTATION Compare and order positive and negative numbers; add and subtract 4-digit numbers; multiply and divide by 2-digit numbers; know addition, subtraction, and multiplication facts up to 12s

DATA & CHANCE Collect and organize data to create graphs; use graphs to answer questions; describe events using basic probability terms; find the range, median, mean, and mode and make inferences

MEASUREMENT & GEOMETRY Estimate length with and without tools; measure to the nearest 1/8 inch and millimeter; draw angles with given measures; describe and use appropriate formulas to calculate the circumference of circles and to solve area, perimeter, and volume problems; continue coordinate geometry; describe, classify, and draw angles; determine angle measures by applying properties of orientations of angles

PATTERNS, FUNCTIONS & ALGEBRA Represent patterns and rules using algebraic notation; represent functions using words, algebraic notation, tables, and graphs; translate from one representation to another and use representations to solve problems involving functions

CONCEPTS How does land use affect the ecosystem? Why are estuaries important and how do we protect them? Wetland, island and rainforest habitats; adaptation and ecosystems; engineering; archaeology; scientific method; resource use; waste production data

SKILLS Deepen practice of observation and use of written descriptions; practice with the scientific method (ask questions that can be answered by experimentation, use controls in experimental methods, carefully gather and analyze data, draw conclusions and ask further questions); use scientific tools, such as a triple-beam balance; practice representing data in tables, graphs, and maps

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students explore the Arroyo Seco watershed and make detailed observations through water testing, monitoring water levels, and conducting insect and plant population surveys.

CONCEPTS Public policy and community engagement; land, power and authority; cultural values and belief systems; election processes; equity vs. equality; social change

SKILLS Develop research questions; identify authorship, bias, and credibility; create concept webs; take notes for main ideas and details and write summaries; make timelines and maps; analyze tables and charts and use data; understand cause and effect; participate in the creation of simulations to understand historical or contemporary issues; listen to texts and make connections to ideas about the history of our society; examine societies through multiple lenses (e.g., government, religion, ethics, the arts)

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students visit local stakeholders working on policy, such as City Hall personnel, Occupy LA participants, Tea Party representatives. Students also meet with professionals in the community to discuss other current local, national, or global issues relating to their topic of study, and work to develop their own solutions.

CONCEPTS Authority, credibility, and bias; Internet etiquette and safety

SKILLS Continue to develop independence with print and digital research processes, including the development of strong questions and usage of keywords; learn to use formal citations and bibliographies; design a portfolio website; use a variety of technologies to produce a digital presentation or product in a curriculum area; create original animations or videos

10-11 OVER THE HILL / OUT BACK

READING Study elements of fiction, such as plot, characterization (traits and motives), theme, setting and mood, genre, and conflict, in multiple forms, including video texts; analyze literary devices in prose and poetry, such as imagery, metaphor, simile, symbolism, hyperbole, and personification; study the characteristics of mythology; distinguish between first-, second-, and third-person narratives; practice strategic reading of prose by identifying text organization, main ideas and details; improve vocabulary and spelling through focus on root words, prefixes, suffixes, synonyms, antonyms, common homonyms, and homophones

WRITING Explore style and voice in writing; master paragraph structure using relevant topic sentences, supported by details, examples, and a concluding sentence; practice multiple forms of written expression, including expository and persuasive essays that demonstrate awareness of audience and purpose; pose concrete, relevant questions about a topic and gather clear, accurate perspectives on the subject; create narratives that demonstrate understanding of the elements of fiction; develop independence in the writing process; edit for content, organization, style, word choice, spelling, and mechanics

ORAL COMMUNICATION Share textual analysis in Literature Circles and seminars; create presentations (short stories, Poetry Jam, and book reviews) with an awareness of audience, volume, rate, emphasis, articulation, organization, word choice, body position, and eye contact; respond to others; ask clarifying and analytical questions

NUMBERS & NUMERATION Know place value, roots, exponents; factors; represent equivalent names for decimals, fractions, and percents; use GCFs, LCMs, and divisibility rules to manipulate fractions

OPERATIONS & COMPUTATION Use mental arithmetic, paper-and-pencil algorithms, and calculators to solve problems involving the addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers, decimals, and signed numbers; describe the strategies used and explain how they work

DATA & CHANCE Collect and organize data or use given data to create bar, line, and circle graphs with reasonable titles, labels, keys, and intervals; use the minimum, range, median, mode, and mean and graphs to ask and answer questions, draw conclusions, and make predictions; compare and contrast the median and mean of a data set

MEASUREMENT & GEOMETRY Choose and use appropriate formulas to calculate the circumference of circles and to solve area, perimeter, and volume problems; continue coordinate geometry; describe, classify, and draw angles; determine angle measures by applying properties of orientations of angles

PATTERNS, FUNCTIONS & ALGEBRA Represent patterns and rules using algebraic notation; represent functions using words, algebraic notation, tables, and graphs; translate from one representation to another and use representations to solve problems involving functions

CONCEPTS What impact have and are humans having on the climate? What is an ecosystem? Climate change; human impact on ecosystems; the credibility of scientists and experiments; scientific method

SKILLS Continue to practice detailed observation and construct written descriptions; use experimental methods; design experiments; present results; use chemical tests and indicators in experiments; present data in tables, graphs, and maps

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students explore the Arroyo Seco watershed and make detailed observations through water testing, monitoring water levels, and conducting insect and plant population surveys.

Habits of Mind

PERSPECTIVE

To seek, honor, and reflect on multiple viewpoints, in order to broaden understanding and solve problems

INQUIRY

To become curious, motivated, self-reflective learners who generate questions to deepen understanding

COMMUNICATION

To engage in constructive dialogue, value literature and language, and express oneself effectively through a variety of modalities

COLLABORATION

To know when and how to lead, follow, and work together as an active listener and meaningful contributor

CREATIVITY

To approach challenges with an open mind and a willingness to take imaginative risks while generating ideas and refining solutions

APPLICATION

To integrate and apply acquired knowledge in and out of the classroom

STEWARDSHIP

To take care of people, take care of things, take care of the environment, and seek to make the community a better place for all

OWNERSHIP

To do one's best work

Assessment

HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT STUDENTS HAVE LEARNED?

Reflection is a fundamental aspect of learning, and Sequoyah emphasizes assessments in which students take an active role. Through assessment students gain the insight to understand themselves as learners. The components of assessment at Sequoyah include: exhibitions; portfolios; student-led, parent-teacher conferences; and narrative reports.

Exhibitions

Students share learning of concepts and skills from units of study through a variety of creative presentations.

Portfolios

Students reflect on personal goals and collect work samples related to central academic concepts and skills.

Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences

Supported by parents and teachers, each student takes a central role in reflecting on their learning.

Reports

Teachers provide thorough feedback about each student's social-emotional growth and academic learning in all subject areas.

This map is a schematic overview of curriculum from entry level through junior high. It is not intended to represent all content knowledge that may be covered during a school year, nor the full depth and responsiveness of teaching and learning that occurs in our classrooms each day.

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SUBJECT AREAS

Spanish

The Spanish program helps students develop an appreciation for the Spanish language through speaking and listening, reading and writing, grammar, and creative application. Students build a personal connection to Spanish while exploring the geography of Spanish-speaking countries and the diversity of their cultures. Local traditions are incorporated, such as Cesar Chavez Day and Día de los Muertos celebrations.

Music

The Music program is grounded in Carl Orff's approach to music education. Orff believed children best learn music by fully experiencing it through singing and body movement, as well as instrumental expression. Students are given opportunities to perform individually and as members of an ensemble. Students share their work at exhibitions, all-school meetings, and the annual Musicale.

Visual Arts

The Visual Arts program encourages student artists to innovate, explore, and take risks. It provides opportunities for self-expression through various materials and concepts and leads students to discover their own creative methods. Students use the elements and principles of art and design as building blocks.

Theatre

The Theatre program inspires confidence and creativity and empowers students as performers, critics, and collaborators. Students progressively deepen their understanding of ensemble – the experience of participating as a member of a group. Theatre experiences are often integrated into other subject areas.

Field Studies

Expanding the traditional classroom to encompass the surrounding community and natural world, the Field Studies program brings curriculum to life. While practicing stewardship and self-reliance, students use experiences in the field to develop questions and collect information relating to their topics of study.

Gardens for Learning

The Gardens for Learning program explores science content through investigations and experimentation on the Sequoyah campus.

Physical Education

The Physical Education curriculum provides fun opportunities to cultivate personal habits for fitness and well-being. Students learn when and how to lead, work as a group, and support others' ideas.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How does learning another language help me understand culture, community, and myself?

How can music provide a mode of expression for my ideas and feelings?

How can music deepen my understanding of the world around me?

How does taking on different roles in an ensemble deepen my understanding of the elements and patterns of music?

How does the written language of music help me understand musical concepts?

What is art?

How does art impact how I see the world?

What are the elements of art?

What are the principles of art?

How do the elements and principles of art help me to see, study, and create art?

What are the qualities of a strong performance ensemble?

How does a performance ensemble provide opportunities to practice communication and collaboration?

How does performing help me understand multiple perspectives?

How can theatre be used to explore and address local, national, and global issues?

How does exploration in the field help me deepen my inquiry?

How can I develop my understanding of the communities and environments I visit?

How can I be a good steward of the places I visit?

How can I take responsibility for the well-being of our group during trips?

How do the gardens provide opportunities for stewardship?

What is needed to keep the garden ecosystem balanced?

How can the scientific method and the cycle of inquiry support my work in the garden?

In what ways do sports and physical activities provide opportunities for collaboration and communication?

How can I embrace fitness for life?

5-6 BAMBOO FOREST / POND

VOCABULARY Alphabet; the calendar; greetings; numbers (1-20); colors; classroom objects; family words; seasons; animals

GRAMMAR Conjugating "ser/estar"; subject pronouns "yo/ta"

APPLICATION Students sing, learn chants, play games, and listen to and act out stories. They use scripted skills with a partner to introduce each other. They speak out loud to count items and say color names; state their favorite color and animal; and name the current month and season.

CONCEPTS Listening; rhythm; movement; singing

SKILLS Acquire basic music skills through listening activities and rhythmic games; recognize rhythms in names, nursery rhymes and everyday speech; singing, creative dance, and instrumental exploration; demonstrate rhythms using body percussion and pentatonic scale on xylophones; learn about use and care of the voice; memorize words and melodies; begin to improvise; learn classic Sequoyah songs for school events and Anza-Borrego; study folk, world, and classical music; share live-music listening experiences

ELEMENTS Engagement with horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curved, and zigzag lines; direction; shape; color/hue

SKILLS Know how to successfully apply wet and dry materials; know how to use direction, line, shape, and color in various art exercises

EXPRESSION Students delight in discovering how music, color, and creative movement come alive through visual art. They learn from guiding the materials and from allowing the materials to guide them. Students are introduced to the inherent relationship between art and nature during their Anza-Borrego experience.

CONCEPTS Ensemble; language of theatre; character; environment

SKILLS Learn to create a performance ensemble; improvise; create characters; learn movement (dance, isolation of body parts, physical control); recognize dramatic structure (plot, character, setting); learn vocal projection; practice listening to and following directions

CONCEPTS Exploration and observation; desert habitats; teamwork

SKILLS Ask questions; learn to observe and compare; identify and compare Sequoyah campus plants with desert plants; learn basic camping skills (packing a daypack, keeping track of gear); practice stewardship of the campus, the surrounding community, and campgrounds

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students begin their field studies experiences in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. A two-night trip culminates weeks of investigation and preparation. Additionally, the class explores the Sequoyah campus and surrounding neighborhood. Students make decisions about how to provide service in these locales.

CONCEPTS Origins of seeds and plants; growth cycles; physiology of flowers; different types of plants; garden care

SKILLS Sort and identify seeds; learn about plant seeds; observe and identify plants; care for gardens by properly watering plants and pulling weeds

CONCEPTS Having fun with exercise; coordination; conditioning; soccer and basketball

SKILLS Learn to move safely and quickly in a group; learn basic soccer skills (dribbling, passing with instep, throw-ins); learn basic basketball skills (dribbling, bounce and chest passes, introductory shooting); practice for Jogathon

6-7 BACKYARD

VOCABULARY Food; colors; shapes; parts of the body; animals; numbers (20-40); asking words

GRAMMAR Conjugating "tengo/siento"; plurals; noun gender; articles "el/la"

APPLICATION Students recite and identify a variety of food items; state favorite foods; identify shapes as they appear in food and their world; act in Spanish-speaking skits.

CONCEPTS Listening; rhythm; coordination; patterns in music; singing; instrumental performance

SKILLS Further develop basic music skills through listening activities and rhythmic games; recognize rhythms in names, nursery rhymes and everyday speech; singing, creative dance, and instrumental exploration; demonstrate rhythms using body percussion and pentatonic scale on xylophones; recognize rhythms and melodies in daily environments; learn about use and care of the voice; listen to and reproduce pitches; memorize words and melodies; learn to improvise with the pentatonic scale; learn classic Sequoyah songs for school events and Anza-Borrego; learn songs in other languages; study folk, world, and classical music; share live-music listening experiences

ELEMENTS Further engagement with line, direction, size, color/hue

SKILLS Use color theory; primary, secondary colors; tints, and shades; identify and apply complementary colors; use scissors; demonstrate understanding of direction in art; identify and create positive and negative space

EXPRESSION Students are immersed in highlighting and celebrating different modes of learning (auditory, kinesthetic, and visual). Students further explore the inherent relationship between art and nature during their Anza-Borrego experience.

CONCEPTS Audience; staging; Living Diorama™

SKILLS Learn to create a performance ensemble; improvise; create characters; learn movement (dance, isolation of body parts, physical control); recognize dramatic structure (plot, character, setting); enunciate and practice vocal projection; memorize lines; perform scripted material; basic stage use; learn mask and puppet making; prepare and perform short plays; attend local performances

CONCEPTS Community; charge; desert habitats

SKILLS Explore, observe, and ask questions; learn basic camping skills (packing a daypack, keeping track of gear, cooking, cleaning up, tent setup); make and use maps; study astronomy and constellations; explore how people of the past learned from the night sky; practice stewardship

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students visit parks, exhibits, performances, and local businesses to explore and map out the Pasadena area. They share artwork with residents at a local coalescent home. Students return to Anza-Borrego with new ideas and skills, learning leadership while assisting younger students. Students visit the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Museum.

CONCEPTS Relationships between plants, insects, and animals; relationships between soil and insects; relationships between plants and soil

SKILLS Practice planting and weeding; practice watering methods; observe changes in the gardens; identify plant parts; make soil comparisons; learn about composting and vermicomposting; identify small insects and their body parts; observe stages of caterpillar metamorphosis

CONCEPTS Beginning sports game play; coordination; soccer; basketball

SKILLS Learn to move safely and quickly in a group; continue refining skills for soccer (long kicks with laces) and basketball (5-on-5 games); practice for Jogathon

7-8 NEST

VOCABULARY Greetings; seasons; numbers (40-60); colors; house; feelings; traditional games of Latin America; money; verbs as actions

GRAMMAR Demonstrative adjectives; using "ser" to tell time; using plurals to count money; some asking words as they support greetings; using "estar" to state feelings

APPLICATION Students create house models, labeling rooms and explaining their vision for their house. Students count out loud and spell numbers. They learn traditional Latin American games and role play to learn to express feelings and ask about costs.

CONCEPTS Critical listening; rhythm; coordination; patterns in music; movement; singing; instrumental performance; compositional form

SKILLS Demonstrate basic musical skills, beginning recorder; show ability in listening activities, rhythmic games, and recognizing rhythms; singing, creative dance, and instrumental exploration; demonstrate rhythms using body percussion and pentatonic scale on xylophones; recognize rhythms and melodies in daily environments; learn about use and care of the voice; listen to and reproduce pitches; memorize words and melodies; practice improvising and composing with the pentatonic scale; learn good practice techniques; learn classic Sequoyah songs for school events and Anza-Borrego; learn songs in other languages; study folk, world, and classical music; share live-music listening experiences; explore musical styles and composers

ELEMENTS Direction, texture, and gradation; color/hue, value, and intensity; symmetry and asymmetry; 2-D and 3-D

SKILLS Learn to define the outside edges of an object through contour line; explore how color/hue, tints, and shades are applied to create gradation; identify and utilize texture through 2-D and 3-D materials and techniques

EXPRESSION Students are immersed in highlighting and celebrating different modes of learning (auditory, kinesthetic, and visual). Students' understanding and application of the inherent relationship between art and nature is expanded during their final Anza-Borrego experience.

CONCEPTS Interpretation of texts; classical theatre; satire; Living Diorama™

SKILLS Further develop previously learned skills; enunciate, practice vocal projection and effective body language; memorize lines; follow stage directions; use basic stage combat; learn basic scene design; make masks; make puppets and create a puppet; prepare and perform short plays; attend local performances; use theatre to perform ideas from other subjects

CONCEPTS Urban, desert, and marine habitats; cultures and history of Los Angeles; stewardship

SKILLS Further develop camping skills (packing a daypack, keeping track of gear, cooking, cleaning up, tent setup); investigate habitats; identify mammals; adaptive traits and the group

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students take advantage of opportunities for stewardship by making partnerships with local agencies, including an animal shelter and ocean foundations. Learning to explore their city via public transportation, students visit Chinatown and Olvera Street. Returning to Anza-Borrego, students study traits of desert animals comparing them to non-desert animals. Some students learn independence by making the journey without a parent and acting as mentors to younger students.

CONCEPTS Healthy habitats and ecosystems

SKILLS Observe, design, and maintain habitats on campus; determine needs for specific species; identify all species on campus and observe interactions

CONCEPTS Sports game play; offense; defense transitions

SKILLS Learn to move safely and quickly in a group; continue refining skills for soccer (shooting) and basketball (5-on-5 games); practice for Jogathon

8-9 TREEHOUSE

VOCABULARY Foods; weather; family; courtesy words; ages and birthdays; numbers to 50 and counting by tens to 100; intro to present tense verbs

GRAMMAR Introduce punctuation; common verbs "ser," "tener," and "querer"; conjugate in the first, second, and third person singular; plurals, noun gender, and articles "el/la"

APPLICATION Students use skits to learn to order food and play a TV weather forecaster in Spanish. They create recipes and shopping lists. Then they take field trips to practice ordering at a restaurant and go shopping at a grocery store. Students present their family tree and create a video project in Spanish about their family.

CONCEPTS Aural training; rounds; coordination and dexterity; instrumental performance; songwriting

SKILLS Build on the musical skills previously developed; beginning recorder; sing, play, and notate simple melodic passages in the treble clef staff; reproduce whole-, half-, quarter-, and eighth-note rhythms on body percussion and instruments; learn beginning recorder. Orff instruments, keyboard, and guitar; continue to create original compositions; recognize the strong beat in words and phrases; further develop good practice techniques; practice more complex choral singing, incorporating two-part rounds and developing more sophisticated dynamics and blending techniques; learn folk songs from the Sequoyah tradition; use creative body movement to explore musical rhythms and compositional forms

PRINCIPLES Repetition; contrast; variation

SKILLS Gain a deeper understanding of art materials; hone observational drawing techniques; successfully use and apply 2-D and 3-D materials; develop a strong understanding of color theory; understand and employ the value of color to create volume and depth in a composition; begin to study art history

EXPRESSION Students make connections to art outside of the context of the classroom through camping experiences, museum field trips, and field studies that include art exercises.

CONCEPTS Styles of theatre; satire; poetry and playwrighting; theatre analysis

SKILLS Further develop previously learned skills; critique and create dramatic structure (plot, character, setting); write plays and poems; design scenes, costumes, and props; learn introductory theatre history and multicultural styles of theatre; use theatre performances to explore and address local, national, and global issues; write short melodramas to address ideas from social studies and science; study and perform radio dramas

CONCEPTS Water systems; food systems; stewardship

SKILLS Make observations and ask questions; make connections between class texts and field studies; make maps; record observations in journals through narrative and drawings; expand camping skills to include trip planning, packing, tent setup and repacking, cooking and cleaning up meals

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Furthering inquiry into their topics of study, students visit the Los Angeles Aqueduct, Hyperion water treatment facilities, pumping stations, reservoirs, local farms, El Capitan State Beach, Silverwood Lake, and Leo Carrillo State Park. Students learn to explore and observe each place on bicycles and/or on foot.

CONCEPTS Growing food effectively; making improvements to existing agricultural methods

SKILLS Practice soil testing and comparison; compost; use horizontal and other planting methods; experiment with vertical gardening; experiment with different watering methods; observe harvest times; apply inquiry-based methods to make improvements with garden work

CONCEPTS Inclusion; group awareness; strategy; offense; defense transitions

SKILLS Continue to develop skills for soccer and basketball; develop agility and coordination

9-10 EGRET'S PERCH

VOCABULARY Family; house; school; navigation and cities; asking words; telling time

GRAMMAR Present-tense conjugation; articles; plural nouns and adjectives

APPLICATION Students engage a family project in which they describe physical traits using adjectives. They also interview a friend to learn about their family. Students create a model of a city and explain the location of its buildings.

CONCEPTS Aural training; harmony; coordination and dexterity; instrumental performance; song structure; musical theatre

SKILLS Practice advanced notation and sight-reading, including more complex dotted and uneven rhythms; intermediate and advanced recorder to practice aural, breathing, articulation, sight-reading, and notation skills; practice solo and ensemble singing, incorporating three-part rounds and two-part harmony; practice songwriting skills; find words and phrases that most naturally fit rhythmic passages; create original songs; learn new folk and popular songs

PRINCIPLES Repetition; emphasis; dominance; variation; proportion

SKILLS Apply the principles with the elements of art; begin to master observational drawing; use foreground, middle ground, and background successfully in a composition; understand and use value to create depth in observational studies, such as site-specific drawing and working from life; incorporate previously learned knowledge of color and apply it to each composition; explore form and function in 2-D and 3-D applications

EXPRESSION Art students become strong decision makers and are able to identify the powerful relationships between materials and ideas. Personal and artistic growth is highlighted through storytelling, critique, self-assessment, and the recording of camping experiences.

CONCEPTS The connection of social issues and theatre; satire; dramatize historical events and people

SKILLS Identify and perform multiple perspectives in relation to social issues; form strong performance ensembles, and reflect with a group; research historical characters and use research to inform developing and acting out the character; explore musical theatre; rehearse and perform short plays; attend local performances

CONCEPTS Ecology; sustainability; culture; society; self-confidence

SKILLS Make observations and collect data in the field; interview scientists and public officials; read maps; use museums to do research; participate in pre-trip research and more complex trip planning; expand camping skills to include packing, tent setup and repacking, cooking and cleaning up meals

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Students study the history of native Californians in the Channel Islands and the Santa Barbara area. Students also study the relationship between society and natural environments in the Morro Bay area by working with scientists to collect data in the marshes, tide pools, and mudflats, and by interviewing local public officials about issues regarding development and sustainability. Students also visit local landfills to understand resource use and waste. Additionally, students develop confidence and courage through rock climbing and cave exploration at Joshua Tree National Park.

CONCEPTS Plant physiology and phenology (comparative study of budding cycles)

SKILLS Develop observation methods; identify native plant types and stages; use Project Budburst database to record stages online; analyze and interpret collected plant data; share conclusions with the community

CONCEPTS Introduction to football and Ultimate

SKILLS Continue agility and coordination work; develop skills for football (running, passing, catching) and Ultimate (throwing, positioning in open space)

10-11 OVER THERE / OUT BACK

VOCABULARY Family; clothes; school; asking words; telling time

GRAMMAR Present- and preterite-tense conjugation; articles; plural nouns and adjectives

APPLICATION Students engage a family project in which they describe physical traits using adjectives. They also interview a friend to learn about their family. They collaborate to make a Spanish video tour of the Sequoyah campus.

CONCEPTS Aural training; harmony; different key centers; major and minor tonalities; instrumental performance; appreciation; songwriting

SKILLS Use the skills developed in previous classes to explore musical performance, composition, and analysis with greater depth; express musical opinions on a piece-by-piece basis through ensemble experience and related discussion; practice making interpretations of compositions based on musical terms, notes, and symbols; participate in an ensemble as a singer, instrumentalist, or both

PRINCIPLES Balance; dominance; proportion; variation; movement

SKILLS Gain a deeper understanding of how to combine the principles with the elements of art; master the use of various 2-D and 3-D materials; demonstrate deep understanding of material compatibility; balance observational drawing from life with concepts in art; integrate visual thinking strategies with self-assessment

EXPRESSION The acknowledgement of unique qualities in the students' own works prompts deeper connections. Student artists learn to recognize the deep impact art can have.

CONCEPTS The connection of social issues and theatre; satire; playwrighting; multimedia production

SKILLS Further develop skills learned in previous classes; review dramatic structure (plot, character, setting); research historical characters, and practice using research to inform acting out the character; continue researching theater and costume history and multicultural styles; create mini-movies; rehearse and perform classic and modern plays; rehearse and perform staged readings; perform a radio drama; attend local performances

CONCEPTS Observation; research; planning and budgeting; collaboration; leadership; land use

SKILLS Develop independent inquiry and share with the group; record observations through detailed notes and drawings; plan for two five-day trips; create budgets; conduct pre-trip research; independently manage most aspects of the camping experience; use maps

PLACE-BASED LEARNING Study emphasizes more student collaboration and trip planning. Students do independent observation and research on organisms and geology. Field studies trips are usually to Sequoia National Park, Yosemite National Park, and Pfeiffer-Big Sur State Park. Students frequently explore Pasadena's Arroyo Seco and visit other public spaces to examine community land use. Students engage in social studies activities such as visiting city halls, and have observed Occupy LA and Tea Party discussions.

CONCEPTS Leadership and service

SKILLS Practice composing, planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting; support younger students to learn these skills; make improvements to the Gardens for Learning outdoor classroom

CONCEPTS Health and daily exercise; agility; flexibility; endurance; speed and coordination; cross-lateral coordination and connections to academic learning

SKILLS Practice daily exercise routines; develop game play and strategy for soccer, basketball, volleyball, and Ultimate

12-13 JUNIOR HIGH

VOCABULARY Family; city; transportation; directions; hobbies; sports

GRAMMAR Irregular verb conjugation; future and preterite tenses; subject and verb agreement

APPLICATION Students create an imaginary city project using location words and directions for navigation. They also further connect to Spanish on a personal level through a family video project using adjectives to describe likes and dislikes, hobbies, and other family information. This video project is supplemented by a written description.

CONCEPTS Aural training; harmony; instrumental performance; appreciation; songwriting

SKILLS Choose a specific area of focus to continue refining skills learned over the years, while developing independence; select one of the following four choices:

Chorus Choose material with the teacher and practice both solo and group parts; further develop listening and blending skills with two- and three-part harmonies

Band Practice previously introduced skills; learn to read and follow band parts and learn basic composition

Music Production Learn and explore the GarageBand™ platform with new compositions (songs, narrative soundscapes, or a mixture of both); learn the basics of audio production as a means of setting up, dismantling, and caring for the school PA system; learn to support technical aspects of productions

Music Appreciation Practice critical listening and analysis skills through the exploration of pop, rock, jazz, world, and classical music; present informed opinions in class discussions and writing projects

PRINCIPLES Balance; variation; movement; rhythm; harmony; dominance; unity; proportion

SKILLS Develop an understanding of art history and contemporary art practices; know how to implement concepts through art from multiple perspectives; demonstrate knowledge in selecting appropriate materials to convey specific ideas; take ownership of ideas; successfully research and write about art concepts and history; successfully move a big idea from concept through completion; create work inspired by critical, conceptual, and referential strategies; experiment with and evolve traditional techniques

EXPRESSION Students at this level enjoy celebrating the poetics of the art-creation process and develop an ownership of the