September 2011

Dear Parents or Guardian,

Welcome to “Meet the Teacher Night.” This is an important evening for parents and teachers alike as together we look forward to what we know will be an exciting school year for your child. In addition to the information which our teachers will share with you tonight, we are pleased to present to you this curriculum handbook for your child’s grade level. This guide is designed to acquaint you with the curriculum objectives of the major subject areas.

It is the goal of the Herricks Schools to challenge each child to achieve his or her own level of excellence. We recognize the value of a variety of learning styles and learning rates, and we strive to teach all our students to become independent learners. It is important to appreciate that not all children will reach the described levels of achievement at the same time. We are confident that the total K-5 experience will provide a strong foundation for their education career and for life.

As you read this handbook, we would like you to be aware that our curriculum is continually being re-evaluated, and as a result, it is an evolving document that reflects changes in our schools and society. We are proud of our program and of the ability of our teachers to translate it into meaningful learning experiences.

Sincerely,

Dr. Deirdre Hayes
Mr. Edward Bellomo
Ms. K. Elizabeth Guercin
Mrs. Mary Louise Haley
Curriculum

The Herricks name is synonymous with quality and the district is genuinely committed to meeting the needs of all students. Innovative techniques, combined with years of experience and expertise, are educational cornerstones of the district. District-wide, the Herricks program is a comprehensive learning experience offering a number of alternatives as well as a wide range of methods within a core program of traditional classroom instruction. A strong network of support services is provided for all students. District policy encourages small class size and close interpersonal relationships among teachers and students. Each student is afforded the time and nurturing necessary to develop qualities of individuality and strength.
In Herricks, we support the implementation of a comprehensive balanced literacy program with the belief that all children can learn to read and write. The most important goal of reading instruction is to instill a love of reading and an appreciation of literature, thereby creating lifelong readers.

Reading is a comprehensive process that incorporates all areas of language arts. Components of the program include:

- Word work (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary instruction anchored in the Fundations Program).
- Interactive read-aloud
- Shared, interactive, guided, independent, and partnership reading
- Modeled, shared interactive, and independent writing
- Listening and speaking activities

Oral language development activities are integrated into many areas of balanced literacy since talking helps young children understand their world, comprehend stories, poems, nonfiction materials, and understand patterns in words.

Classrooms are organized to support this program by providing different areas for small group and whole class instruction. Teachers support every child at his or her stage of reading development.

Students learn to think out loud, develop clear and concise expression and learn the vocabulary that best communicates their messages.

Listening to stories above their reading level creates the literary knowledge necessary to progress in their independent reading. During read-alouds, children respond to prompts given by teachers and “turn and talk” to partners in response to their teachers’ requests.
Quality children’s literature from a wide variety of genres provides the core of the reading/language arts program. These genres are explored in conjunction with the reading, writing, social studies and science content areas. Fiction, non-fiction, and poetry are discussed and enjoyed by the children. Second graders are engaged in author studies to identify literary elements in their work, empathize with characters, learn new information, analyze story language, illustrations, and study “tricks of the writing trade.”

**Writing**

Second grade students write daily in writing workshop. They receive direct instruction in generating and developing topics, drafting, revising, and editing through mini-lessons and shared writing. Second graders celebrate their work with peer or parent audiences. They are taught to believe they are authors with an important voice in their world.

Children may approximate words or conventions before mastering them. These approximations are accepted, while direct instruction in language arts and spelling scaffolds their understandings of the complexities of written English. The conventions of English are modeled by teachers and incorporated into each unit of study. Direct instruction includes varying sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, and capitalization of proper nouns, paragraph structure, and revising for clarity. Spelling is anchored in the Fundations Program, a sequential phonics and spelling program that children began in Kindergarten.

Second graders develop beginnings, middles, and endings of stories about their own lives and use published authors as “mentors” to improve their writing. Teachers choose from other writing units such as realistic fiction, fairy tales, persuasive reviews, all-about nonfiction books, poetry, and writing in the content areas to broaden second graders’ writing experiences.
Spelling

In the Fundations Program, second graders are taught to correlate letters to sounds, focus on beginning, middle, and ending sounds, and blend and segment up to six sounds per syllable. Six different syllable types, multiple vowel patterns, suffixes, and inflectional endings are taught, applied, and practiced to achieve mastery of age appropriate spelling words. Multi-syllable sight words, or the words lacking predictable spelling patterns, are taught systematically so that your child will continue to build up his or her spelling vocabulary.

During writing conferences, guided writing, shared writing, and strategy group instruction, specific conventions may be targeted based on the curriculum and on individual need. Young authors are encouraged to institute newly taught skills when writing about their own lives and about topics that they know well. Students transition from “invented spelling” to conventional spelling when they are able to integrate their constantly expanding knowledge into their own published pieces in writing workshop.
Mathematics- Grade 2

The Mathematics curriculum in Herricks is reflective of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Principles and Standards for School Mathematics, the New York State Learning Standards for Mathematics, Science, and Technology, and the Common Core State Standards. The curriculum is mathematically rich, providing students with opportunities to learn important mathematical concepts and procedures with understanding. Students are engaged in inquiry based hands-on lessons that utilize a variety of manipulatives and appropriate technologies.

The Standards for Mathematical Practice and Standards for Mathematical Content found in the Common Core State Standards, help to define what students should understand and be able to do in their study of mathematics. They further specify the understanding, knowledge, and skills that students should acquire from Pre-K through Commencement in Grade 12.

Children in Grade Two have already begun to develop number concepts, problem solving strategies, reasoning skills and applications of mathematics through the inquiry model. Largely a problem solving, manipulative based program, the students are also engaged in the activities from the Pearson series The Investigations in Number, Data and Space, and the Scott Foresman/Addison Wesley mathematics series. In Grade 2, instructional time defined by both direct teaching and guided exploration focuses on building foundational skills and extending understanding of base-ten notation, building fluency with addition and subtraction, using standard units of measure, and describing and analyzing geometric shapes. Greater focus is placed on problem solving and the strategies for problem solving as the year progresses.

In Grade Two, children should develop an understanding of:

1. Operations and Algebraic Thinking - understand numbers and their relationships; be able to compute addition and subtraction through 100 fluently, add and subtract using mental math through 20, make reasonable estimates, solve simple one and two step problems, and begin work with equal groups of objects to gain foundations for multiplication
2. Number and Operations in Base Ten – Understand place value, count and write numbers within 1000, compare, add and subtract within 1000, explain why addition and subtraction strategies work.
3. Measurement and Data – measuring, comparing and estimating lengths of objects in standard units, measure time, and money, manipulate change from a dollar, pose questions and gather data about themselves and their surroundings, create graphic representation of collected data, and interpret given data independently to solve problems.
4. Geometry- Identify and reason with shapes and their attributes, partition shapes into parts and identify those parts, recognize that equal shares of identical wholes need not have the same shape.
Social Studies

Social Studies is the study of what human beings have made of themselves within the context of their physical and social environment. In the early elementary years, students study the individual, the family, the neighborhood and communities. Later, students examine specific world cultures to better understand our world’s diversity. They then become “historians” and trace the developments of Long Island, New York State and the American people, including the events surrounding the creation of the United States. Introducing and broadening students’ understanding of various forms of government, the basic elements of economics, geographical knowledge and principles, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic values enhances this study. A social studies vocabulary notebook is introduced and maintained throughout the elementary years. Through readings and other courses of study, students begin to understand the importance of historical evidence and the importance of changing and competing interpretations of different historical developments.

In the second grade Social Studies curriculum, students explore their local community, as well as other communities located in urban, suburban or rural areas. The study of the students’ own community serves as a basis for understanding other communities of today and of long ago.
Science

The central purpose to scientific inquiry is to develop explanations of natural phenomena in a continuing creative process. Our curriculum focuses on problem-solving and the development of critical thinking as part of the ongoing process of preparing our students in the 21st Century Skills for learning. Students explore science by engaging in science process skills to understand scientific concepts. By examining either everyday occurrences or planned experiments, students learn to observe carefully, record these observations and data, and design charts, graphs, or tables. Students then propose explanations and clarify misconceptions or reconcile these explanations based on observations or new ideas, create new experiments and present research findings. Throughout this process, students gain understanding of scientific knowledge, concepts, principles and theories pertaining to the physical setting and living environment. Technology in our labs and classrooms enables us to research our inquiries and present our understanding in collaborative ways.

Experimental Design (Scientific Method)

- Observations
- Questioning
- Hypothesis
- Experiment
- What I understand

In second grade, these are the units of study:

**Physical Science**
Measurement
Interactions

**Life Science**
Plant and Animal: life cycle

**Earth Science**
Air and Water
Weather/Seasons
Day/Night

**Health**

The Herricks health scope and sequence utilizes the core pieces of The Great Body Shop health program, and is organized to sequentially present key health ideas and concepts across the K-5 curriculum. Each year builds upon the skills of the prior year, enabling the students to learn, practice, and apply those skills. This skills based approach enhances the students ability to maintain personal health and safety, make healthy consumer choices, and apply health skills to a variety of related situations.
Art

Students develop an awareness of community and their neighborhood in the second grade. Through their art experiences, they may explore structures, animals and other aspects of their immediate world. They comprehend and manipulate spatial relations in their work through the use of foreground, middle ground and background details. Integrating the art curriculum with the academic areas provides a variety of learning experiences. Individual encouragement provides a positive feeling of self-worth and enables each “artist” to grow in the area of self-confidence.

Music

Recognizing that much of the early formulation of musical understanding takes place in the elementary music classroom, the curriculum engages students in a variety of activities as they learn about music in the world around them. Throughout their elementary school years, children are introduced to, and taught to distinguish among the elements of music: melody, harmony, rhythm, form texture and dynamics. Activities which all students experience regularly include singing music, playing music on instruments, moving to music, listening to music and creating music. In the later elementary years, instrumental music is offered to further develop the student’s understanding of music.

Concepts introduced in earlier grades are further developed. Relative duration of sound is introduced, high/medium/low pitches are notated on the musical staff, musical terms for loud/soft are introduced as are solfege syllables. Children learn to identify by sight and sound several commonly played instruments of the orchestra. Foreign language, patriotic and animal songs are introduced.
Physical Education

The State Education Department requires that a physical education program be planned so that activities are presented progressively and built upon previous experiences from kindergarten through high school. The specific activities are: basic and creative movement, rhythm and dance, games and sports, gymnastics, aquatics (if possible), outdoor living skills and physical fitness.

At the entry level, K-3, the student is guided through movement experiences in the program areas of rhythm and dance, low organization games, tumbling and gymnastics for the purpose of developing:

- **Basic and Creative Movement**—a practical and working understanding of how the body does move and can move, and
- **Perception Motor Skills**—an understanding of the relationship between body parts and objects.

These two understandings are the foundation for activities presented at all other levels of the curriculum.

At the 4-5 grade level, the student is given continuing experiences in the program areas of rhythm and dance, as well as movement and perceptual motor skills. Organized movement in the form of more structured games and sports ("lead-ups") are introduced at this level. Knowledge of physical fitness, introduced at the K-3 grade level, is developed through specific fitness and conditioning activities integrated throughout the intermediate units. At the 4-5 grade level, students are also introduced to activities that develop outdoor living skills.
Computers

The elementary computer curriculum emphasizes a hands-on application approach for developing computer literacy skills. Children in grades kindergarten through fifth have access to computer technology and instruction in the computer laboratory and classroom on an as-needed basis from the school computer teacher.

Children in second grade have access to computer technology and instruction in the computer laboratory as well as in their classroom. Each second grade classroom is equipped with four computers and a printer, and a large-screen monitor for demonstrations. A large variety of educational software encompassing all curriculum areas and grade levels is available for student and teacher use. Filtered Internet access is available in the classroom, library-media center and computer lab.

Students use the computer as a tool to manipulate data and ideas in various subject areas. For example, word processing has become an integral part of the computer curriculum enabling students to draft, revise, edit, and publish their work in a way never before possible.

The school computer teacher meets with second grade students during the year in the classroom or computer lab as scheduled by the classroom teacher. Instruction includes extension of computer skills, exposure to various reading and literacy software, exploration of patterns in mathematic and drawing programs, and map-creation software.
Library

Second graders' story time continues to encourage the children’s appreciation of literature and their interpretive skills. Students delve more deeply into the organization and location of library materials and the use of the electronic catalog in order to become independent users of the media center. Skills such as alphabetical order, use of the table of contents, and index are introduced. Learning about the Caldecott Medal and the elements of fairy tales are two popular second grade units.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

The Herricks ESL program is a state-mandated program that meets the needs of students who have exposure to a language other than English. Children in the ESL program learn the same curriculum as in the non-ESL classroom (English Language Arts, Social Studies, Math and Science) with an emphasis on language structure and vocabulary. ESL teachers clarify academic language and teach problem solving strategies and other skills. Children are given extra time to process questions, the chance to ask questions and opportunities to discuss class lessons in a small group setting. Techniques such as the use of specialized vocabulary, visuals and pre-teaching are used to help the children understand the content area material. Differentiated instruction is used to help meet each child’s individual needs. The goal of the ESL program is for each child to succeed academically in their non-ESL classrooms. This includes achieving oral proficiency, reading and writing fluency, as well as a good understanding of a variety of reading materials. All children will be tested with the NYSESLAT (New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test) at the end of the school year.
Language Immersion

The Herricks Immersion Model

The specific model we follow at Herricks is one in which half of a student’s day is in English and half in Spanish for grades K-5. This is accomplished by pairing two classes, one with a teacher who teaches literacy skills in English and one with a teacher who teaches selected curriculum areas in Spanish. The students move from one classroom to the other at mid-day.

On the elementary level, math and science are taught in Spanish at respective grade levels of the immersion program. All other subjects are taught in English. In addition to the coverage of the Herricks elementary school curriculum in each subject area, immersion students are expected to acquire an acceptable level of *oral functional fluency* in Spanish. At the elementary level, students acquire a facility with aural/oral language, and it is later on that *formal* grammatical instruction begins. Students in the immersion program will also develop, to a lesser degree, written language skills that are specific to Spanish (e.g. grammar, spelling, syntax, verb tenses, and conjugations, etc.). True proficiency in these areas is targeted in middle and high school follow-up programs.

In addition to the above stated goals, students enrolled in the language immersion program are exposed to different aspects of Latin culture. Themes related to specific Spanish-speaking countries and peoples are woven throughout the curriculum. The ultimate aim is to develop plurilingual global citizens.

Studies show that students who know more than one language also show...

- a greater measure of cognitive flexibility and creative/divergent thinking skills.
- development of more intense listening skills.
- transfer skills in many curriculum areas (vocabulary development in English is especially enhanced by learning a romance language at an early age).
- development of fluency in a world language in a natural setting, with fluency being the by-product of an elementary school education.
- development of a greater degree of cross-cultural acceptance through the understanding that the diverse peoples of the world speak diverse languages, and that learning a world language can bring us into touch with the world around us in a very personal way.
Testing

In order to meet the needs of every child, the Herricks school district uses a variety of formal and informal assessments to guide teachers toward appropriate instruction.

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