



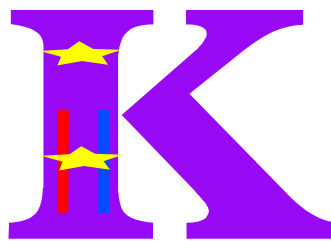
2023/2024

"DOING THE RIGHT THING"~  
FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN

# Curriculum Overview



Kindergarten



## Our Educational Program

The Old Bridge Public School's educational program is driven principally by the district's mission statement:

"... *To empower each* student to learn, to achieve success, and to become a confident, productive member of a pluralistic, global society prepared to face the challenges of the 21st century."

Underpinning this mission is the district's philosophy which asserts that addressing the needs of the "whole" child in a safe and supporting learning environment, fosters self-esteem, and a love for learning which in turn enables all children to achieve at their highest level possible. To this end, our district places a high priority on its award winning character education program for which Old Bridge Public Schools was recognized as a "National School District of Character" for the 2014-15 school year, a testament to our community's emphasis on respect, tolerance and fairness.

In concert with our philosophy is a steadfast commitment to curricular/professional standards, data, and feedback-informed decision-making relative to our educational programs. The district maintains a sharp focus on emerging best practices and current standards such as the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, while at the same time thinking critically about what will work best for our community and its youngsters. In Old Bridge, all curriculum areas are continuously reviewed and revised to insure the highest quality instructional program. Committees of teachers and administrators research the best educational practices, instructional materials and resources, align curriculum objectives to the appropriate state and national standards and the New Jersey Model Curriculum, and develop plans for program implementation and evaluation. An extensive professional learning program provides staff with the necessary training and support to effectively deliver outstanding educational services. All subject and curriculum guides may be found on the Old Bridge District website.

Above all, the district uses the Partnership for 21st Century Learning framework as the foundation of its curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The framework identifies learning and innovation skills which are essential for academic, professional, and personal success in the 21st century, the four Cs: critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration.

Last and perhaps most importantly our district values parents/guardians and community partners as valuable stakeholders who can not only help to inform the district's decision-making; but also actively participate as partners in the most important mission of all: educating and nurturing the academic, social, and emotional growth of our community's children.

## Language Arts Literacy

### Wonders: Grades K-5 (2023)

*Wonders* is the district kindergarten English Language Arts program that is designed to meet the rigor of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. *Wonders* is an evidence-based program grounded in the Science of Reading. It empowers kindergarten students to take an active role in learning and exploration. Kindergarten students will enjoy unparalleled opportunities to express and assess themselves through reading, writing, and speaking. *Wonders* offers a thorough grounding in foundational skills, including phonological/phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, structural analysis, high-frequency words, and fluency. It utilizes explicit, systematic foundational skills instruction which is built from standardized instructional routines and features a variety of multimodal learning opportunities.

Kindergarten students learn many skills, including the understanding of the organization and basic features of print; knowledge of spoken words, syllables,

and sounds; and basic knowledge of one-to-one letter sound correspondence. In *Wonders*, kindergarten students are explicitly taught the sound/symbol relationship of letters and how to blend the sounds of the letters to decode the words. Blending, decoding, and word-building are instructional priorities, as they are foundational and necessary skills that allow students to become proficient readers and writers.

*Wonders* utilizes a Close Reading Routine in which students are taught to read, reread, and integrate with a range of text-dependent questions that challenge the implicit and explicit meaning of each text. In Kindergarten, the Close Reading Routine focuses on identifying important ideas and details, taking notes, and retelling a story. Students are exposed to literature, informational text, and research while expanding their vocabulary.

*Wonders* emphasizes the importance of reading and writing every day, in every grade, to ensure that even our youngest learners have opportunities to observe mentor writing. *Wonders* provides explicit instruction in analytical writing, the writing process, and grammar.

The *Wonders* program utilizes assessment-informed differentiation and a combination of small-and whole-group lessons to ensure that every student has the building blocks needed for literacy success. Individual learning styles, developmental readiness, and cultural differences are recognized and supported through differentiated instruction, enabling all students to experience success.

## Mathematics

*enVisionmath2.0* (2016) is the district core math program. It is a comprehensive, blended digital and print mathematics program designed to help your child achieve the mathematical proficiency levels established by the district, providing the foundation for future math courses. Your child will be actively involved in using both concrete and digital tools to develop deep mathematical understanding through practice and problem-solving in every math lesson. You can expect your child to learn and practice math concepts in a variety of ways, such as:

- Solving problems and explaining mathematical thinking both in writing and online
- Using online resources to build understanding
- Completing homework that promotes computational thinking, fluency, and application of skills
- Engaging in online practice through worked-out examples and supplemental videos

New Jersey Student Learning Standards introduced in Grade K, supported by Mathematical Practices:

- Understand addition as putting together and adding to
- Understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from
- Work with numbers 11-19 for place value
- Describe and compare measureable attributes

- Classify objects and count the number in each category
- Identify and describe shapes
- Analyze, compare, create and compose shapes

### **Response To Intervention (RTI)**

In order to better address the needs of “reaching” learners the district utilizes a Response to Intervention (RTI) program: RTI is a framework designed to provide educational support to students. It is most commonly used to address learning challenges in reading and mathematics but is also applicable to social emotional needs. Initial screening assessments are administered to all students and support plans are developed for any student not meeting grade-level expectations. Interventions may take place within the classroom or outside of it depending on the nature of support required. Our teachers, interventionists, and paraprofessionals provide a variety of data/evidence informed interventions to ensure each student's success. Thus, student progress is regularly monitored to guide decision-making about instruction throughout the school year.

### **Social Studies**

In Kindergarten, students begin to learn the basic concepts of Social Studies. Using their observations in school and their community, students describe how people of different cultural backgrounds interact cooperatively, meet human needs and contribute to the community. Students learn about geographic tools to locate places in the community. They describe how economic choices, tools and products affect people's daily lives, work and leisure activities. The social studies program moves in sequence to expand the child's awareness of self through home, school, neighborhood, community, state, region, country and world.

### **Music & Art**

Music and Art are regarded as essential parts of a child's development. Aside from the inclusion of various Art and Music projects into the academic curriculum, our elementary school art and music teachers work diligently to expose and educate their students to various aspects of music and art production and appreciation. The programs are spiraled in nature so that the information introduced will be revisited and will gradually increase in depth and scope. The students' works are proudly displayed around the schools as well as in the Central Administration building. Many of their works have also been displayed at the Old Bridge Public Library during March, Youth Art Month.

The Music Program at the elementary level provides students an introduction to basic notation and music production on their own precorder. The instrumental program which now begins in fourth grade allows the students to have a broader exposure to music production and appreciation and gives students the opportunity to begin playing woodwind, brass, and string instruments. Here students gain fundamental knowledge of instrumentation and ensemble performance. Together, the art and music programs provide an exceptional foundation for the continued study and enrichment of your children.

### **World Language**

Old Bridge Schools are on the cutting edge of pedagogical theory when it comes to culture exposure and language instruction. The realization that secondary language learning occurs easiest at younger ages spurred the development of our elementary language program. The elementary language instruction program incorporates the instruction of language and culture by exploring global cultures, learning to make comparisons to their own lives and identifying respectful ways to identify the diversity around our globe. Lessons are designed to motivate students to continue language learning as they progress into higher levels of middle and high school. Lessons are designed with hands-on, engaging, authentic units of study using music and relevant technology and media to

enrich students' experiences. Coupled with continuous review, the cultural and linguistic benefits of world language are exceptional. In today's multicultural world, it is essential that students be exposed to multiple languages. Early world language study has been linked to benefits in later educational accomplishments and higher test scores. We are proud and pleased to offer language instruction in grades K-5, and encourage the continuation of multiple language study throughout our programs in middle and high school.

### **Science**

The elementary school grade-level curricula are aligned to the approved New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) that were adopted and implemented in September, 2021. The three components of the NJSLS are disciplinary core ideas, scientific and engineering practices, and cross-cutting concepts.

Science is a human activity through which problems dealing with natural phenomena can be identified and defined, followed by having potential courses of action proposed and tested before determining a final solution. Science instruction incorporates a format of differentiated learning strategies and instructional activities with an emphasis on student-centered hands-on opportunities. Scientific investigatory practices such as measurement, observation, data collection, and analysis of results, are infused in the instructional process to create different pathways that address the needs of diverse learners. The process of using the scientific method helps students to develop and hone investigation skills, to thus better understand their surroundings and to make practical connections that apply content material and experiences to real world situations.

Recognizing the globalization of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners, science education must lay the foundation for developing scientific literacy to allow our students to successfully participate in a world increasingly shaped by science and technology. Thus, there are continual cross-curricula efforts in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to develop and refine skills such as critical thinking, complex problem solving, operations and systems analysis, and both deductive and inductive reasoning. New Jersey, in its push for college and career readiness, has identified such knowledge and skills as those deemed essential for future personal and professional success.

### **Physical Education**

A kindergarten student in Old Bridge will experience, in a safe and fun environment, their first formal Physical Education program. Students will explore various activities that will foster individual development of fundamental motor skills at their own pace. The program is divided into five categories: Fitness, Individual Activities, Cooperative Activities, Creative Movement and Rhythms. Each unit progresses through developmentally specific goals and objectives, enabling students to begin their journey of lifetime fitness.

### **Health**

The kindergarten health curriculum lays the foundation for the development of concepts and skills necessary to lead a healthy and active lifestyle. Students will gain knowledge and develop an understanding of their personal, physical, social and emotional health while developing leadership skills that contribute to character development.

### **Technology**

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Technology challenge students at all grade levels to master higher-order thinking skills as well as to become responsible digital citizens of our global society. Old Bridge Township Public Schools offers robust technology training at all grade levels. Classroom teachers integrate technology across all subject areas in their own classrooms in addition to computer lab instruction by a technology teacher throughout the year as part of the Related Arts cycle.

In addition to New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Technology, technology instruction also supports New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers. These college and workplace readiness skills include:

- Creativity and innovation
- Communication and collaboration
- Conducting research and using information
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Using technology in all forms effectively and productively

Technology teachers and classroom teachers partner together to integrate technology into daily instruction.

Students are further encouraged to practice their technology skills at home or at the public library. Kindergarten and Grade 1 students should know operational keys (space bar, shift, delete, enter, backspace) as well as be able to identify numbers and letters. They should also be able to type their own name using the keyboard and enter simple text.

Family members can also assist with these efforts at home by helping Kindergarten and Grade 1 students responsibly visit “kid-friendly” websites. A listing of additional websites and resources are available from the technology teachers.