September 2020

Dear Fourth Grade Families:

Welcome to Fourth Grade! Students in grade four participate in a variety of classroom experiences to expand their love of learning and develop their academic, social and physical skills while applying INQUIRY to all they study. The following descriptions present a brief overview of the comprehensive program. 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, our 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 - 15 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.

Language Arts: Students in fourth grade continue to develop and expand their literacy skills in word knowledge, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, speaking, and listening by engaging in a variety of lessons and activities based on the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards and the Anne Arundel County Literacy Curriculum. Fourth graders independently demonstrate and apply a variety of reading strategies as they engage in fluent reading and comprehension of complex materials with literary and informational texts. They strive to construct meaning, monitor and check their own understanding, and engage in collaborative discussions of what they have read. Students are required to respond to text–dependent questions and write to source in all areas. Technology skills continue to develop during the fourth-grade year. Students become more independent in using online resources and computer applications to support their learning in all curricular areas. As writers, they focus on opinion, informative, and narrative writing. Students learn to organize and develop complex ideas to compose pieces that include a variety of sentence structures, word choices, and language conventions to enhance their writing. Students continue to practice handwriting skills through writing.

Mathematics: Students develop mathematical thinking through the integration of the Maryland College and Career Ready (MCCR) Standards and the Standards for Mathematical Practice. These standards and practices require students to demonstrate skills and persevere when solving problems, explain their reasoning to others, choose appropriate mathematical tools, and be accurate with representations and explanations. The Standards for Mathematical Practices are incorporated into daily lessons and promoted through student discourse during lessons. The MCCR 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. The mathematical concepts taught in fourth grade include:

- Number & Operations: Base Ten – Place value and foundations of multi-digit multiplication and division
- Number & Operations: Fractions – build unit fractions to determine equivalence and compare, understand relationship between decimals and fractions
- Operations & Algebraic Thinking – use four operations to solve problems, factors, and multiples
- Geometry -identify lines and angles, classify shapes by properties

- Measurement and Data – conversion of measurement and angle measurement

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 building sets and relating them to multiplication, measuring/estimating the distance from the house to the playground, estimating or determining elapsed time when they clean their room, cooking with a family member and using the world around them to name shapes and describe their attributes.

Social Studies: Through the study of Maryland and with the mission of exploring diverse perspectives, students apply the concepts of geography, economics, civics and history that they have learned in grades 1-3. Students build their knowledge of their own communities by learning about the history and government of Maryland. Students continue to practice the skills of social studies by sequencing events, analyzing cause and effect, and analyzing perspective. Students read primary sources and are expected to read and write independently, complete writing assignments and research projects. Students will also read and construct maps, charts, tables and graphs. The units studied are:

- Maryland: First Settlers
- Maryland: The Colony to State
- Changing Maryland
- Modern Maryland

Science: Through exploration of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) curriculum, students engage in scientific inquiry. During this process, students ask scientifically-grounded, real-world questions, take measurements, collect data, and analyze information to find solutions to scientific problems. Students study patterns and relationships within science and learn to build evidence-based arguments in response to claims. The topics are:

- Structure and Function of Organisms
- Use of Patterns in Transferring Information
- Interpreting Maps of Earth's Features
- Developing Models of Wavelength and Amplitude of Waves
- Weathering and Erosion
- Forms of Energy & Energy Transfer
- Effect of Fuels on the Environment
- Engineering Design

In the Spring, Students can apply what they learned by taking part in the Innovators Science and Engineering Challenge.

Environmental Literacy: Maryland Environmental Literacy Standards are integrated into curriculum through engaging units that connect students with their local natural world. Students will answer the question, how has human activity affected Maryland's living things? Students conduct investigations and collect data through their science curriculum and experiences with staff from Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center to complete Project Based Learning action projects. Focused environmental topic relates to their current science units. They learn that when humans change environments, organisms are not always

able to adapt and may not survive. With a particular focus on their local Chesapeake Bay environment, students learn and understand issues affecting the Bay and how they can make a difference.

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. In addition to classroom instruction, ELs engage with personalized learning through Imagine Language & Literacy, an online adaptive learning program that builds reading and language proficiency skills. 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 a year of learning for your fourth grader. If you desire additional information, please contact your child's teacher.

Sincerely,

WRL/pmw