



**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PHILOSOPHY AND CURRICULUM
(1st - 4th Grades)**



Kehoe-France Northshore has been recognized as a school that stands out not only for its academic and liberal arts curriculum, but also for the importance it places on developing social skills and building character among its students. Our purpose is to develop the child intellectually, emotionally and socially. It is in a child's formative years that a love of learning develops, and Kehoe-France Northshore encourages students to embrace and enjoy the journey.

As an authorized world school for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP), our first through fourth grade students are challenged in their learning to ask questions, investigate curiosities and work together to consider multiple solutions.

Our degreed, certified teachers work in classrooms with low student-teacher ratios to provide individualized attention and instruction which encourage an inquiry-based approach to learning. We want and expect our students to be involved in their learning. We believe that in addition to a focus on fundamentals, our students must be prepared to apply their learning to real-world situations. Teachers receive ongoing professional training in the International Baccalaureate program as well as in other educational areas.

The Daily Curriculum

As a part of the IB PYP, each classroom in first through fourth grades explores six units of inquiry centered around themes that promote transdisciplinary, conceptual learning. We believe learning is interconnected and students should be encouraged to strive to make these connections. Our goal is to explore subjects in both traditional and innovative ways.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Our language arts program in first and second grade integrates reading, language, spelling, and writing. Skills taught are phonics and structural analysis, comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, study and research skills, spelling, writing, and grammar usage and mechanics. Cursive handwriting is taught beginning in second grade. Children learn that listening, reading, and writing are all ways to communicate ideas, and communication is the goal of all the language arts. Literature and language-rich activities ensure that all students develop the skills to become fluent readers, writers, listeners, speakers and thinkers. As students move into third and fourth grade they apply the knowledge of phonics, letter patterns, syllabication and word parts to achieve fluent oral and silent reading. Comprehension strategies and skills are applied to a wider variety of fiction and non-fiction genres. Word-learning strategies and relationships among words continue to be taught and children continue to build vocabulary through reading. Students also build on prior knowledge of the writing process as well as writing strategies with an emphasis on written and oral English language conventions and correct spelling.

MATHEMATICS

The vertical alignment of this program incorporates a balance of instruction. A balanced approach to mathematics is provided by investigating concepts and building conceptual understanding, developing, reinforcing, and mastering computational and procedural skills, and applying mathematics to problem solving situations. As students build their foundational knowledge they will gain an understanding of place value and number relationships as they add and subtract, as well as use simple concepts of multiplication. Students will also measure, classify, and collect and analyze data to verify answers. In third and fourth grade students are able to extend their skills to deepen their understanding of math concepts and relationships as well as begin the more complex processes of estimating, describing, and using patterns to solve problems. The students are exposed to the first theoretical concepts of mathematics as they prepare to move forward.

SCIENCE

Our science program focuses each year on students' development and use of basic process skills as they observe, investigate, hypothesize, analyze, evaluate and apply an understanding of the scientific process. Students explore the world through hands-on and virtual investigations and STEM activities that connect to their curiosities in physical, life, and earth sciences. Students develop their observational skills by using their senses to gather and record information to identify and reflect on simple patterns, make predictions, and test to refine their ideas. They will explore the way objects and phenomena function, identify parts of a system, and gain an understanding of cause and effect relationships. Students will examine change over time periods, and will recognize that more than one variable may affect change. They will be aware of different perspectives and ways of organizing the world, and they show care and respect for themselves, other living things and the environment. Students will communicate their ideas or provide explanations using their own scientific experiments and that of others.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students build a fundamental understanding of anthropology, geography, history, civics, and economics in the first through fourth grades. Students will use basic geographic and technological tools to organize and interpret information about people, places, and environments, as it relates to the United States and the world. Students also explore the purpose and structure of governments as well as their role as a responsible citizen and the ways in which individuals must work together to solve conflicts. Leaders and cultures from around the globe are explored to study diverse groups, religions, traditions, and their contributions to the global community. Additionally, students gain an understanding of the economic concepts of goods and services as well as supply and demand within their school, community and around the world. Finally, an emphasis is placed on making connections to our past and present and the ways in which local, regional and national government and traditions have developed and left their mark on society.