



# Curriculum Overview

## 2011-2012 School Year

**Introduction**

This document is meant to be a broad overview of HoLa’s school-wide approach, program goals and initiatives. Each classroom teacher will also provide her own year-at-a-glance curriculum document that outlines more specific academic goals and expectations for a given grade. Our hope is that these two documents, together, will be complementary and comprehensive.

**Curriculum**

A curriculum is both a written statement of academic goals, benchmarks and skills to be achieved at each grade level, and a roadmap of lessons and strategies to achieve them, including the order in which concepts should be taught and in many cases which classroom tools and materials to utilize. The HoLa curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards, as required of all public and charter schools in the state, but our approach to implementing the curriculum at the classroom level is unique, reflecting our school’s own mission and vision, and incorporating all of the elements that make HoLa special: dual language model, emphasis on the arts, experiential approach to learning, and a multicultural perspective. Our approach embraces the whole child—academic, social, creative, physical, emotional—as well as different learning styles, and seeks to create intellectually curious life-long learners with all of the tools to be true global citizens.

A curriculum is ideally a dynamic entity, in a state of continual evaluation and development. The ongoing assessment of student performance (i.e., data from diagnostic testing, standardized test scores, and running records) as well as input from teachers and parents continue to inform this process. Key to an effective curriculum is grade-appropriate content that is both horizontally aligned across classrooms, so that all students in a given grade are covering the same content and using the same materials, and vertically aligned so that the progression flows in a deliberate, logical way from one grade to the next. At the classroom level, the approach must be rigorous, standards high for all students, and the content appropriately challenging and differentiated to address students across the spectrum of academic preparedness in each subject area.

Although we are a dual language school, our program is fundamentally academic; in fact, this is a defining characteristic of schools following the Two-Way Immersion approach. Bilingualism is a key goal that results from specific teaching strategies in an immersion setting. The language component does not replace instructional time; rather, academic content is delivered primarily in Spanish in the early years so that language is a tool of instruction, not a subject in and of itself. Teachers are trained and certified in dual language education and have mastered the classroom strategies that have proven effective in immersion settings. Language lessons are incorporated intrinsically into content throughout the day and strategies facilitate communication and understanding, even when students are first exposed to a second language—but none of this is at the expense of academic content (rather, they are complementary). Differentiation of instruction is key in any classroom, but especially so in a dual language setting. Immersion classrooms are rich, dynamic learning environments where students are challenged and stimulated on many levels: cognitively, academically, creatively and linguistically. Textbooks and other academic materials are carefully selected to reflect the school’s mission, and to best suit the needs of our academic model and approach.

**Two-Way Immersion (TWI)**

HoLa adheres to the Two-Way Immersion / 90-10 approach to provide a traditional core curriculum through instruction in both Spanish and English, with a range of opportunities for creative expression and experiential learning. Teachers utilize a variety of innovative strategies to facilitate comprehension and communication, integrate linguistic and academic content within a single lesson, and differentiate instruction.

Considered the most effective model of dual language education, TWI brings native Spanish-speakers and non-Spanish-speakers together with the goal, for all students, of achieving academic excellence while becoming bilingual and biliterate. Students acquire knowledge and skills in all core content areas through instruction in both languages, with the added benefits associated with learning a second language at a young age. HoLa implements TWI following the 90-10 approach, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

Two-Way Immersion has been correlated with high levels of academic success: students in such programs tend to achieve at or above grade level compared with their monolingual peers. Research data also identifies a range of cognitive benefits: more flexible thinking, improved problem-solving and reasoning skills, as well as an increased understanding of the structural properties of language. By being immersed in a second language, students are able to develop greater listening and higher-level thinking skills, which enhances their chances for academic success.

Other benefits associated with Two-Way Immersion include:

Educational: Students in Two-Way Immersion programs tend to achieve at or above grade level across core subjects, compared with peers in monolingual programs; high academic achievement coupled with high levels of bilingualism allow for access to a greater range of educational and professional opportunities.

Linguistic: Two-Way Immersion programs prepare children to achieve high levels of academic and conversational proficiency in speaking, reading and writing two languages (in this case, both English and Spanish).

Social: The experience of learning side by side with, and from, a culturally diverse group of children allows for increased cultural awareness and communication skills, and academic bilingual proficiency equips students for increased career opportunities in a global economy.

**HoLa students will:**

- Develop high levels of verbal and written proficiency in both Spanish and English
- Achieve grade level (or above) academic performance and mastery of core content across all subject areas, in both Spanish and English
- Take advantage of the optimal window for learning a second language
- Benefit from an academic and competitive edge in continued education and the workplace
- Reap the many cognitive, academic and social benefits of bilingualism and biliteracy
- Develop positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors

**90-10 approach**

Extensive research from more than two decades of successful practice in the field of dual language education in hundreds of districts across the U.S. and Canada indicates that Two-Way Immersion is the most effective form of dual language education for native speakers of both the target and the dominant language (in this case, Spanish and English), and the data clearly demonstrates that students from both language groups achieve the most academic and linguistic success when the 90-10 approach is implemented.

90-10 refers to the proportion of time teachers utilize Spanish vs. English as the language of instruction (90% Spanish / 10% English). HoLa utilizes a graduated 90-10 approach, whereby the majority of instruction (90%) takes place in Spanish for Grades K and 1, with the ratio gradually tapering to 50% English and 50% Spanish in Grades 4 and 5. This approach provides students with an intensive immersion experience in the early years to allow for the most exposure to, and practice of, the target language when their brains are most receptive to language acquisition, and then builds in increasing levels of explicit instruction in English to facilitate the transfer of academic skills, knowledge and vocabulary.

<b>Grade / Classroom Type</b>	<b>Spanish Language Instruction</b>	<b>English Language Instruction</b>
Kindergarten (self-contained)	90%	10%
1 <sup>st</sup> grade (self-contained)	90%	10%
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade (self-contained)	80%	20%
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade (side-by-side)	60%	40%
4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grades (side-by-side)	50%	50%

- **Self-contained** refers to the traditional arrangement of a single “home” classroom. In the context of dual language, this means that students remain in the same classroom regardless of the language of instruction.
- **Side-by-side instruction** refers to a system of alternating between two monolingual "home" classrooms (one Spanish, one English), so that the experience is one of “immersion” in each setting. HoLa students alternate classrooms on a weekly basis. As all lessons are cumulative and no content is repeated in both languages, this requires a great deal of cooperation and collaboration between partnering teachers.

The 90-10 model requires initial emphasis on the minority language (in this case Spanish), because this language is less supported by the broader society and academic uses of this language are less easily acquired outside of school. By later grades, students have generally developed solid academic proficiency in both languages and they can study core academic subjects at or above grade level in either language. In research on this model, academic achievement is very high for all groups of students participating in the program, when compared to comparable groups in traditional monolingual classrooms. It is important to note that research has also clearly demonstrated that English language development does not suffer as a result of the emphasis on Spanish in the early grades. It is impossible to overestimate the influence of the majority language as the “default” language of society outside of school even for students whose home language is Spanish (or another, third language).

English Language Arts and literacy classes are formally introduced in second grade, in addition to continuing Language Arts in Spanish, thus changing the percentage of language of instruction from 90-10 to 80-20. The gradual increase of instructional time in English continues for the next two years until instructional time is divided equally between the two languages (50-50 in fourth grade and beyond). At each grade level, there are predictable milestones that students can be expected to achieve in terms of second language acquisition and literacy.

### **Classroom Strategies**

HoLa teachers implement a range of innovative strategies associated with successful immersion education, and are provided with ongoing professional development related to classroom strategies and the unique challenges of the immersion setting. Learning is aided by social interaction with peers, scaffolding by teachers and via real world experience. A review of the research indicates that students in a dual language setting benefit from a variety of instructional methods, including sheltered instruction and opportunities for discovery and contextual learning in support of the core curriculum and language development.

- **Sheltered instruction** refers to a group of teaching strategies and techniques designed to help children better understand academic content regardless of language of instruction. Using such techniques allows TWI teachers to teach the same academic material that is expected of all students at a given grade level in a way that enables the second language learners to understand it and participate fully in instructional activities.
- **Active/discovery learning** is a child-centered approach that allows for students to work directly with materials in order to understand a given concept. In TWI programs, this is particularly useful, as second-language learners benefit from having tangible objects that they can manipulate in order to help them understand abstract concepts. This is an important element of a broader experiential approach to the classroom, discussed in more detail below.

To maximize the “cognitive stretch” that is characteristic of immersion learners, whereby students in dual language immersion programs tend to develop enhanced problem-solving and creative thinking skills, as well an improved understanding of the structural properties of language, teachers do not simply translate for children when they do not know or cannot think of a word or phrase in the classroom language, but encourage them to think of other ways to communicate what they are trying to say, or to ask other questions to solicit the correct answer. For example, if a child wants to say, “I need a pencil,” but cannot remember the word for “pencil” in Spanish, the teacher might ask a series of questions and prompts in Spanish until the child is able to explain at his own language level what he needs. By encouraging students to ask and answer questions and figure it out for him- or herself, teachers encourage persistence, problem-solving and creativity, while helping develop vocabulary and language skills.

HoLa strives to embrace a whole-child approach to the classroom, whereby teachers attend to all aspects of child development, work to differentiate instruction so children are challenged at all levels, across the academic spectrum, and across all forms of intelligence. Different learning styles are respected and accommodated through a variety of classroom activities and methods of teaching core concepts.

**Experiential and Cooperative Learning**

Experiential learning is an important component of the immersion experience because non-verbal and hands-on activities reinforce academic concepts, while supporting language development; children “see” and “touch” a concept at the same time that they “hear” it.

Experiential and discovery learning opportunities are integrated throughout the curriculum. HoLa teachers treat all classroom activities as “teachable moments” for content integration, language development and opportunities for expression. A variety of arts programming (art, music, theater, movement) as well as other hands-on learning opportunities are incorporated into the program. These serve to support concepts aligned with the curriculum as well as provide opportunities for vocabulary development, language practice and expression. Teachers are encouraged to bring their own passions and interests into the classroom as instructional tools. Teachers coordinate regular field trips, both walking trips throughout the community and more formal expeditions, to facilitate experiential learning and language practice in a variety of settings. For example, our 1<sup>st</sup> Grade classes went to a Cuban restaurant and used the opportunity to practice reading signs, menus and other written materials in Spanish encountered along the way, as well to speak in Spanish to the restaurant staff and to each other throughout the meal.

Exploration of and exposure to the greater community provide opportunities to investigate, test and illustrate concepts learned in the classroom, and to develop language skills in a variety of contexts. Field trips to cultural institutions and community destinations alike increase students’ domain knowledge and enrich content learning.

The HoLa School Garden is an example of experiential education at work. Students participate in tending the garden and learning hands-on about the life cycle of plants and the foods that we eat, while teachers use the garden as a resource for teaching other core subjects, such as Science, Math, Art and Language Arts. In the garden, students measure, observe, count, draw, name, write and read—the possibilities are endless for bringing a lesson to life and making concepts concrete.

Cooperative learning strategies and peer modeling are also effective tools in immersion classrooms, and provide additional benefits intrinsic to the empowering experience of helping one’s peers. Classroom activities are structured to provide ample small-group work, projects and opportunities for language modeling and peer tutoring among students. Teachers encourage students to ask each other for information and academic support. For example, if a student is trying to answer a question in a Spanish immersion classroom, and she cannot think of the word for “book”, the teacher might encourage her to look around the classroom to see if the word is written anywhere, or to ask one of her classmates (in Spanish, as best she can) how to say it. The opportunity to model and teach one’s peers is a powerful learning tool, and is correlated with high levels of academic success, particularly in dual language settings.

**Arts Emphasis**

Art is an integral part of the HoLa experience: exposure to a variety of artists and art forms, instruction across a range of media and techniques, important opportunities for self-expression. The arts are integrated into the curriculum through classroom-based activities, curriculum themes, and weekly “specials” – art, music, and rotating specials aligned with themes. An emphasis on the arts allows for another dimension of expression and communication while students master or develop a second (or third!) language; it also complements our experiential approach, whereby students learn through doing. This does not mean that students spend the bulk of their day making art for art’s sake – a worthwhile undertaking in itself! – but rather that students learn about, and express their acquired knowledge of, core subjects through a variety of means, including artistic ones. This element of the curriculum reflects the school’s whole-child approach and sensitivity to a range of learning styles and intelligences.

The integration of the arts and other “non-academic” disciplines (such as gardening and cooking) into classroom activities helps to improve vocabulary and language proficiency and challenges students to apply knowledge in new ways. The arts also present a unique opportunity for students to internalize vocabulary and language skills by pairing them with movement and music, a technique that is correlated with improved retention.

Hoboken, and its surrounding area, has strong cultural traditions in music and the arts that serve as subject matter for student exploration, as well as an opportunity for vocabulary development and language practice. Teachers are encouraged to explore community resources such as local museums, theaters, cultural centers, and community-based organizations.

**Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism and a global worldview are intrinsic to HoLa’s mission, with an emphasis on equity among all cultures and language groups. The school’s curriculum incorporates multicultural lessons in each content area, so that it is taught implicitly as well as celebrated explicitly. Through interactive learning experiences, students learn to appreciate and understand diverse viewpoints and ways of life. In addition to the study of other cultures as part of the Social Studies curriculum, students are exposed to the stories, games, traditions and art of other cultures in a variety of academic contexts.

**Assessment**

Assessment is a means to establish a baseline of skills and develop a strategy for data-driven and differentiated instruction for each group of students. To this end, each student’s academic and linguistic levels of development are assessed at the beginning of each year, and ongoing, using a variety of methods: performance-based measures, observation/anecdotal records, and other classroom-based methods. Differentiation of instruction is implemented accordingly, including small, skills-focused flexible groupings for Language Arts and Math.

Second language acquisition is assessed regularly through observation and grade-appropriate written and verbal means. For each age and grade level, there are predictable patterns and milestones for second language acquisition and literacy. Students’ linguistic progress is assessed along a variety of parameters (verbal, comprehension, literacy, content, etc.) on an ongoing basis, as well as in a variety of settings.

*Classroom-Based Assessment:* In addition to quizzes or classroom reviews that may be administered at each teacher’s discretion to assess student understanding and retention of lessons taught, literacy skills are assessed throughout the year, using research-based tools such as the DIBELS and IDEL, or the DRA, which are administered to all grades (DIBELS/IDEL were administered last year; this year, we are using the DRA). Flexible groupings for Language Arts and Math are modified periodically as students progress to different skill levels over the course of the year. Observation and anecdotal records provide additional bases for assessment.

- **The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)** is a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills. DIBELS was developed to measure empirically validated skills related to reading outcomes. Each measure has been thoroughly researched and demonstrated to be a reliable indicator of literacy development and predictive of later reading proficiency. Results can be used to evaluate individual student development as well as provide grade-level feedback toward instructional objectives.
- **Indicadores Dinámicos del Éxito en la Lectura (IDEL)** is a set of research-based formative assessment measures designed to assess the early literacy skills of children learning to read in Spanish. The IDEL measures they take into account the linguistic structure of the Spanish language, including the phonology, orthography and syntax. Like DIBELS, the IDEL measures are based on evidence-based principles of how children learn to read in alphabetic languages such as Spanish and English. The IDEL measures are standardized, brief and individually administered.
- **The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)** provides teachers with a method for assessing and documenting students’ development as readers over time. Its purpose is to identify students’ reading level, defined as a text on which students meet specific criteria in terms of accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. Additional purposes include identifying students’ independent reading strengths and weaknesses, planning for instruction, monitoring reading growth, and, for Grades 3-5, preparing students to meet classroom testing expectations and providing information to teachers, schools, and region regarding reading achievement. The assessments are conducted during one-on-one reading conferences as children read specially selected leveled texts. The teacher then scores each child on a range of skills, such as accuracy of reading, comprehension, and fluency, and assigns him or her to an initial reading group to focus on targeted skills; reading groups change over the course of the year as students are assessed and reassigned according to skills mastered and those still in development.



*Standardized Tests:* HoLa students are required to take the same standardized achievement tests as students in all other public and charter schools in New Jersey, starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade. In addition, the norm-referenced NJ PASS assessment will be administered to Grades 1 and 2. These tests are currently all administered only in English.

- **The New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK)** is the State’s mandatory student testing program. The NJ ASK is designed to measure student mastery of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in the areas of Math and English Language Arts.
- **The New Jersey Proficiency Assessment of State Standards (NJ PASS)** is available for Grades 1 to 8, and is aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. NJ PASS is not a mandatory test, but helps teachers identify student’s strengths and weaknesses to target classroom instruction more effectively and prepare for the NJ ASK.

### **Homework**

Homework is an important way for students to practice and consolidate lessons learned during the school day, and for teachers to assess how well students have understood them, so that they can revisit concepts as needed and differentiate instruction. Homework should not be stressful for students or parents, and ideally students should be able to complete assignments independently. For Spanish language homework, teachers provide a brief translation of general instructions for parents so that they know what students are working on, and so they can help ensure that students understand the assignments. Homework is not meant to teach anything new, but rather to reinforce concepts and vocabulary that have already been introduced.

### **New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards**

HoLa’s mission-driven curriculum is challenging, meaningful and aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards (NJCCS). Language objectives are incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum to ensure that students learn the content as well as the academic language associated with the content. While NJCCS provides a basic framework for the HoLa academic curriculum, our methods and strategies are unique and consistent with the school’s mission and vision. Our goal is not just to meet the standards, but to exceed them, and to challenge each student according to his or her needs and abilities. Standards are public information, available online at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/>

The HoLa academic program provides students with a comprehensive learning experience in each of the nine content areas identified by the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards: Language Arts Literacy; Mathematics; Science; Social Studies; Visual and Performing Arts; World Languages; Health and Physical Education; Technology; and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Life and Careers. The HoLa curriculum treats each of the content areas as a unique opportunity to build academic skills, while achieving linguistic proficiency in both English and Spanish.

It is important to note that the standards define what all students are expected to know and be able to do, not how teachers should teach. Furthermore, while the standards make references to some particular forms of content, such as mythology, foundational U.S. documents, and Shakespeare, they do not enumerate all, or even most, of the content that students should learn; it is up to the individual school to provide a content-rich curriculum that is specific to that school’s mission. Similarly, while the standards focus on what is most essential, they do not dictate all that can or should be taught. Much is left to the discretion of teachers and curriculum developers.

**1. Language Arts Literacy:** HoLa’s Language Arts program focuses on developing high-level bilingual skills in oral communication, reading, writing and language structures. Students in all grades receive explicit Language Arts instruction (phonics, literacy, mechanics, grammar, structure, vocabulary, etc.) in Spanish and/or English, as grade appropriate and in varying proportions, depending upon grade level. Initial Language Arts instruction is taught in Spanish, with English Language Arts added as a separate subject starting in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (in addition to ongoing Spanish Language Arts), when the transfer of skills from Spanish to English begins to be formalized. Reading and writing skills transfer readily and organically from one language to another, but in 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade, students start to become explicitly aware of the distinctions in phonics, spelling and grammatical rules between the two languages.

Differentiation of instruction is critical to language acquisition and literacy development, especially in the early grades, as there is much variation among students in terms of ability, developmental level, acquired skills, and degrees of bilingualism. Language skills and literacy development are assessed regularly so that strategies may be tailored to each student’s needs.

*Materials and Programs:* Our teachers implement several programs in the classroom to support the Language Arts curriculum and develop strong readers and writers.

- Writer’s Workshop (Teacher’s College) – A method of writing instruction developed by Lucy Calkins at the Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University. Emphasizes author study, reading/writing in multiple genres, and writing for real world purposes, with the goal of fostering lifelong writers. Each grade level has specific units of study tailored to meet developmental and curricular needs.
- Balanced Literacy Approach – Designed to increase confidence and fluency in all aspects of literacy; students progress through reading levels using the Guided Reading approach, which emphasizes the use of quality, authentic children’s literature to build an interest in and passion for reading.
- Buenos Hábitos, Grandes Lectores / Good Habits, Great Readers (Pearson) – A comprehensive Language Arts program, including standards-based lessons and materials for all aspects of literacy development (in Spanish for all grades; additionally in English for Grades 2-5).

Excerpts from the NJ Core Content Curriculum Standards for K-5:

*Reading:* The standards establish a “staircase” of increasing complexity in what students must be able to read. The standards also require the progressive development of reading comprehension so that students advancing through the grades are able to gain more from whatever they read. Through reading a diverse array of classic and contemporary literature as well as challenging informational texts in a range of subjects, students are expected to build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspective.

*Writing:* The ability to write logical arguments based on substantive claims, sound reasoning, and relevant evidence is a cornerstone of the writing standards, with opinion writing—a basic form of argument—extending down into the earliest grades. Research—both short, focused projects (such as those commonly required in the workplace) and longer term in depth research—is emphasized throughout the standards but most prominently in the writing strand since a written analysis and presentation of findings is so often critical.

*Speaking and Listening:* The standards require that students gain, evaluate, and present increasingly complex information, ideas, and evidence through listening and speaking as well as through media. An important focus of the speaking and listening standards is academic discussion in one-on-one, small-group, and whole-class settings. Formal presentations are one important way such talk occurs, but so is the more informal discussion that takes place as students collaborate to answer questions, build understanding, and solve problems.

*Language:* The standards expect that students will grow their vocabularies through a mix of conversations, direct instruction, and reading. The standards will help students determine word meanings, appreciate the nuances of words, and steadily expand their repertoire of words and phrases. The standards recognize that students must be able to use formal English in their writing and speaking but that they must also be able to make informed, skillful choices among the many ways to express themselves through language.

**2. Mathematics:** The focus of the Math program at HoLa is concept mastery, whereby math skills, facts and mechanics are explicitly connected to key “big” ideas, and each concept is taught using a range of strategies and methods. When students develop a deep understanding of broad mathematical concepts, and have the opportunity to practice them across a variety of practical scenarios—both abstractly in the form of equations, and concretely using word problems, visuals and manipulatives—then they become better able to apply the concepts to new and increasingly challenging problems and sets of data. Problem-solving skills are further developed by emphasizing the application of mathematics to real world situations; numbers, skills, and mathematical concepts are linked to contexts that are relevant to daily life.

Opportunities to verbalize thoughts and strategies deepen students’ understanding of the material and provide vocabulary practice. Manipulatives are used to facilitate proficiency by introducing students to abstract thinking skills rudimentary to algebraic and geometric concepts; this is particularly helpful in the early grades when vocabulary is limited for non-Spanish-speakers. Students’ developing mathematics skills and problem-solving processes are applied across disciplines to other areas of study, which helps to consolidate concepts and serves as the foundation for applied learning.

Students are taught as a whole class, as well as in small, flexible groups, with additional time for individual exploration and practice. Teacher-directed instructional time is balanced with open-ended, hands-on exploration and ongoing, differentiated practice.

*Materials and Programs:* Our classroom teachers implement the following programs to support the Math curriculum:

- Investigations / Investigaciones (TERC) – A comprehensive elementary math curriculum based on 20 years of research, through a grant from the National Science Foundation, and patterned after National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards. The program features a constructivist approach, and emphasis on concept mastery. For more information, visit: <http://investigations.terc.edu/>.

- EnVisionMATH (Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley) – Used as a core standards-based complement to Investigations, this program features daily problem-based interactive math lessons and visual learning strategies to deepen conceptual understanding through strong, sequential visual/verbal connections.

Excerpts from the NJ Core Content Curriculum Standards for K-5:

The K-5 standards for Math provide students with a solid foundation in whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions and decimals. The standards stress not only procedural skill but also conceptual understanding, to ensure students are learning the critical information they need to succeed at higher levels.

*In Kindergarten*, instructional time focuses on two critical areas: representing and comparing whole numbers, initially with sets of objects; and describing shapes and space.

*In Grade 1*, instructional time focuses on four critical areas: developing understanding of addition, subtraction, and strategies for addition and subtraction within 20; developing understanding of whole number relationships and place value, including grouping in tens and ones; developing understanding of linear measurement and measuring lengths as iterating length units; and reasoning about attributes of, and composing and decomposing geometric shapes.

*In Grade 2*, instructional time focuses on four critical areas: extending understanding of base-ten notation; building fluency with addition and subtraction; using standard units of measure; and describing and analyzing shapes.

*In Grade 3*, instructional time focuses on four critical areas: developing understanding of multiplication and division and strategies for multiplication and division within 100; developing understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions (fractions with numerator 1); developing understanding of the structure of rectangular arrays and of area; and describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes.

*In Grade 4*, instructional time focuses on three critical areas: developing understanding and fluency with multi-digit multiplication, and developing understanding of dividing to find quotients involving multi-digit dividends; developing an understanding of fraction equivalence, addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators, and multiplication of fractions by whole numbers; understanding that geometric figures can be classified based on their properties, such as having parallel sides, perpendicular sides, particular angle measures, and symmetry.

*In Grade 5*, instructional time focuses on three critical areas: developing fluency with addition and subtraction of fractions, and developing understanding of the multiplication of fractions and of division of fractions in limited cases (unit fractions divided by whole numbers and whole numbers divided by unit fractions); extending division to 2-digit divisors, integrating decimal fractions into the place value system and developing understanding of operations with decimals to hundredths, and developing fluency with whole number and decimal operations; and developing understanding of volume.

*Mathematical Practice (all grades):*

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

**3. Science:** HoLa’s standards-based Science curriculum is comprised of four basic areas of study, which are addressed to varying degrees in each grade starting in K, and progress in complexity and focus from year to year: Science Practices (scientific/investigative thinking), Physical Science, Life Science, and Earth Systems Science. Our approach to the curriculum emphasizes hands-on application of scientific principles, encouraging children to formulate hypotheses, make predictions and draw conclusions. Students are given opportunities to work individually and in small groups to practice working cooperatively and to introduce students to the collaborative nature of science. Teachers facilitate independent and critical thinking by asking open-ended questions and challenging students to test their own assumptions and hypotheses.

Students in each grade level engage in science experiences that promote the ability to ask, find, or determine answers to questions derived from natural curiosity about everyday things and occurrences. Science is presented as an active process in which inquiry is central to learning and in which students engage in observation, inference, and experimentation on an ongoing basis. When engaging in inquiry, students describe objects and events, ask questions, construct explanations, test those explanations, and communicate their ideas to others.

*Materials and Programs:* Our classroom teachers implement the following program to support the Science curriculum (grades 1-3 only):

- Interactive Science (Pearson) – Science program for Grades 1-3, featuring standards-based lessons that scaffold multiple levels of inquiry for each unit of study, as well as student workbooks.

**4. Social Studies:** All students receive Social Studies instruction from Kindergarten through Grade 5 in the following areas, as grade-appropriate: U.S. History, World History/Global Studies, and Active Citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In the early grades, this content may be integrated into other core subjects, such as Language Arts, rather than explicitly taught as a separate subject. Social Studies instruction focuses on concepts that enable students to think critically and systematically about local, national, and global issues; and provides learners with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives needed to become active, informed citizens of both local and global communities. An important aspect of the core curriculum standards for Social Studies, with special relevance within the context of HoLa’s curriculum, is an emphasis on fostering a student population that is civic-minded, globally aware, and socially responsible; and one that considers multiple perspectives, values diversity, and promotes cultural understanding.

Excerpts from the NJ Core Content Curriculum Standards for K-5:

*In Grades K-4*, students learn fundamental concepts about government, citizenship, geography, economics and history. The focus of instruction is on developing an understanding of core democratic values, the rights and responsibilities of American citizens, and how key people and events contributed to the development of the American heritage. Exploration of cultural universals enables students to realize how the availability of resources, the changing environment, and innovation impact everyday life.

*In Grade 5*, students build upon K-4 foundational content to begin a new phase of study during which they begin to analyze the implications of government structures and economic policies for individuals, communities, nations, and global relationships. The study of migratory patterns and belief systems that in the past led to cooperation and conflict among groups of people enable students to realize the significance of cultural transmission in today's global society. Relevant activities help students connect content knowledge to current issues.

**5. Visual and Performing Arts:** HoLa's Visual and Performing Arts curriculum incorporates painting/drawing, dance, music and theater to offer students opportunities for self-expression, critical analysis and exposure to and appreciation for the role of the arts in cultural development. All students in grades K-5 are given broad-based exposure to, and are provided opportunities for participation in, each of the four arts disciplines. Students benefit from access to professional artists through workshops, performances, residencies and field trips.

The arts are particularly important in successful immersion programs because they provide a unique opportunity for both verbal and non-verbal expression, cultural learning and language development. The arts are also important for second language acquisition because, as research and anecdotal experience clearly indicate, the learning of new concepts is reinforced and integrated into a student's universe of knowledge when partnered with music or movement. Further, the visual and performing arts make subject matter immediate and relevant. Arts instruction is integrated into the curricula for mathematics, language arts, science, social studies and history, as appropriate. Students also benefit from Art and Music as weekly areas of explicit study, while Dance and Theater are presented as theme-based specials over the course of the year.

**6. World Languages:** HoLa's academic program intrinsically fulfills the World Language standard. Spanish is both a medium and a tool of instruction with the goal of developing high levels of academic bilingualism/biliteracy. All academic content areas are taught in Spanish for a minimum of 50% of instructional time, depending on the grade. Additionally, every effort is made to integrate Spanish language vocabulary and practice into all aspects of school life, including field trips, special programming, school events, enrichment activities, etc., in order to promote language acquisition and retention.

Also, as part of our Language Arts curriculum, students in all grades receive explicit instruction in the mechanics, grammar and syntax of the Spanish language. Initial literacy instruction is taught in Spanish, with English Language Arts beginning in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (in addition to Spanish Language Arts). This approach has demonstrated efficacy in promoting language and literacy skills in both languages.

Children who have been exposed to a second language at an early age tend to demonstrate increased facility in acquiring a third (or more). HoLa may offer an additional World Language as a "special" subject at some future point.

**7. Health and Physical Education:** HoLa offers a comprehensive, age-appropriate Health and Physical Education curriculum, which focuses on the role of health and physical activity in personal development and participation in the broader community. HoLa also promotes healthy choices through lifelong fitness, healthy eating habits and an environmentally-friendly lifestyle. Instruction in these areas will contribute to improved academic student performance by developing social responsibility, self-esteem, sportsmanship, teamwork, and a safe and healthy learning environment.

Physical activity is integrated into students' daily activities in the form of twice-weekly gym classes, a rotating dance "special," and daily recess time, as well as frequent walking field trips.

HoLa has demonstrated a commitment to healthy eating habits through its selection of Revolution Foods as its school lunch provider, by its proactive efforts to work with students and parents to cultivate and study our organic school vegetable garden, and by its partnership with Smart Cookies to provide our first rotating "special" class of the year.

Excerpts from the NJ Core Content Curriculum Standards for K-5:

As part of the initiative to prepare students to function optimally as global citizens and workers, Health and Physical Education standards focus on taking personal responsibility for one's health through a healthy lifestyle that fosters a lifelong commitment to physical, social and emotional wellness. A comprehensive health and physical education program fosters a population that:

- Maintains physical, social, and emotional health by practicing healthy behaviors
- Is knowledgeable about health and wellness and how to access health resources.
- Recognizes the influence of media, technology, and culture in making informed health-related decisions as a consumer of health products and services.
- Practices effective cross-cultural communication, problem solving, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills.
- Is accepting and respectful of individual and cultural differences.
- Advocates for personal, family, community, and global wellness, and is knowledgeable about national and international public health and safety issues.

**8. Technology Literacy:** Technology and computer skills are integrated throughout the curriculum as grade- and context-appropriate. All students will demonstrate age-appropriate competence with computers and the ability to apply technology to learning. Students will use the tools of technology to solve problems, apply knowledge, write and communicate effectively.

Students have regulated access to computers in the classroom and are provided with opportunities to approach a certain classroom assignments and tasks by using computers. Technical competency is not an explicit area of instruction; rather, proficiency is attained through the use of technology to achieve task-related goals.

Excerpts from the NJ Core Content Curriculum Standards for K-5:

The Core Content Standards describe two basic areas of knowledge and skills:

*Educational Technology:* All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaboratively and to create and communicate knowledge.

*Technology Education, Engineering, and Design:* All students will develop an understanding of the nature and impact of technology, engineering, technological design, and the designed world, as they relate to the individual, global society, and the environment.

**9. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Life and Careers:** HoLa will prepare students with a foundation in the academic, linguistic and social skills necessary to eventually enter the workforce and become global citizens. While 21<sup>st</sup> Century Life and Careers will not be taught explicitly as a separate subject area, the content standards are integrated into all other core areas at an age-appropriate level for each grade. For example, Kindergarteners might learn about the value of coins as they practice their early math skills, while a 5<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies unit might discuss careers.

Students are provided with opportunities to explore individual interests and to work in small groups to develop project plans, meet deadlines, overcome obstacles, and identify solutions to complex problems—all skills that can be translated to future development of individual career plans. Students will gain key self-management skills and work habits throughout their education.

Excerpts from the NJ Core Content Curriculum Standards for K-5:

All students must acquire knowledge and skills to prepare for life as active citizens in a dynamic global society, and to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century workplace.

*In Grades K-5:* Students are introduced to 21st-century life skills that are critical for personal, academic, and social development. They are also introduced to career awareness information and to basic personal financial literacy skills.