Currey Ingram Academy
Lower School

Primary - K
CURRICULUM GUIDE

Updated August 2017
CURRICULUM INTRODUCTION

All Currey Ingram Academy students benefit from instruction that is evidence-based and supports a wide range of learning differences. Instruction at Currey Ingram is based on each student’s previous knowledge and skill development, as well as his/her ability to retrieve from memory the information needed to move from the initial acquisition of a skill to more advanced levels of understanding.

Students receive instruction that includes direct teaching of skills, modeling, corrective feedback, prompting and positive reinforcement within a highly structured curriculum framework. In addition, students learn and practice strategies that help them to gain more independence in their learning. Teachers in the Lower School understand that the pace of learning varies among students. Instruction is adapted based on the stage of learning at which a student is working (see image below). In the acquisition stage, students are developing conceptual understanding of the skill and learning to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry Level</th>
<th>Acquisition</th>
<th>Proficiency</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
<th>Generalization</th>
<th>Adaption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>Proficiency</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Generalization</td>
<td>Adaption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Maintenanc</td>
<td>Generalization</td>
<td>Adaption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **High rate and accuracy**
- **Transfer to new settings or responses**
- **Capitalize on knowledge**

**AIM**

- **Accuracy (90%-100%)**
- **Fluency (desired rate)**
- **Retention**
- **Expansion**
- **Extension**


perform the skill accurately. As the student progresses to the proficiency stage, the student is performing the skill both accurately and automatically. In the maintenance stage, direct instruction of the skill is faded and the goal is for students to continue to perform the skill with a high level of accuracy and speed. In the generalization and adaption stages, students are performing the skill in different contexts and using the skill to complete higher-level, problem-solving tasks.

As a result of ongoing curriculum assessment, formal testing and teacher classroom observations, administrators and teachers select evidence-based materials and programs to optimize instruction and capitalize on student strengths. Teachers, in consultation with administrators and parents, develop an Individualized Learning Plan for each child based on an assessment profile, teacher observation and

---

2

Primary - K Curriculum Guide
curriculum expectations. This plan outlines programs, instructional strategies, accommodations, adaptations and curricular modifications designed for student success.

Many skills and concepts in our curriculum are taught over a period of years using progressively challenging texts and increased expectations for student performance. Students receive direct instruction with a heavy multisensory component that includes modeling, corrective feedback and positive reinforcement within a highly structured curriculum. This instruction includes teaching, modeling and practicing strategies that help students to gain more independence in their learning.

These curriculum guides are developed by a committee of teachers and administrators with experience in teaching and designing programs for students with learning differences. The curriculum is dynamic and will be changed and revised based on current research as well as teacher and administrator observations of the students and their learning needs.

The documents in the curriculum guides include course descriptions and learning goals. In addition, the curriculum guides describe instructional materials, educational programs and support services. Curriculum maps can be used in conjunction with these curriculum guides and contain a more detailed outline of the skills targeted at each grade level in a variety of academic and enrichment areas.

ACADEMIC COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND GOALS

Language Arts
Students will independently apply reading, writing, speaking and listening skills at a developmentally-appropriate level across curriculum areas. As students progress through the Lower School, they learn to apply these skills through the introduction of increasingly more challenging texts, concepts, instructional activities and school experiences. Strategies are directly taught that will allow students to decode words, determine word meanings, understand story text and write cohesive stories, paragraphs and essays. Student goals for language arts are as follows:

Reading - Students will develop the following skills in the areas of phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and spelling:

• Develop a foundation for learning to read by building phonological awareness skills
• Develop visual discrimination skills in preparation for decoding increasingly difficult words
• Develop skills blending and segmenting sounds necessary for decoding
• Learn sounds used in language by reproducing the sounds represented by individual letters and letter combinations
• Use a variety of reading strategies including picture and context clues, phonetic rules and exceptions, word recognition, and rhyming words
• Build vocabulary utilizing sight words, phonetic and structural analysis, and context
• Manipulate letters to form words in preparation for spelling
• Connect prior knowledge and personal experiences to text
• Use comprehension strategies to enhance understanding, relate ideas, organize information, make predictions, and distinguish fact from fantasy during the reading process
• Make connections to reading as both a source of information as well as pleasure
Writing - Students will develop the following structural and creative skills necessary to produce written language that can be read and interpreted by various audiences:

- View writing as a critical means of communicating ideas
- Use elements of the writing process
- Begin to recognize elements of mechanics
- Use pictures, letter strings and inventive spelling to communicate thoughts and ideas
- Use manuscript handwriting for appropriate tasks
- Practice letter formation of manuscript letters to support orthographic coding

Handwriting - Students will strengthen their fine motor integration skill needed for proficient handwriting development as well as acquire legible manuscript needed for effective written expression.

- Engage in fine motor strengthening tasks that support efficient pencil grasp and writing pressure development
- Engage in fine motor integration tasks that support handwriting development
- Trace, form and copy prewriting shapes with accurate closure, directionality, and sequencing
- Acquire legible manuscript, demonstrated through the ability to copy letters with accurate formation and to construct letters in a variety of media
- Acquire legible numeral writing, demonstrated through the ability to write from memory numerals one to ten with correct directionality and formation
- Write first and last name from memory with accurate capitalization
- Improve alphabet knowledge and awareness
- Copy cvc words onto one-inch, lined paper or smaller

Speaking - Students will develop the following skills to express ideas clearly and effectively in a variety of settings:

- Communicate effectively during class discussions, peer interactions and group presentations
- Improve speaking skills through modeling the good speech patterns of others
- Formulate, organize and express ideas in planned oral presentations
- Use the five senses for oral description
- Communicate thoughts, feelings and information orally
- Use verbal and nonverbal language and vocabulary pertinent to the purpose, meaning and audience
- Use visual aids as support for oral presentations
- Retell simple stories incorporating paraphrasing and sequencing skills
- Use self-regulation strategies to manage apprehension related to oral communication
- Use appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication techniques to establish and maintain oral communication with an audience
- Use oral language to resolve conflict

Listening - Students will develop the following active listening skills to analyze and evaluate spoken language:

- Perform a task by following simple oral directions
- Listen appropriately as others are speaking
- Answer and ask questions after listening to an oral selection or presentation
- Connect personal experiences to information and experiences shared by others
• Respond with comments that demonstrate understanding
• Develop techniques for managing disruptions and distractions that interfere with active listening
• Demonstrate good audience behavior during assemblies, movies and presentations
• Develop an awareness of nonverbal communication and body language

Mathematics
In kindergarten, student learning focuses on solving problems involving number sense, number theory, estimation, measurement, money, computation, patterns, spatial sense, and functions. Through a hands-on instructional approach, students recognize, represent and model mathematical skills and concepts. Students learn to develop and apply mathematical concepts that allow them to move through the concrete, semi-concrete, semi-abstract and abstract stages of instruction. As students progress through the Lower School, they learn to apply these skills through the introduction of more challenging problems and learning experiences. Student goals are as follows:

• Count sets of objects individually and in groups*
• Represent whole numbers concretely, pictorially and symbolically* (i.e., form legible numeral from 0 to 100)
• Demonstrate an understanding of the relative magnitude of numbers
• Demonstrate an understanding of whole numbers by relating counting, grouping and place value
• Apply estimation strategies when appropriate
• Demonstrate an understanding of standard and nonstandard units of length, capacity, weight, time, money and temperature
• Demonstrate thinking strategies for basic number facts and select and use appropriate computational operations and procedures
• Sort and classify objects by common attributes*
• Sort numbers into different classes, such as even and odd
• Collect data by observing, measuring, surveying and counting
• Identify and classify solid and plane figures by attributes such as shape, size, symmetry, edges, corners and faces*
• Demonstrate the meaning of operations by modeling and discussing a wide variety of problems
• Relate the mathematical language and symbolism of operations to problem situations and real life experiences

*Areas of emphasis for Kindergarten as recommended by the National Council of Teacher of Mathematics (NCTM) standards

Social Studies
Kindergarten social studies provides students with the opportunity to learn about themselves and their immediate surroundings through the study of communities. As students study families, school and communities, they are introduced to the basic concepts of government, economics and history.

Students are engaged in activities that teach them how to live, work, play and learn together; make and keep friends; and become productive and helpful community members. Through interactive hands-on experiences, students apply communication skills and develop the social skills necessary to be successful in all community settings. Student goals for social studies are as follows:

• Describe aspects of families
• Identify ways and provide examples of how people in families and schools work together
• Recognize the need for rules/laws
• Compare and contrast different types of communities
• Identify special celebrations and holidays as ways to remember and honor events and people
• Identify different jobs and the responsibilities of each
• Identify the difference between needs and wants
• Identify basic needs for life
• Understand that people earn money to buy things
• Describe seasonal weather changes
• Describe characteristics of basic landforms
• Use simple maps
• Identify maps and globes as different representations of the earth
• Recognize symbols of the U.S.A.
• Identify Native Americans as first people to live in North America
• Describe contributions of some scientists and inventors
• Identify similarities and differences among people
• Identify and describe family customs

Science
In kindergarten, students develop an awareness of the world around them as they begin the study of earth, life, physical and health science. Through direct instruction, structured hands-on activities and interactive videos, students use their senses to observe the environment. Following each science activity, students use science terms as they ask questions and describe their observations. Student goals are as follows:

• Learn through the use of basic scientific inquiry
• Use senses to observe the environment
• Communicate what is observed and ask questions about these observations
• Identify how living things are different from nonliving things
• Identify how plants and animals differ
• Recognize life cycles
• Identify the parts of plants and animals
• Identify the environments in which plants and animals live
• Tell about the Earth’s land, water and weather
• Recognize the properties of the sun, moon and stars
• Discuss ways to care for the earth
• Describe and utilizes the properties of matter
• View, describe and simulate the motion of objects
• Observe and apply the concept of magnetism
• Recognize that human bodies have needs
• Identify the major body structures
• Recognize the importance of sleep, exercise and proper nutrition
• Identify major food types and from where they come

In the Discovery Lab, students participate in a weekly hands-on experience designed to raise interest and enhance understanding of the science curriculum. It is the goal of these sessions to let students become scientists by involving them in the process of scientific inquiry. Active participation through observing, questioning and experimenting will be modeled and encouraged to build mastery of science process skills. Each activity is directly related to the skills and concepts included in the science units taught in the classroom. Student goals are as follows:
• Make observations
• Communicate observations
• Learn to classify
• Practice measurement and the use of numbers
• Construct models to understand scientific concepts
• Make inferences and predictions from their observations
• Identify and control variables in an experiment
• Interpret data, develop operational definitions and form a hypothesis
• Design investigations and carry out experiments
• Develop a positive attitude toward science

**Strategy Instruction and Thinking Maps®**

In addition to explicit and direct instructional techniques, Lower School teachers frequently employ “strategy instruction” for students who struggle to learn and apply new concepts and skills. A strategy is a tool or method that helps students learn a skill or accomplish a difficult task. As reported by researcher Lee Swanson at the University of California, this combined approach of direct explicit instruction and strategy instruction has a significant impact on student performance. These techniques are threaded throughout the curriculum and provide the foundation for independent learning and self-advocacy.

Strategies typically taught and implemented in the Lower School include 1) cues, which can be visual or verbal prompts to help maintain attention to a task or aid in learning something new; 2) mnemonic devices, such as the one developed by Drs. Harris and Graham to teach the writing process (POW: Pick my idea, Organize my notes, Write and say more); 3) self-regulation strategies that are used in learning activities, as well as to help a student learn to regulate his/her emotions; and 4) many other metacognitive and memory strategies, such as making associations, chunking information, visualization and verbalization.

Thinking Maps® are used as a way to enhance student learning while using our own curriculum and programs. The Thinking Maps program introduces eight specific graphic organizers based on how the brain processes information. Each visual is associated with a certain cognitive activity. The following list identifies each graphic organizer from the Thinking Maps program:

• Circle Map: Brainstorming or Defining in Context
• Bubble Map: Describing
• Double Bubble Map: Comparing and Contrasting
• Tree Map: Classifying
• Brace Map: Whole-Part Relationship
• Flow Map: Sequencing
• Multi-Flow Map: Cause and Effect
• Bridge Map: Analogies

These visuals can be used across all grade levels and curriculum areas. They are meant to be learned as a set of tools that encourage life-long learning. These visuals allow for abstract thought to be organized in a concrete format.
ENRICHMENT COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND GOALS

Art
The art program focuses on the major concepts, methods, techniques and materials used in the world of art. Students will develop an understanding of what art is and why it is important to our culture and heritage. The art program is integrated with other academic subjects. Students participate in activities including drawing, printing, painting, sculpting and mixed media. Students use skills and techniques to develop an individual collection of creative work. Student goals are as follows:

• Learn and apply the proper care and use of materials
• Understand and speak the language of art
• Develop fluent shape and color recognition
• Use the different elements of art and apply them in their own work
• Create meaningful, personal art
• Create art from observation, memory and imagination

Technology
Currey Ingram Academy Lower School students participate in technology and digital projects that are integrated within the instructional day. Each Lower School student is assigned an iPad to use throughout the school year. Students acquire skills in basic technology knowledge and keyboarding. The program, Keyboarding Without Tears, is used in Grades 2-4 to introduce keyboarding skills and promote keyboarding fluency. Students use technology in their ongoing academic projects. Classroom work integrates technology skills through the use of applications to supplement the regular classroom instruction (e.g., Pages for word processing, Nearpod for instructional presentations). Student goals are as follows:

• Understand teacher directions using iPad terms and icons
• Develop skills for proper use and care of iPads
• Develop basic skills in application use
• Learn how to locate, label and save a document and locate and quit an application
• Know where letter keys are on a keyboard
• Understand the safety issues related to technology
• Apply technology to enhance learning, increase productivity and promote creativity

Creative Drama
Creative drama is designed to allow students to explore their creativity while developing their natural expressive capabilities and effective communication skills through puppet theatre, story dramatization, narrative pantomime, improvisation, characterization, movement and more. Students create and perform various informal and formal presentations throughout the year. Student goals are as follows:

• Use imagination in guided dramatic play
• Develop skills of memory and sensory recall
• Develop communication and listening skills
• Expand descriptive language through dramatic activities
• Use literature to create dramatic activities
• Develop techniques to focus and sustain attention in dramatic activities
• Explore problem solving and risk taking in a dramatic context
• Use voice and movement to communicate thoughts, feelings and roles from life, literature and history
• Explore different types of social interaction through various characters and environments
• Develop creative expression and improve gross and fine motor coordination through puppetry
• Participate in improvised dramatic activities, including various informal and formal presentations
• Recognize technical theatre elements used in dramatic activities
• Explore dramatic works from different cultures to increase cultural understanding
• Develop an awareness of theatre history

Library
Library classes are designed to develop enthusiastic learners who are effective users of information, as well as to instill a lifelong love of reading in each child. Students develop appropriate grade level skills to facilitate information access to both print and electronic sources, build understanding and create and share new ideas with others. The library media classes for each grade level address four broad standards that are derived from the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Standards for the 21st-Century Learner. Learners use skills, resources and tools to:

1. Inquire, think critically and gain knowledge
2. Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge
3. Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society
4. Pursue personal and aesthetic growth

Underlying each of these standards is the belief that:
Reading is a foundational skill for learning, personal growth and enjoyment. The degree to which students can read and understand text in all formats (e.g., picture, video, print) and all contexts is a key indicator of success in school and in life (AASL Standards). Student goals are as follows:

• Participate in storytelling activities, such as a group retelling of a story
• Begin learning about individual authors, illustrators and award-winning media (e.g., Caldecott award books)
• View and listen to a variety of stories, poems, pictures and streaming media representing world cultures, and relate these cultures to own life, home and town
• Explore folk and fairy tales through viewing dramatic presentations and other media
• Interpret and create stories through pictures
• Enjoy and learn rhymes and poems
• View and engage in stories in a variety of non-print formats
• Learn responsible use of library resources
• Learn the concept of sharing of library resources
• Identify information providers (e.g., librarians, assistant librarian)
• Learn the areas of the library
• Begin to select and check out books
Music
Music helps students develop an appreciation of various styles and genres of music through positive classroom experiences and performances. Students are asked to contribute, cooperate and collaborate with others in a variety of musical settings, such as solo and group singing.

Students are introduced to musical concepts and symbols to help them develop the basic skills required for an understanding of music theory. They will explore many musical possibilities and become more confident and develop a healthier well-being. Student goals are as follows:

- Sing a varied repertoire of music alone and with others
- Develop skill in singing repetitive, narrow-range and rhythmically simple songs
- Sing repetitive, linguistically simple songs from memory
- Develop skill in making steady beats, long and short sounds, and high and low pitches
- Vocally improvise simple song fragments
- Learn to interpret iconic rhythmic and melodic notation
- Analyze, describe and recognize different styles and genres of music
- Recognize same and different rhythmic and melodic patterns
- Experience the relationship between music and dance through movement to rhythms and melodies
- Listen and sing songs that represent genres and styles from diverse cultures
- Use folk songs and games to relate music with geography, history and culture
- Identify individuals and/or groups that impacted music development and broader society

Physical Education
The physical education program allows students to explore movement and space. They develop skills in movement and coordination by watching, listening, experimenting and expressing themselves in various situations. Student goals are as follows:

- Explore self and general space and understand how it relates to a safe environment
- Travel using correct body and spatial awareness
- Explore creative movements
- Identify directions and utilize directional terms in various movements
- Explore and identify movement using various levels and pathways
- Demonstrate beginning ways to move using physical education equipment
- Imitate and create rhythmical patterns and dance sequences
- Engage in sustained rhythmical patterns that result in an increased heart rate
- Follow directions with few reminders
Character Education Program

Character education is an essential part of school life in the Lower School. Character education is addressed through a developmentally-appropriate, comprehensive model for character development that incorporates moral knowing, feeling and action. The faculty, staff, administrators and parents work collaboratively to infuse character virtues into all components of the curriculum and school programs. Character virtues are represented through ten core character traits. Each trait is defined in terms of behaviors that are modeled, taught, expected, celebrated and continually practiced in the school, home and community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Character Trait</th>
<th>Description of Trait</th>
<th>Social Skill of the Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>A sense of dignity, respect and value for self, others, family and community</td>
<td>Welcoming new students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Showing consideration for self, others and the environment</td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Being responsible for your own behavior</td>
<td>Greeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>Being a responsible, caring person in your school and community</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Showing kindness, compassion, friendship and generosity</td>
<td>Getting along with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Work Ethic</td>
<td>Showing dedication and commitment to completing work and tasks successfully</td>
<td>Getting along with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Being truthful and honest in all you do</td>
<td>Kindness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Collaborating to achieve a common goal</td>
<td>Playing fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Perseverance</td>
<td>Continuing to stay focused in the midst of difficulties</td>
<td>Handling disappointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Self-Advocacy</td>
<td>Taking action to celebrate your strengths and seek support to accommodate your unique learning style</td>
<td>Handling peer pressure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Character language is embedded in instruction, discussions and positive behavior support. Daily opportunities are provided for students to problem solve and make decisions, examine choices and consequences, develop perspective taking skills, work cooperatively, support others and practice positive health habits. All students have the opportunity to participate in character-related activities through school-wide service activities planned and promoted by the Lower School faculty and Student Council. The goal is to provide every student with a school culture that will help them to grow into people of strong character.

Key Elements of Character Education
It cannot be assumed that language, concepts, behaviors and skills of good character are only absorbed through daily activities in the home or at school. The teaching of character values must be 

language-based Curriculum - Teachers adjust character education lessons to individual teaching and learning styles while teaching the character language and concepts. Teachers plan specific activities to reinforce the character traits and also focus student attention on the basic language that expresses core concepts and link the words to explicit behavior.

Classroom Lessons - The school counselor introduces the Character Trait of the Month and the Social Skill of the Month in classroom lessons at the beginning of each month. Classroom teachers then spend time modeling, discussing, practicing and celebrating the character traits and social skills throughout the school day.

Visual Reinforcement - The character mascot, “MP” (for “Mustang Pride”), is the character mascot who represents the “know the good (head), love the good (heart), and do the good (hands) whole-child” model for character development at Currey Ingram Lower School. MP is displayed on all banners and communication about character education. In addition, banners, bulletin boards, character trait posters, and the “Caught in the Act” board all remind members of the school community of these traits and social skills.

Active Student Involvement - Students are provided opportunities throughout the year to share these character traits with the broader school community. All students in the Lower School have the opportunity to lead the morning announcements. The monthly character trait and social skill are defined during the morning students by the student with the facilitation support of the school counselor. Finally, a number of awards (e.g., Golden Spoon, Caught in the Acts, Homework Awards, Golden Hanger) and presentations (e.g., character trait presentations at Success Assemblies) further support the character traits.

Parent Participation – The Lower School enriches its character education program by keeping parents informed of the “character trait of the month” and “social skill of the month” through the weekly newsletter, Success Assemblies, banners and posters.

Digital Citizenship
As technology becomes more integrated into daily activities and students have more opportunity to learn through this medium, it is critical that students learn to behave safely and participate responsibly
in the digital world. According to Common Sense Media, digital citizenship is the ability “to think critically about the ethical opportunities and challenges of the digital world and make safe, responsible and respectful choices.”

Digital citizenship is taught in connection with the Lower School Character Education program. The LibTech team supports Lower School staff members to link developmentally-appropriate examples of positive digital actions to the character trait discussed each month. For example, when the trait of honesty is discussed in February, teachers discuss the importance of a student only using the digital device (computer/iPad) assigned to him or her and to always give credit to all sources.

School Counseling
The school counselor partners with administrators, teachers, staff, parents and the community to provide a comprehensive and developmental school counseling program. The counselor supports students, parents, school staff and the community through prevention and responsive services. Prevention services include education, skill practice, and reinforcement of positive behaviors. Responsive services are designed to meet the immediate and future needs of the students, families and community at Currey Ingram. The Lower School Counseling Program is based on recommendations from The American School Counselor Association National Model for School Counseling Programs and the Tennessee Standards for School Counseling.

The Currey Ingram Academy Lower School Counseling Program seeks to help students to make healthy life choices and establish positive relationships. School, family and community values are reflected through these relationships. Four main character areas frame the curriculum for the counseling curriculum and mission: intellectual (thinking), emotional (feeling), social (interacting), and spiritual (searching for meaning).

Strategies to promote and develop social competencies are a vital component of the Lower School curriculum. Throughout the day, teachers, administrators, the counselor and staff are providing instructional, supportive and non-judgmental interventions to help students develop social competence. The school counselor works with the professional educators in the Lower School to collaborate on character education teaching, practice and development for all students.

Prevention Services
Classroom Program – The curriculum used in the Lower School classroom program consists of structured, developmentally-appropriate lessons taught in the classroom and in collaboration with teachers. The classroom lessons emphasize prevention-based activities designed to help students achieve the knowledge and skills to understand themselves, accept and interact with others in a positive way, cope with the issues of growing into emotionally healthy individuals, and become individuals of “good character.” The school counselor uses the following prevention-based materials:
• Second Step is a nationally-acclaimed curriculum designed to increase the student’s level of social competence and emotional intelligence.
• The Talking About Touching Program focuses on teaching children basic skills that will help them keep safe from dangerous or abusive situations.
• Developing social competencies (It’s So Much Work To Be Your Friend, Lavoie, 2005) is a vital component of the Lower School curriculum. Throughout the day, teachers, administrators, counselor and staff provide instructional, supportive and non-judgmental
interventions to help students develop social competence. Social competencies may also be addressed in speech-language and tutorial groups.

**Responsive Services**

- **Groups**: Developmental and problem-solving groups are formed as needed to help students build skills to cope or resolve problems and issues that may interfere with learning. Groups may relate to family changes such as divorce, remarriage, death, individual/family/school crisis intervention, communication, problem solving, conflict resolution, peer relationships, coping strategies and academic support.
- **Individual counseling**: The immediate needs of children affected by personal issues and crises that interfere with academic and social development at school are addressed through short-term counseling sessions. Suggestions may be made to parents for resources outside the school setting if long-term counseling is needed.
- **Consultation**: The school counselor is available to consult with parents, teachers and other educators as needed.
- **Referrals**: Referral can be provided to other support services or community resources through the counseling department.

Student goals are as follows:

- Acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning
- Understand how character traits shape positive life choices
- Demonstrate, practice, and express safety and survival skills
- Acquire knowledge of positive social and friendship skills
- Express personal feelings and recognize feelings of others

**Speech/Language Services**

The development of speech-language skills is an important component of each student's academic success. Thus, if it is determined that a student needs speech and/or language services to support a child’s learning, these services are provided directly by a speech-language pathologist (SLP) or indirectly through SLP consultations with teachers and parents. To determine a student’s target area (or areas), Currey Ingram SLPs study previous evaluations and obtain input from teachers and parents. Sessions vary in frequency and duration according to each student’s needs. Areas addressed may include auditory comprehension and processing, articulation, voice/intonation, and a variety of skills associated with verbal language, such as word retrieval, vocabulary or grammar/sentence structure. Intervention focuses not only on improving the student’s speech-language skills but also on teaching strategies to help him or her be more successful in the classroom.

In addition to the typical speech/language services listed above, pragmatic language therapy is a large part of the intervention provided not only by the speech-language pathologists but also faculty and staff. Pragmatics involve the social use of language. Children with weak pragmatic skills are offered support in the classroom setting as well as in small therapeutic groups and during social times (e.g., lunch). Activities target the appropriate use of pragmatic skills, including the following: initiating and maintaining topics of conversation, turn-taking during conversation, demonstrating behaviors considered polite, appropriately using body language, correctly interpreting the body language of others, and understanding how verbal messages can change depending on how they are used. Students will also develop strategies to help them self-regulate their social behaviors.
Tutorials and Small-Group Instruction
Additional small-group instruction may be provided to students throughout the week. Tutorials or other small-group instructional activities may focus on pragmatic language, receptive and/or expressive language, math, written language, enrichment activities for content areas, social skills, social problem solving, reading comprehension, reading fluency, vocabulary development, or other identified areas of need.

Occupational Therapy Services
Currey Ingram Academy employs a full-time occupational therapist (OT) in the Lower School. The Lower School OT implements integrative group services within each Lower School homeroom. Occupational therapy consultation is provided to all Lower School faculty regarding student needs. Students may receive additional support from the OT in the areas of assessment (e.g., fine motor, gross motor and visual-motor integration) and additional group OT intervention.

Occupational therapy services are concentrated within the kindergarten and first-grade curricula to help develop prewriting, handwriting, fine motor and visual-motor integration skills during the early years of development. Occupational therapy intervention for all grades is provided within the classroom to allow for optimal communication and coordination between the OT and classroom teacher. Group OT intervention allows for addressing students’ needs in an inclusive and dynamic setting. The Lower School OT will facilitate communication between any private OTs and classroom teachers to further assist in meeting the needs of students.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The instructional programs used with Currey Ingram students are selected based on the 1) needs and learning characteristics of the student, 2) the program’s developmentally appropriate content, 3) systematic sequence of skill and concepts, 4) continuous reinforcement and repetition, and 5) strategies for ongoing assessment. All programs use a direct instructional approach with a strong multisensory component. The skills and concepts presented in these programs are based on Currey Ingram’s curriculum scope and sequence and are applied across the curriculum.

The language arts and math programs described in this section are major programs that have been adopted for classroom instruction at Currey Ingram Academy. Based on formal and informal student evaluations, teaching teams in consultation with administrators recommend programs that address each student’s individual needs and developmental levels.

Language Arts: Reading, Spelling and Written Expression
Language arts instruction in the Lower School is comprised of enrichment, remediation, explicit instruction, and appropriate support. All students are taught directly and explicitly by teachers who are trained in evidence-based teaching methods and curricular programs. Students are taught the critical early reading skills (e.g., phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency) that will help them to become proficient readers. In addition, children receive instruction in reading comprehension strategies and vocabulary building skills to help them find meaning in what they read.
Lower School faculty and staff match each student with the language arts program that best suits his or her learning profile and needs. Language arts group placements are subject to change depending on a child’s individual needs and progress.

The following programs are considered for Lower School students:

**Open Court/Imagine It!** – This evidence-based program effectively combines the teaching of comprehension skills and strategies with explicit phonics instruction as well as written language activities. Students engage in the reading of both decodable text and quality literature.

**Seeing Stars** - The *Seeing Stars* program helps students develop the ability to visualize the sounds and letters in words. Instruction in this skill, known as symbol imagery, is integrated with phonemic awareness, word attack, word recognition, and contextual reading instruction to develop reading fluency. Students are taught single sounds, which are then systematically integrated into simple and complex syllables. Instruction progresses to learning prefixes and suffixes and applying these skills in the context of multisyllable words.

**Sounds Sensible®** - *Sounds Sensible*, the precursor to the *S.P.I.R.E.* curriculum, provides hands-on, multisensory instruction in the areas of phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, letter-sound correspondences and handwriting. Skills are presented in a structured and systematic format and incorporates five activities each day: listening, rhyming, segmentation, phoneme-grapheme relationships and dictation. This program uses Orton-Gillingham principles to build foundational reading skills. Throughout the program, students are introduced to 20 consonant sounds and the short vowel a.

**S.P.I.R.E.®** – *S.P.I.R.E.* is a comprehensive, multisensory systematic reading program that is based on Orton-Gillingham methodologies. Established on the most recent research in reading and language arts, *S.P.I.R.E.* incorporates a direct, systematic, sequential approach to teaching reading. Beginning with *Sounds Sensible*, students learn basic sound to symbol associations. Within the eight levels of instruction, students learn explicit rules and letter patterns to read and spell words in the English language. In addition, at levels seven and eight, students learn morphological patterns (i.e., prefixes and suffixes, classical roots). Students are placed in a level based on an individually-administered assessment. Each *S.P.I.R.E.* lesson includes instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, spelling and comprehension.

The following supplemental language arts programs are used with students who need additional assistance in a particular area of reading or spelling:

**Assured Readiness for Learning (ARL)** - The *Assured Readiness for Learning Program* is both remedial and developmental in scope. It responds to the need in children to touch, smell, taste and compare as much of their environment as possible. As learning is reinforced, children gain increasing control over themselves, their physical world and their own thinking. Language development, perceptual ability, the organization of information-processing systems, and an integration of the motor, visual and auditory channels are stimulated and developed to the degree necessary that each child may benefit from instruction. The language of instruction contained in this program enables children to attend to detail in their environment and acquire the organizational skills necessary for academic success.
Basic Spelling Vocabulary List - Created by three prominent researchers in the field of education (Graham, Harris & Loynachan), this list contains 850 words, organized by grade level, that account for 80 percent of the words children use in their writing. Therefore, if students can spell these words correctly, their written work will be more legible. Whereas other spelling words are taught by their spelling patterns rather than in a list format, these words are taught using the pre-test/post-test method. Multisensory strategies and games also provide frequent exposure to and practice of these words.

Braidy the StoryBraid™ – This child-sized puppet (or braid for older students) is used to support narrative development in students. Braidy helps foster oral language development to enhance students' listening and reading comprehension, writing, critical thinking and social-emotional growth. Braidy assists students as they sequence the parts of a story and develop their use of special language features within the stories.

Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing (LiPS) – This program addresses the development of phonemic awareness as a base for accurate reading and spelling. Students gain awareness of their mouth actions, which can increase reading and spelling fluency.

Story Grammar Marker® – Story Grammar Marker assists students in telling, retelling, writing and comprehending stories. Special icons give students a visual, kinesthetic tool to help them with sequencing events and answering the questions Who, What, When, Where and Why while they tell a story. Additionally, students delve into the characters’ motivations, feelings and plans to sequence the components of a story and add age-appropriate language features in order to share their ideas.

Visualizing/Verbalizing (V/V) – This supplemental program applies concept imagery to reading comprehension, oral language, listening comprehension, following directions, higher-order thinking skills, expressive language, and writing. The program utilizes specific steps to develop concept imagery (i.e., the ability to image a gestalt or whole).

The following writing programs and strategies are used to improve written expression:

Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) – SRSD is an instructional intervention developed by Drs. Karen Harris and Steve Graham at Arizona State. It has a strong research base for teaching students to write. Its purpose is to help students learn and internalize strategies used by skilled writers. As students gain the ability to regulate their learning through goal setting, self-monitoring and evaluation, they increase their content knowledge and motivation. Through mnemonics, students learn the parts of good stories and essays in a variety of writing genres. These methods help students improve both in their knowledge of the writing process and the overall quality of their work.

Step Up to Writing – This program’s objective is to teach students to write clear, organized compositions using the writing process. It employs visuals (e.g., color-coding, icons and graphic organizers) to teach basic writing skills, beginning with single sentences and progressing to multi-paragraph compositions. This program complements the SRSD approach to writing instruction, particularly in the area of teaching different writing genres. It also offers methods for learning to express one’s self orally and improving reading comprehension through writing.
Mathematics
The mathematics curriculum in the Lower School incorporates the stages of learning to ensure that each student reaches an advanced level of understanding. Programs of instruction are grounded in concept development and are selected based on the learning characteristics of the student as well as the mathematics curriculum. For the student who struggles with mathematics, skills are taught sequentially and progress through concrete, semi-concrete, semi-abstract and abstract levels of instruction. At the concrete level, students demonstrate understanding by using tangible materials and objects. Next, students move to the semi-concrete stage, where they pair the concrete concepts they learned with color-coding. Then, students learn to use written symbols to demonstrate understanding. Other students who may not struggle may be able to demonstrate understanding at a much faster rate with less time at the concrete and semi-concrete levels of instruction. For some students, assessments are modified to evaluate the level of knowledge students hold at the concrete, representational and abstract levels of instruction.

Lower School faculty and staff match each student with the math program that best suits his or her learning profile and needs. Math group placements are subject to change depending on a child’s individual needs and progress. The following mathematics programs may be used in the Lower School:

* **Everyday Math** – When students demonstrate independence in their individual math skills, *Everyday Math* helps deepen understanding of mathematical concepts through cooperative learning and small group work. It also allows students to explore data gathering and analysis, probability, geometry and algebra.

* **Saxon Mathematics** – When students benefit from skills presented systematically and incrementally with sufficient time for practice, the Saxon program is selected. Two important aspects of *Saxon Math* are the incremental development of math concepts and continuous, spiraled practice. New concepts are divided into small, easily understood pieces that are taught over several lessons.

* **Making Math Real** – *Making Math Real* can be used in conjunction with one of the regular math programs or as a specific tutorial. It is an incremental, hands-on and manipulative-based program that covers basic math processes. *Making Math Real* addresses the needs of learners by breaking down the basic math content into its concrete elements as it creates story-based visual imagery by linking manipulatives with informal language. Math becomes a real experience wherein memory load is greatly reduced while all instruction moves gradually through the steps of concrete, semi-concrete, semi-abstract and abstract levels of instruction.

Content Area Courses: Science and Social Studies
Students develop a knowledge and working vocabulary in social studies and science. These content area courses foster and encourage problem-solving and reasoning skills, imagination, experimentation and exploration. All students use state-approved social studies and science textbooks. Students receive explicit, direct instruction from the classroom teacher, as well as instruction using multimedia programs and hands-on learning opportunities.

* **Here We Go and All Together** (Scott Foresman): This comprehensive social studies text offers a variety of ways for students to think critically about key concepts—through reading, hands-on activities and technology—so they actively experience the world in which they live. By providing multiple ways to experience the content, learning is personalized. Students make connections
between their prior knowledge and each unit. The “Essential Questions” help students see big ideas in what they are learning. In their text, kindergarten students develop true understanding by taking the concepts and transferring that knowledge to new content, situations, ideas and to their own lives. The goal is to help students become successful learners who will remember not only what they have learned but will want to learn more!

Scholastic News: This weekly magazine serves as a supplement to social studies instruction and provides opportunities for students to learn about current events in the country and the world. Colorful pictures, graphs and photographs enhance the information provided in this publication. Discussions that arise from news articles in Scholastic News also assist students in developing social skills and pragmatic language.

STEMscopes: Created by Rice University, STEMscopes is an inquiry-based science curriculum written explicitly to the Next Generation Science Standards. This online curriculum is built on a digital platform and contains informative passages, engaging videos, and hands-on science experiments. In addition to scientific experiments, STEMscopes presents problem-based learning tasks, connects to a variety of academic disciplines including engineering, literacy and math, and supports students as they participate in abstract reasoning tasks. In each lesson, students walk through four stages: Illuminate, Do, Expand and Assess.

TESTING IN THE LOWER SCHOOL

Currey Ingram Academy provides ongoing educational testing to 1) determine each student’s level of performance in the academic areas of reading, spelling, mathematics and written language; 2) determine each student’s learning strengths and needs; 3) provide information in the development of ILP goals; 4) measure each student’s progress over time; 5) compare each student’s performance to the performance of other students using national norms for the same grade and/or age; and 6) help plan future student and program changes. Tests vary at each grade level to allow for developmentally-appropriate testing. Beginning in third grade, group achievement tests are administered. The types of testing that are administered to students include the following:

Informal Tests - Teachers use these tests throughout the year as a way to assess student progress. Some of these are teacher-made, while others follow reading and math programs to determine the student’s skill level and to determine if the child has mastered the skills taught during a specified period of time.

Individually Administered Criterion-Referenced Tests - Criterion-referenced tests are administered to students in kindergarten through fourth grades. These tests describe the results in terms of skill mastery. Students in kindergarten may receive the following tests that fit in this category:

Sounds Sensible Assessment - This assessment, which coordinates with the skills taught in the context of the Sounds Sensible program, focuses on the foundational phonological awareness skills that support the acquisition of reading skills. These skills include listening, rhyming, segmenting and blending.
Phonological Awareness Check (PAC) - Phonological awareness is a broad skill that includes identifying and manipulating the individual sounds in spoken language - parts such as words, syllables, onsets and rimes. The PAC evaluates a student's ability to hear and produce rhyming words, as well as manipulate sounds and syllables in words.

Informal Phonics Inventory - This measurement tool consists of individual letter sounds, digraphs, blends and words and was developed by Currey Ingram Academy teachers to assess developing phonological skills in a spelling format.

Individually Administered Standardized Norm-Referenced Tests - These test results are compared to a normed population. They can also be described by their degree of digression from an average score. Most speech-language tests are in this category, as are some educational tests. Educational tests are administered at least once each school year, and speech-language tests are administered as needed. Educational tests that may be administered to kindergarten students include:

Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency (BOT) - The BOT-2 is a standardized assessment evaluating motor skill development in individuals ranging from four years, zero months to 21 years, 11 months. This assessment is administered as a pre- and post measure to assess progress with fine motor skill, visual-motor integration, bilateral coordination, and balance. Annual re-evaluation occurs as needed.

DIBELS Next - (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) - DIBELS Next is a quick and efficient measure that evaluates critical skills that underlie a student's reading success. Each student is given the Benchmark Assessment three times per year. Components measured include knowledge of letters, awareness of speech sounds in words (i.e., phonemic awareness), and the ability to link the two. Additional subtests evaluate reading fluency, reading recall and comprehension. The specific subtests administered vary depending on the grade level of the child.

Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement-Third Edition (Kaufman III)™ - The Kaufman provides age norms from ages 4 through 25, and grade norms from kindergarten through grade 12. The Kaufman has two independent, parallel forms (A and B), which contribute to greater accuracy in the measurement of progress, and is administered in a one-on-one setting. The Kaufman is used to measure achievement in reading, mathematics and written language.