

#### **Fourth Grade Teachers**

Ms. Jane Castner- Team Leader

Mr. Shane O'Neal

Ms. Christine Niebuhr

Ms. Cara Roberts

#### **Grade Four Web News**

In English Language Arts, ELA, fourth graders work extensively on reading and writing strategies. Students read a variety of text, fiction and nonfiction, many of which are connected to the content areas which gives their reading a specific purpose. For example, while studying electricity in science, children read about Ben Franklin and Thomas Edison. Fourth graders also use the Houghton Mifflin Leveled Reading Series. Students learn and use strategies to understand, interpret, and evaluate text. Writing is broken down into six traits that help students learn, identify and develop better writing skills. This year students will be focusing on formulating an opinion and using details from the text or research to support their idea.

In fourth grade, students begin to refine their math skills. New concepts are presented with concrete materials to help students become more successful in understanding the more abstract concepts. "I hear, and I forget. I see and I remember. I do, and I understand" -Chinese Proverb. Creating this foundation is supported by the Maryland Standards for Mathematics and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards. Topics will include number relationships and computation, measurement, algebra patterns and functions, probability, reasoning, statistics, communication, geometry and problem solving. Being able to recall basic math facts will support learning these new concepts. We will be incorporating the [Standards for Math Practices](#) from the Common Core State Standard Initiative into our curriculum. These practices include behaviors that will help build a strong math understanding.

Science units are motivating and hands on. They include Water Quality, Electricity, Energy, Adaptations, Force and Motion, and Light and Sound. We will be implementing a new unit call "An Alarming Idea" which is problem-based scenario designed to integrate science, technology, math, and engineering concepts.

Our health curriculum, presented by the health special area teacher, includes Personal Safety, Substance Abuse, and Disability Awareness. In the spring, students are introduced to "Growing Up and Liking It". A parent preview will be scheduled prior to this program.

In Social Studies fourth graders learn Geography and Map Skills, Maryland's Past, and Maryland's Present. The Maryland Historical Society will be coming to our school to share with us artifacts Maryland's Native Americans.

Spring will be a busy time. Fourth graders take the MSA test in March. Instrumental and chorus are highlights of fourth grade, as well as cultural programs that enrich our curriculum. With a generous grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, we will be taking a Living Classroom field trip in the spring. On this trip students will investigate the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its rich history. In May, look forward to our Spring Instrumental and Vocal Music Concerts.