



# Manzano Day School

## Grade Transition Differences

Sometimes parents have questions about differences in expectations as children advance through the grade levels. Below you will find a list of some of the key elements that mark grade transitions. This is not meant to be a comprehensive list, but rather a brief overview of some of the significant differences as children advance through the curriculum.

### **Pre-Kindergarten - Kindergarten**

- The beginning steps of literacy are introduced using the program [CR Success Learning](#) and quality literature
- Academic time is structured (within small groups)
- Fine motor development is emphasized with higher expectations of motor mastery of simple tasks
- Co-curricular classes are taught with the entire class and no classroom assistant
- Learning expectations focus on a comprehensive set of academic skills
- School day trip to Fenton and frequent field trips are part of the curriculum
- Self-selection of activities receives less emphasis than teacher guided activities
- Writing process is structured - handwriting skills emphasized

### **Kindergarten - First Grade**

- Students are responsible for their own personal workspace
- Students are expected to stay on a single task for longer periods of time
- There is more responsibility for personal items (tying shoes, zipping coats) as well as daily routines
- There is increased independence in completing learning activities
- Following multistep directions is expected
- Overnight Fenton Ranch trip
- Students will transition for math instruction
- Student provides individual daily snack; lunches are outside and in the Growney Assembly Center
- Daily homework is assigned and occasionally home projects assigned
- The four first-grade classrooms share one assistant teacher

### **First Grade - Second Grade**

- Second graders may need to bring their own morning snack. Parents may volunteer to bring snacks for the class to be consumed in the afternoon because lunch is at 11:15
- There is no regularly scheduled show & tell
- Students are expected to gain more independence in the classroom
- A weekly homework packet is sent home
- A homework folder must be brought in every day
- Nightly reading and math facts practice are part of the daily homework
- Spelling list is sent home every "A Day"
- Co-curricular teachers for P.E., Art and Spanish change from lower-school to upper-school teachers
- Students go to the Upper School Computer Lab working with their classroom teacher
- Students can use the BIG, big toy for optional afternoon recess
- Students begin cursive handwriting

## **Second Grade - Third Grade**

- Students begin to follow directions and tackle projects with less teacher support
- Students have nightly math, spelling/grammar, and reading homework instead of a weekly packet. A variety of long term projects are spaced throughout the year.
- Students are increasingly able to keep track of assignments and organize materials
- Strong emphasis is placed on content reading
- Third graders learn to work in a variety of cooperative group settings on long-term projects
- Third graders review phonics concepts and move quickly into novel study
- Students are gaining independence in meeting deadlines and clarifying details about assignments
- Students learn to use a variety of resources and learn to cite the resources used in their projects
- Problem solving in math focuses on understanding how to set up the problem, in addition to manipulating the algorithm
- Students learn to talk problems out and negotiate solutions without relying as heavily on adult intervention
- Fenton overnight visit is for two nights
- Students begin independent reading with assessment thru book reports

## **Third - Fourth Grade**

- Students focus on completion of their work independently
- Students receive letter grades on their report cards
- Music classes transition to the upper school music teacher
- Literacy emphasis is on learning to read multiple genres
- Chorus participation is increased and students may participate in the chorus for the spring musical
- Children become increasingly able to address and solve social/peer issues
- Homework quantity is increased
- STEM (Science) Fair is mandatory
- There are increasing demands on organization and time management skills
- There is an increasing focus on interpreting/processing nonfiction
- There is an increasing demand for self-control
- Several extra-curricular activities are available: All-State Chorus, Good Apple Singers, Chess, Robotics Club, Geography Bee and Spelling Bee
- Math requires a mastery of addition/subtraction facts upon entering fourth grade and multiplication and division facts by October.

## **Fourth - Fifth Grade**

- Students switch classes for core subjects, (homeroom teacher is the Writing teacher) and are expected to attend class with appropriate/necessary materials
- Math and science classes are gender based
- Homework is assigned, recorded in planners and expected complete on the due date
- Students must learn to communicate with four fifth-grade teachers as well as co-curricular teachers
- Students are responsible for in-class assignments and homework when class is missed. Students must communicate with teachers in advance of any planned absences.
- Long-term projects require increased responsibility and time management skills
- Essays and longer papers must be typed; as well as more written work in general
- Research projects are frequently an integral part of the curriculum
- Middle school applications, visits, interviews and testing take place
- Students are given increasing responsibilities as leaders and guides; have special experiences: Making Chile Ristras, Cultural Celebration, and Alumni Luncheon
- A Human Development/Drug Education study takes place during the year