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 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...
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:
- Apply a variety of reading strategies
- Segment sounds to decode words
- Extend vocabulary utilizing sight words, phonology (study of sounds), orthography (spelling patterns), morphology (study of meaning), and context
- Read orally to develop fluency, expression, accuracy and confidence
- Interpret, analyze, synthesize and evaluate written text
- Identify story elements of character, setting, conflict and plot
- Use comprehension strategies to enhance understanding, make predictions and respond to literature
- Make inferences and recognize unstated assumptions
- Read independently for a variety of purposes
- Recognize a variety of literary genres
- Identify and interpret figurative language
- Experience and develop an interest in literature, which includes multicultural, gender and ethnic diversity
- Enrich vocabulary and appreciation of language expression through listening to orally read literature and poetry
- 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
• Write to acquire knowledge, clarify thinking, improve study skills, gain confidence and promote lifelong communication
• Use elements of the writing process as appropriate to the writing task
• Practice a variety of prewriting activities to generate and organize ideas
• Use appropriate organizational strategies to develop writing, including main ideas and supporting details
• Write frequently for a variety of purposes
• Demonstrate an effective writing style through the use of vivid words, varied sentences and appropriate transitions
• Recognize and demonstrate appropriate use of standard English: usage, mechanics, spelling and sentence structure
• Begin to evaluate and revise writing to focus on purpose, organization, transition and audience
• Identify and use resources to revise and edit writing
• Use legible handwriting for appropriate tasks
• Write and respond actively and imaginatively to literature

Handwriting - Students will adapt their handwriting within the classroom, demonstrated by fluent and legible handwriting used within a variety of contexts. Following consultation with the occupational therapist, students will determine a preferred and effective handwriting style (manuscript, cursive or mixed) that best supports written expression.

• Use legible handwriting within academic classes
• Write legible letters from memory onto lined or unlined wide-rule paper
• Copy and write from dictation grade-level basic spelling vocabulary words with legible handwriting onto lined or unlined wide-rule paper
• Copy grade-level text from the board with legible handwriting onto lined or unlined wide-rule paper
• Copy grade-level text with legible handwriting with a rate between 45 and 70 legible letters per minute

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 their speaking skills through modeling the good speech patterns of others
• Give clear and specific oral directions
• Use a variety of activities to generate, develop and organize ideas for oral communication
• Use complete sentences in spoken language
• Use verbal and nonverbal language and vocabulary pertinent to the purpose, meaning and audience during an oral presentation
• Speak and read using appropriate pronunciation, inflections, pauses, pitch, rate and volume
• Develop an outline with teacher assistance for an oral presentation
• Develop self-regulation strategies to manage or overcome apprehension related to oral communication
• Use appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication techniques to establish and maintain oral communication with teachers and other students
• Participate in small and large group discussions by making relevant contributions
• Produce, present and/or perform original or published literary works
• Use oral language to resolve conflict
• Use appropriate verbal/nonverbal language, vocabulary, voice control and tone for specific situations
• Formulate, organize and express ideas in planned oral presentations
Listening - Students will develop the following active listening skills to analyze and evaluate spoken language:
• Apply active listening techniques to conversations, discussions, direct instruction and presentations in order to improve comprehension
• Apply appropriate listening skills as classmates are speaking
• Connect personal experiences to information and experiences shared by others
• Repeat and carry out complex directions
• Develop techniques for managing disruptions and distractions that interfere with active listening
• Demonstrate good audience behavior during assemblies, movies and presentations
• Synthesize information presented orally, respond with comments that demonstrate understanding, and ask appropriate and relevant questions
• Practice skills that show an awareness of interpreting nonverbal communication and body language

Mathematics
Mathematics instruction is hands-on, activity-centered and success-oriented. It incorporates the use of manipulatives, mental math and paper and pencil strategies to develop problem-solving skills. Instruction is based on incremental development and continual review of skills and concepts accompanied by periodic assessment. Small-group instruction involves a variety of teaching methods ranging from direct teaching to cooperative learning appropriate for the students’ developmental and cognitive levels. As students progress through the Lower School, they learn to apply these skills through the introduction of more challenging problems and learning experiences.

In the fourth grade, student learning focuses on solving problems involving numeration, whole number operations and computation, including strategies for building automaticity with math facts, fractions, decimals and percents. Money, measurement and geometry provide students with areas of study from which they can apply math in meaningful real-life situations. Student goals for math are as follows:
• Identify the place value of whole numbers, fractions and decimals in the base-ten system
• Recognize and apply the properties of whole numbers and their operations
• Develop quick recall of multiplication facts and related division facts*
• Use a variety of measuring devices to collect, organize and communicate data
• Apply and explain patterns and number operations in problem-solving situations
• Understand and apply estimation strategies
• Identify, describe and represent functions found in a variety of situations with tables, graphs, verbal rules, number patterns and equations using variables
• Measure time on analog clocks to hour and minute and to quarter/half-hour segments (before and after the hour) and calculate elapsed time
• Develop an understanding of decimals, including the connections between fractions and decimals*
• Identify and compare properties of polygons such as number of sides, number of vertices, classifications of angles, and parallel or perpendicular sides
• Apply and explain geometric properties and relationships such as congruency, similarity and symmetry
• Compute and compare concepts of area, perimeter and volume*
• Interpret and apply x/y coordinates on a grid

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

Social Studies
The fourth-grade social studies program includes a study of geography, people, cultures and history of early North America, the United States and Tennessee prior to 1840. As students read a weekly news magazine,
they learn to appreciate how global, national and local events impact Tennessee and the United States today.

Social studies is used as a vehicle for students to learn study strategies and apply reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Study skills include strategies for reading and understanding parts of textbooks, locating information, taking tests and using study guides. Skills and concepts are learned and reinforced through the use of technology and visual representations such as diagrams, illustrations, maps, globes, graphs and charts. Student goals for social studies are as follows:

- Explain how early settlers reached the Americas
- Identify and describe early cultures
- Evaluate how various civilizations affected and responded to their environments
- Describe how the desire for trade increased interactions between the West and East
- Identify trading kingdoms of West Africa
- Describe how the Iroquois adapted to the Eastern Woodlands
- Describe how Native Americans of the Southwest were affected by a desert environment
- Describe how Native Americans of the Northwest Coast were impacted by the rich coastal resources
- Describe voyages of Christopher Columbus
- Explain why Spanish conquistadors explored the Americas
- Describe how Spain’s drive to build an empire affected people in the Americas
- Explain how England succeeded in founding Jamestown
- Describe efforts of Pilgrims and Puritans in the New World
- Analyze how the 13 English colonies were established
- Describe how English colonies grew
- Explain aspects of colonial life
- Identify how and why slavery spread through the colonies
- Describe New Spain and its expansion
- Explain how French exploration of the Mississippi River expanded French colonies
- Describe the major events of the French and Indian War
- Explain why people fought for control of land in North America
- Explain how British taxes impacted the colonists
- Identify how events in Boston led to increased tension between Great Britain and the colonies
- Explain why the colonists were willing to risk everything for freedom
- Describe the events that sparked the American Revolution
- Identify steps taken by colonists declaring independence from Great Britain
- Describe actions of heroic Patriots during the American Revolution
- Explain how the colonial forces won the war
- Explain how hardships forced the colonists to work together
- Explain why the new nation struggled under the Articles of Confederation
- Describe how the members of the Constitutional Convention crafted the Constitution
- Explain how compromise was sometimes required for the ratification of the Constitution

Science

Fourth-grade students will develop an understanding of the world around them while learning about science in their environment, increasing their science vocabulary, and improving observation skills. Students participate in hands-on activities and science experiments in the Discovery Lab to supplement in-class instruction. A science lab instructor collaborates with classroom teachers to plan weekly lab activities involving the scientific process. As students explore their world through hands-on activities, they are encouraged to ask questions and discuss their observations. Their scientific knowledge will be expressed
and expanded through activities involving reading, written expression, discussion and technology. Student goals are as follows:

• Apply scientific inquiry through guided practice
• Develop observation skills using their senses, technology and measurement
• Retell what is observed and ask questions about these observations
• Explain the characteristics and how they are used to classify living organisms
• Explain the life cycles of organisms and how organisms obtain energy
• Identify ecosystems and the processes that change ecosystems
• Identify Earth’s natural resources
• Recognize that extinction of organisms has occurred in the past and still occurs today
• Recognize concepts relating to the Earth’s gravity, gravity’s affect on the planets and the field of space exploration
• Model Earth’s layers and how the Earth’s surface can change
• Identify properties of rock and minerals
• Identify properties of the atmosphere and how it affects weather and climate
• Examine different types of matter
• Identify the components of matter
• Measure changes in matter
• Understand what causes light and sound waves and how they can be affected
• Explain and simulate the use of simple machines and the motion of objects
• Observe and apply the concepts of heat, sound, electricity and magnetism during demonstrations and hands-on activities
• Identify concepts of the production of energy and sources of energy
• Identify physical and emotional changes that occur throughout the life steel of human development
• Recognize the relationship of nutrition to healthy living
• Identify appropriate and inappropriate uses of chemical substances for healthy living

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 then 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.

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**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
- Recognize the geometric shapes within their environment and nature
- Learn and apply the basic color ideas
- 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 computer terms and icons
- Develop skills for proper use, care and transportation of computers
- Develop basic skills in many applications
- Format, label and manipulate documents and files for efficient retrieval
- Know where letter and number keys are on a keyboard
- Use correct finger placement when using the keyboard
- Develop an understanding of basic shortcuts
- Use the various functions to search efficiently on the Internet (e.g., toolbars, bookmarking tools)
- Understand the ethical, cultural, societal and safety issues related to technology
- Use technology to locate, evaluate and collect information from a variety of sources
- 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 and increase cultural understanding
- Develop awareness of theatre history

LibTech
LibTech 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:

- Enhance learning through library activities such as writing poems, collaborating on dramatizations, and creating illustrated stories
- Experience and enjoy all aspects of reading (e.g., independent and class activities)
- Continue to learn about individual authors, illustrators and award-winning media through TeachingBooks.net and other multimedia resources
- Select reading as a personal activity
- Select materials that reflect appropriate reading level and interests
- Read materials such as the (Mildred L.) Batchelder Award books
- Continue to expand understanding and discussion of story elements including character, setting, plot and theme
- Identify, understand and use new vocabulary
- Distinguish among a variety of literature genres including poetry, biographies, autobiographies, fiction and humor
- Understand the organization of information (e.g., electronic catalog, Dewey Decimal classification, digital information sources)
- Identify information needs by constructing inquiries/questions
- Access information through a variety of print and electronic resources
- Develop methods of evaluating materials based on personal and qualitative criteria
- Increasingly able to use search strategies and identify appropriate resources to locate information (e.g., online databases, online library catalog, print indexes, electronic media)
- Understand concepts of intellectual property and copyright
- Improve collaboration skills and work with others to find and present information and solutions
- Reorganize and present information and ideas
- Evaluate search processes and outcomes

**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 alert, more confident and develop a healthier well-being. Student goals are as follows:

- Sing a varied repertoire of music alone and with others
- Perform alone and with others on the recorder
- Read and write simple rhythmic and melodic notation
- Recognize meter
- Analyze, describe and recognize different styles and genres of music
- Recognize and classify orchestral instruments
- Aurally recognize important musical works and composers
- 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 fourth-grade physical education program reinforces existing skills and their applications as new skills are developed. Students begin acquiring knowledge and understanding of the importance of incorporating physical fitness and activity into a healthy lifestyle. Physical education goals are as follows:

- Apply rules, procedures and safe practices without reinforcement
- Demonstrate mature forms of locomotor skills
- Apply the use of basic physical education equipment in sports-specific activities
- Perform selected traditional dance sequences
- Demonstrate and utilize basic skills necessary for participation in various individual and team sports
- Engage in daily physical activity for the purpose of developing a healthy lifestyle
- Select activities that enhance muscular strength, endurance, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness

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><em>Pride</em></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><em>Respect</em></td>
<td>Showing consideration for self, others and the environment</td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td><em>Responsibility</em></td>
<td>Being responsible for your own behavior</td>
<td>Greeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td><em>Citizenship</em></td>
<td>Being a responsible, caring person in your school and community</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td><em>Caring</em></td>
<td>Showing kindness, compassion, friendship and generosity</td>
<td>Getting along with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td><em>Work Ethic</em></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><em>Honesty</em></td>
<td>Being truthful and honest in all you do</td>
<td>Kindness</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 *purposeful and direct*. Students must hear and see the words, learn their meanings, identify appropriate behaviors, and practice and apply the values.

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<th>Social Skill of the Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td><em>Cooperation</em></td>
<td>Collaborating to achieve a common goal</td>
<td>Playing fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td><em>Perseverance</em></td>
<td>Continuing to stay focused in the midst of difficulties</td>
<td>Handling disappointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td><em>Self-Advocacy</em></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>

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**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. Programs such as the Fourth Grade Leaders’ Program and Student Council provide leadership opportunities for fourth-grade students. In addition, all students in the Lower School will 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 nonjudgmental 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 addressed in speech-language and tutorial groups.

Puberty Programming: The Human Growth and Development Unit is comprised of developmental lessons for fourth graders who will soon face physical and emotional changes during puberty. Positive body image and respect for others are key components of the lessons.

Transition activities: The Middle School and Lower School administrators, along with fourth-grade teachers, collaborate to facilitate activities for the transition to Middle School at Currey Ingram. These activities help to provide a healthy transition for fourth-grade students into the Middle School Division. Group and individual transition counseling and activities may also be offered for students who are transitioning to public and other independent schools.

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
- Model positive character traits through personal behavior
- Practice safety steps and teach to others when needed
- Practice expression of personal feelings and use positive self-talk phrases
- Display positive friendship and social skills
- Self-regulate needs and advocate for adult support when necessary
- Set personal goals and note factors that contribute to success
- Relate school habits to potential occupational habits

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 executive function skills, pragmatic language, receptive and/or expressive language, social skills, social problem solving, visual perception, handwriting, keyboarding, 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.

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**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:

**Language! – Language!** is an evidence-based approach to teaching reading, writing, spelling and language. At the earliest levels of instruction, Language! teaches phonological awareness, which includes distinguishing between the different sounds and sound combinations within words. Next, students are taught to associate spoken sounds with written letters, which includes how letters form words, how word structures vary, how words form sentences, how sentence structures vary, how sentences form paragraphs, and how paragraphs become parts of literature. Language! integrates the teaching of reading comprehension and written composition, while teaching abstract, figurative and pragmatic language skills. Content is presented sequentially and cumulatively.

**Merrill Linguistics, Preventing Academic Failure, Explode the Code** – The Merrill Linguistic Reading Program, typically paired with Preventing Academic Failure (PAF) and Explode the Code, carefully introduces words organized according to sound and spelling patterns while it builds decoding skills and vocabulary. The vocabulary-controlled stories provide the decoding practice students need to become fluent readers. The Merrill Program integrates the teaching of reading comprehension with other reading skills. Content is presented sequentially and cumulatively. The PAF component of this program is based on Orton-Gillingham techniques to teach decoding and encoding, which includes the explicit instruction of word and letter patterns as well as high-frequency sight words. Explode the Code is a program of supplemental activities used with Merrill and PAF that focuses on increasing phonemic awareness and reading facility by providing additional practice in recognizing and combining sounds to read real words, phrases, sentences and stories.

**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.

**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:

**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.

**Great Leaps** – This supplemental program aims to improve reading fluency by using timed, repeated reading of letters, sounds, words, phrases and 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.

**Spellography** – This supplemental program begins in fourth grade for students who are proficient readers but have difficulty in spelling. It utilizes the latest research for effective, efficient spelling instruction.

**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 story’s motivations, feelings and plans to sequence the components of a story and add age-appropriate language features to 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.

Math in Focus: Singapore Math® – Math in Focus is based on the math framework developed by the Singapore Ministry of Education. It draws on best practices from around the world and highlights problem solving as the focus of mathematical learning. A primary emphasis of the program is on student attitude and metacognitive strategies. The program is designed to teach fewer concepts in a more thorough manner using the concrete-representational-abstract instructional approach.

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.

VMath - VMath is a targeted math intervention program that provides multiple opportunities to master critical math concepts and skills. The curriculum delivers focused instruction, while also providing foundational skills necessary for grade-level success. Instruction provides conceptual development, procedural skills and fluency practice, and application activities. Finally, explicit instruction in problem-solving strategies is included, which teachers students to recognize the underlying structures and features of math problems. Skills are presented within modules (i.e., skill-specific units), which may including: Foundations, Addition, Subtraction, Measurement, Money and Geometry, Time, Graphing and Data, Whole Number Multiplication, and Whole Number Division.
These programs are never used alone. Below are math programs that are used to supplement the programs listed previously:

**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.

**Mastering Math Facts** – *Mastering Math Facts* is a structured program for the sequential practice of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division math facts. Facts in the program are introduced in sets of two with their reverses. Fluency goals are individualized for each student, and the program allows students to proceed at their own rate. Each day, students practice the newly introduced facts and then take a timed test that focuses on all of the facts learned thus far. Students are presented math facts through varying modalities (i.e., visual, auditory, tactile) to assist in the transfer of these facts from short-term to long-term memory. The *Mastering Math Facts* curriculum also systematically integrates newly learned facts with previously learned facts to ensure the memorization of facts is maintained.

**Reflex Math** - *Reflex Math* is a computer-based program that helps students to develop automaticity of basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts. This program provides each student with customized instruction that adapts to his or her individual rate of learning. Facts are presented in fact families, which emphasize the commutative property and the relationship between operations. After learning and practicing facts, facts are reinforced in the context of games, which are intended to place demands on the working memory while simultaneously having students answer math facts.

**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.

**Building a Nation** (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, students’ 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, fourth-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!

**TIME for Kids**: *TIME for Kids* is a weekly classroom news publication that presents students with a wide range of information about their world and serves as a supplement to classroom social studies instruction. Students are motivated to read and learn through the colorful pictures as well as the easy-to-read stories and captions. Discussions that arise from news articles in *TIME for Kids* assist students additionally in developing their social skills and pragmatic language usage.
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.

SRA/McGraw Hill Snapshots Video Science: This supplemental science program focuses on core science concepts and key vocabulary. This program combines video lessons with students' textbook activities.

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 fourth grade may receive the following tests that fit in this category:

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. This assessment is administered to selected students in third and fourth grade.

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 fourth-grade students include:
**Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency (BOT-2)** - 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-Second and Third Edition (Kaufman II and 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.

**Group-Administered Standardized Tests** - These tests are given in a group setting; however, results are still compared to a normed population of students.

**ERB Writing Assessment Program (WrAP)** - The WrAP asks students to produce a writing sample in response to a standard prompt. This assessment is administered to all third- and fourth-grade students in the spring of each school year. Students are tested in two 60-minute sessions on two consecutive days. Students are compared to other students in suburban public and independent schools. The WrAP is scored analytically, using a six-trait, six-point rubric to provide information that will help target writing instruction.

**Stanford Achievement Test Series** - The Stanford is a group-administered, multiple-choice, standardized test that measures a student’s achievement in reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social science. This test is given to all students in fourth grade in the spring of each school year.