

September 2020

Dear First Grade Families:

Welcome to First Grade! This year your student will participate in a variety of classroom experiences designed to foster their love of learning and help develop their academic, social and physical skills while embracing the CURIOSITY in ALL of US. The following is intended to be a brief overview of the comprehensive program that is offered in first grade. Due to the nature of instructional delivery at this time, we have compacted Curriculum to best meet student needs.

**i-Ready Diagnostic and Personalized Path:** This year, First grade students will take the i-Ready diagnostic. This diagnostic is a short series of questions that will help teachers know how to group students so that we can best address student needs and build on their strengths. The i-Ready diagnostic is administered on the computer and then the program creates a personalized series of games and activities unique for each student. We ask that each student spend 10 minutes each day on reading and math i-Ready activities for homework or asynchronous learning time. To learn more about I-Ready, please go to [www.aacps.org/iready](http://www.aacps.org/iready).

**Language Arts:** First grade students continue to improve their reading skills by listening to and joining in the shared reading of big books. They learn the common letter-sound relationships and how to blend them into words during phonics instruction. Students practice their early reading skills using a published reading series and leveled books. They develop oral and written expression skills. Students write the letter-sound relationships they know by using them in words, sentences, messages, and their own stories. Students use language to respond to text-dependent questions, write to source, and engage in collaborative discussions about a text.

First grade students use basic punctuation and capitalization and apply knowledge of phonics to spell independently. Students acquire the skills needed to form manuscript letters and numerals. They prewrite, write a first draft, edit/proofread, and publish. By the end of first grade, students will have produced a variety of types of compositions including opinion, informative, and narrative pieces.

**Mathematics:** The Anne Arundel County Public Schools Integrated Mathematics PreK-5 Program has implemented the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards through the transdisciplinary curriculum. These standards are a set of high-quality academic goals which provide rigor, focus, and coherence to prepare our students to be college and career ready by the time they graduate from high school. Instruction will include these mathematical domains:

- Operations & Algebraic Thinking – work with addition and subtraction with properties, problem solving and equations
- Number & Operations Base Ten – place value and continued work with addition and subtraction
- Measurement and Data – length and telling time
- Geometry – shapes and their attributes

During the time of Virtual Learning, math topics have been narrowed to include essential grade level standards, guided by the work of NCTM, NCSM and Achieve the Core. With abbreviated time dedicated to teaching mathematics, it is important for students to continue their practice on math concepts using their Ready Common Core work text, the i-Ready platform and First In Math. Students can access both digital programs through ClassLink. Students can practice mathematics in a variety of ways at home including counting steps from the house to the playground, counting items while they clean their room, cooking with a family member and through basic play.

**Science and Social Studies:** The Science and Social Studies learning block is designed to actively engage students in interdisciplinary applications and learning. Using the platform of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Social Studies C3 standards, students develop questions and investigate inquiries as scientists, social scientists, environmentalists, engineers, and informed citizens. Throughout the learning block of Science and Social Studies, students are encouraged to observe, collect, and evaluate data and evidence to communicate conclusions and take informed action about topics being studied. Students are applying their classroom learning to real world scenarios and digging into how to make a difference in their communities. All lessons are designed to investigate, study, and answer a daily Exploration Question. Other MSDE standards/lessons being addressed within the Science and Social Studies block are: Health, Guidance, Counseling, Financial Literacy, Environmental Literacy and the MSDE Primary Talent Development Lessons.

**Environmental Literacy:** Maryland Environmental Literacy Standards are integrated into curriculum through engaging units that connect students with their local natural world. Students will be using the Monarch butterfly as a context for learning environmental issues, math, science, social studies and language arts. Live caterpillars are raised in the classroom and released as butterflies in the fall, students are learning about their lifecycle, migration, plant growth and how humans impact them.

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

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

The WIDA English Language Development standards framework represents the social, instructional, and academic language that students need to engage with peers, educators, and grade-level content curriculum. As such, the framework for teaching language is integrated with the Maryland State Standards for College and Career Readiness, as well as National and State Content Standards. All students who have been identified as eligible to receive English Language Acquisition services will take WIDA ACCESS for ELLs, the annual assessment to measure English Language Proficiency.

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

We are looking forward to an exciting year of learning for your first grader. If you desire additional information, please contact your child's teacher.

Sincerely,

WRL/pmw