

Elementary School Curriculum

Wildwood School is a unique center of teaching and learning. Our curriculum and talented staff offer every opportunity for students to discover and grow intellectually, personally, and emotionally. Our program and each course is designed not to be delivered to students but to actively engage them in learning, stretching, and finding a home in the world of ideas. Many classes are interdisciplinary because we believe that supporting children as they make connections is vital to a nuanced understanding of the way our world works.

We invite you to read on and discover what Wildwood students and families know and expect: intellectual rigor and infinite doorways to knowledge and creativity for every mind.

Elementary School

The elementary curriculum focuses on guiding young students as they gain confidence and agility in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and Spanish. Students develop the foundational skills for critical thinking and listening, comprehension, research, and creative exploration.

The core curriculum integrates learning about visual and performing arts, science, technology and library use, music, physical education and health, and multiculturalism. All teaching and learning intentionally supports students as they develop skills in inquiry, information literacy, and self-expression. Experiential learning outside the classroom includes field trips and community involvement.

At Wildwood, an emphasis on Life Skills is woven into all elementary students' days and reinforced with the Habits of Mind and Heart, which lay a solid foundation for authentic lifelong learning. Our advisory program is introduced in 5th grade, in preparation for the transition to middle school.

Wildwood's elementary school curriculum builds skills sequentially, as mastery and confidence are achieved individually. The scope of the teaching and learning content is illustrated here for easy reference.

	K-1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade
Language Arts	Foundations of literacy; story workshop; oral language development; phonics, spelling, capitalization, print concepts	Reading comprehension and fluency; writing personal narrative; poetry, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation	Developing reading comprehension and writing skills; biography, poetry, expository, research; vocabulary, grammar	Expanding reading comprehension and writing skills; historical fiction, memoir, expository, research, vocabulary, grammar	Literary analysis; fictional memoir, persuasive writing, poetry, drama; writing for diverse audiences; vocabulary, word origins, grammar
Social Studies	Year A: "Home and Family" Year B: "School and Friendship"	"Our Coastal Community" (Trade, geography, transportation, and sustainability systems)	"The City: Los Angeles Then and Now" (Cultures, neighborhoods, geography, landmarks, and political influences)	"The State: California History" (People, places, multicultural perspectives, and statehood)	"The Nation: United States" (Foundations of democracy, slavery, and westward expansion)
Science	The senses, life cycles of plants and animals, hypothesis, prediction, scientific observation, environmental science	Scientific method, experiments, notation, ecosystems, liquids, gases, solids	Food, nutrition, composers and decomposers, the water system	Earth and the solar system, geology, intro to astronomy	Newton's laws of physics, atoms and molecules, simple machines, circuits, robotics
Mathematics	Math fundamentals (number values, addition, subtraction, intro to word problems, problem-solving)	Base-10 notation, fluency with addition and subtraction, geometry and measurement, logic	Multiplication, division, graphing, geometry, computation skills	Numbers and operations, patterns, functions and change, geometry, probability, fractions	Integers and operations, fractions, decimals, percents, algebraic thinking
Visual Arts	Exploring the art studio, imagination, expression, and technique, ceramics	Portraits and place, painting, color mixing, skin tones, realistic and abstract art, art history	Landscape, murals, textures and weaving, set design	Sculpture, architecture, and pottery on the wheel	Human figure, mask making, principles of design
Performing Arts	Year A: Singing, sign language, rhythm instruments, performance Year B: Percussion instruments, square dance, performance	Music, movement, and acting, great composers, swing dance, voice projection, performance	Introduction to music theory, mime, stomp: instruments and dance, stage performance	Shakespeare, music theory, hand-bells ensemble, Pilobolus, stage production	Music theory, Orff, xylophones, chorus, Broadway musical
Physical Education	Sportsmanship, physical fitness, skill acquisition, self-image; aerobic and anaerobic endurance, agility, balance, object manipulation, spatial awareness, creative movement		Continued focus on sportsmanship, physical fitness, skill acquisition, self-image; refining fundamental skills through games and sports, specialized skills, rules, strategies, collaborative team play, health		

LANGUAGE ARTS

Wildwood's K-5 language arts program is based on the reading and writing workshop model developed by Teachers College at Columbia University in New York. This focused approach ensures that each student develops the skills needed to excel as a reader, writer, speaker, and listener.

Our classroom libraries are filled with a range of children's favorites, including many Caldecott and Newbery award-winning books. Through read-alouds, guided reading, and book groups, children develop listening and comprehension skills and learn to express their ideas. "Thinking while reading" strategies are taught to build skills in predicting, visualizing, summarizing, and making inferences.

Grammar, spelling, and vocabulary are integrated as students master mechanics while writing for a variety of audiences and in a wide range of genres. The writing process includes pre-writing, revising, and publishing. Each student is encouraged to develop skills that lead to a lifelong love of reading while guided in developing a voice as a writer.

Pods (K-1)

Reading

From the very first day of kindergarten, instruction is oriented around a belief that every child is a reader who can question, synthesize, and interpret stories. Some children enter Wildwood reading picture books, and others are reading short chapter books. Students learn to choose books that are "just right" for them. Pod students read every day from the leveled classroom library. Teachers guide Pod students to develop decoding and comprehension skills as they become immersed in Wildwood's print-rich environment. With an emphasis on developing the habits of good readers and to experience the joy of reading, teachers work one-on-one with students and in small groups. Reading Workshop begins with a mini-lesson about a reading strategy, followed by students practicing that strategy independently. Students often work with reading partners reading out loud to each other, asking each other questions, and making predictions of what will happen next in a story. Pod classes often start the day reading with family members and friends during Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time. Our goal is to build confident and passionate readers. Favorite authors include Donald Crews, Patricia Polacco, and Eric Carle.

Word Work

Our Word Work program fosters an understanding of how print works in the English language. Children begin with an appreciation of how the letters of the alphabet are constructed to form words and how words are constructed to become sentences. Students develop phonetic awareness and learn to read sight words. Multiple strategies are used to promote spelling such as word games, word sorts, phonics-based books, and word families.

Writing

The Story Workshop approach emerges from research that literacy and play are intrinsically linked. Story Workshop gives each student the opportunity to create stories using a variety of different materials, including clay, beads, oil pastels, paints, blocks, puppets, and dramatic play. Pod students are asked the essential questions, "Where do stories come from?" and "What materials will inspire you to tell your story?" Students are encouraged to play with materials and investigate elements of a story, including characters, setting, and plot. Stories may take different forms, including fiction, personal narrative, and poetry. Following story creation, students capture their stories in writing.

As Pod students develop conventions in writing, they participate in the more formal schoolwide Writer's Workshop. Each workshop begins with a mini-lesson in which the teacher introduces a writing technique such as adding detail or suspense. Children spend their writing time attempting to apply strategies and skills learned from the daily mini-lessons. Each student has a writing folder where work in progress is kept so that children may add to and revise their work. At the end of each unit, children share finished pieces during an Author's Writing Celebration.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Develop reading comprehension and decoding skills
- Develop a love of reading to include a variety of genres and authors
- Write uppercase and lowercase letters correctly
- Develop phonetic spelling skills and spell grade-level words conventionally
- Write complete sentences, short personal narratives, and creative stories

Second Grade

Reading

In the beginning of the year, 2nd graders focus on building good reading habits. Reading skills are taught in a range of forums, including whole class mini-lessons, small, skill-based reading groups, and individually through student-teacher conferences. Second graders learn the value of talking about books in ways that support and ensure comprehension. Students begin using reading logs in 2nd grade. This introduction to homework encourages each child to be responsible for his or her daily reading. New books are selected on Mondays and returned on Fridays along with reading logs. Favorite authors in 2nd grade include Cynthia Rylant and Roald Dahl.

Writing

In 2nd grade, students learn to write with growing independence. They are encouraged to create a greater volume of writing and to revise, rethink, and rewrite with greater fluency. In selected reading and writing exercises, students explore qualities of good writing, including various crafts and writer's tools, as well as more fundamental ones, including structure, focus, and detail. Units of study include narrative writing, writing with authors as mentors, writing and revising realistic fiction, expert projects, writing to learn and teach about a topic of personal expertise, and poetry. Technology is integrated into writing using iPads as an invaluable tool for a storytelling project.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Make predictions, inferences, and retell what has been read
- Spell grade-level words conventionally
- Use beginning and ending punctuation and capitalization
- Write clear and complete sentences
- Sequence writing with a beginning, a middle, and an end

Third Grade

Reading

Reading comprehension skills are deepened in 3rd grade as literacy is increasingly critical in mastering concepts and content in science, social studies, and math. Historical figures come to life as students read, analyze, and synthesize biographies of notable people. Students write from the point of view of Jesse Owens,

John F. Kennedy, or Mother Theresa. In book groups, students make text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections. Third grade favorite authors include Andrew Clements, Patricia Muñoz Ryan, and Jacqueline West.

Writing

With a focus on personal narrative, myth, poetry, realistic fiction, and informational writing, students learn to write a complete paragraph with a main idea, supporting sentences, and a conclusion. Students gain a deeper understanding of the writing process by creating a rough draft, an edited and revised draft, and a final draft. Using a range of writing techniques such as similes, metaphors, thought shots, personification, and snapshots, students discover their own writer's voice and enhance their writing style. In conjunction with social studies learning about Native Americans, students write original creation myths.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Create clear, coherent, and focused paragraphs
- Identify and use nouns, verbs, and pronouns appropriately
- Self-edit and proofread for capitalization, organization, punctuation, and spelling
- Identify and describe plot, setting, and characters
- Summarize a piece of writing

Fourth Grade

Reading

Students continue to develop active reading skills. Reading for information is emphasized as students build the skills to research subjects in depth. Students focus on note taking, highlighting, summarizing, and using tables of contents, bibliographies, and glossaries. Students read expository and reference texts as well as favorites by Sharon Creech, Kate DiCamillo, and Sid Fleischman. Themes of California are explored in the genres of memoir, historical fiction, and poetry. Book groups are increasingly student led as students deepen their ability to formulate and express ideas clearly.

Writing

Students work together to create *Voices of the West*, a book synthesizing information learned in social studies, writing from a range of perspectives representing the people who inhabit California. In this study, focused on elements of historical fiction, characters emerge. Students construct prose illuminating the lives of convincing cabin boys as they appear in Spanish ships' logs to conflicting depictions of life at California missions as heard in poems for two voices. The reflections of Chinese-Americans who courageously worked to build California's railroads are juxtaposed with tales of strength and bravery illuminating the lives of African-American cowboys in the Old West. This yearlong project integrates skill building, content knowledge, and creativity. Each student also writes a formal research paper on a California animal. Using print and Web-based resources, students write introductory, supporting, and concluding paragraphs and a bibliography to be presented in Keynote, including illustrations, maps, and a 3-D model.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Increase competency in self-editing and proofreading for capitalization, organization, punctuation, and spelling
- Use correct subject/verb agreement and consistency of tense
- Create a final draft reflecting pre-writing, revising, and editing strategies

- Identify and distinguish the characteristics of literary genres and devices (e.g., metaphor, personification, simile, flashback)
- Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations and support them with textual evidence

Fifth Grade

As students explore themes of “identity” throughout the course of the year, they read and write and present in a range of genres, including prose, poetry, and persuasive writing with the goal of becoming increasingly confident, thoughtful readers and expressive, versatile writers.

Reading

The gradual shift toward more advanced comprehension and analytical thinking continues. In book groups and independently, students read from a wide range of genres and practice comprehension skills through a variety of strategies, such as identifying theme, making connections, drawing conclusions, analyzing text, and recognizing common literary elements (plot, characters, setting, conflict, and resolution). The reading-writing connection is made as students annotate and write reading responses. Writing skills are developed with guided analysis and modeling of distinguished authors’ styles. Favorite authors include Jean Craighead George, Lois Lowry, and Ralph Fletcher. As literature is increasingly integrated with social studies themes, emphasis is placed on the following:

- Historical fiction: looking at changes in identity over time with a particular look at gender roles in Colonial American history
- Author studies: How does an author create a character’s identity?
- Multicultural studies: stereotypes, multiple perspectives, and “unlearning” with a lens on ways one is able, less able, or differently abled

Throughout the year, students are expected to read every day and are required to practice reading aloud to increase fluency and improve oral presentation skills. Fifth grade students may serve on the annual Wildwood Medal Committee. In this much-loved tradition, students decide which of the five nominated books should be awarded the Wildwood Medal based on literary merit and effective portrayal of the Life Skills. The optional Wildwood Medal program provides passionate readers the opportunity to challenge themselves in a fun, collaborative, and meaningful way.

Writing

Fifth graders write for various audiences and purposes across the curriculum. Students write daily, often responding to a prompt, a sentence “stem,” a photo, a current event, or a poem of the day. Larger assignments require students to follow the full writing process of pre-writing, revising, and producing a final draft. Student work is shared and celebrated in many ways: haiku at the Poetry Museum, monologues accompanying their handmade masks at the visual arts exhibition, or letters to their congressperson regarding the needs of disabled people.

Word Work

Literacy lessons encompass word patterns and origins, phonics, spelling, punctuation, proofreading, grammar, and vocabulary.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Fictionalized memoir—elaborate and expand on personal experiences using the realistic fiction genre
- Expository writing, with a focus on information and opinion-based paragraphs

- Use of poetic devices such as imagery, assonance, repetition, rhyme, and metaphor
- Discern main ideas, concepts, and evidence in text
- Understand and recognize themes and common literary devices (e.g., imagery, symbolism, foreshadowing)

SOCIAL STUDIES

Children embark on a journey of discovery of our world in kindergarten, exploring their communities and considering their place within it. Our multicultural communities and country come into focus as children consider their homes and families, school and neighborhoods. Students learn to question and find answers by researching, building, reading, interviewing, writing, performing, and expanding their knowledge through field trips and excursions.

The curriculum spirals outward as children develop cognitively. The 2nd grade theme of “Our Coastal Community” focuses on the rewards and responsibilities of living near the coast. The city of Los Angeles—past and present—is at the center of 3rd grade studies. In 4th grade, students consider the diverse and great state of California, while 5th grade learning is focused on our nation’s founding and growth. Throughout the social studies program, every child’s curiosity and imagination is encouraged as their awareness grows around what it means to be an informed and engaged citizen.

Pods (K-1)

Students are exposed to two major units of study: “Home and Family” and “School and Friendship.”

Both units of study are organized around hands-on projects, field trips, and inquiry. Through writing, art, dramatic play, interviews, block building, and discussion, every child is encouraged to follow their interests and natural curiosity while gaining an understanding of the concepts of interdependence, communication, diversity, impact on the environment, and the importance of relationships.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Understand concepts of wants and needs
- Appreciate multicultural society/styles of family structures
- Understand concept of responsibilities of individual to group
- Create two- and three-dimensional maps of home, school, and neighborhood

Second Grade

The 2nd grade social studies curriculum is guided by the essential question, “How are our lives impacted by living in a coastal community?” Students explore the relationships between plants, animals, and the people living and working near the coast. Launched on a yearlong journey to discover what the coast offers us in terms of work, food/resources, and recreation, students consider how geography affects our everyday lives. Field trips to the Los Angeles Harbor, the farmers market, the aquarium, Ballona Wetlands, Santa Monica Pier, and The Marine Mammal Rescue Center are integrated into discussions and learning about transportation, climate, trade, agriculture, and other systems as students develop an understanding of the complexity of their coastal community as well as strategies to ensure its vitality. Children participate in group projects, discussions, block building, reading, writing, gardening, and art experiences. Service learning projects reflect curricular themes.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Understand need for community norms
- Appreciate differences and similarities
- Understand influence of climate and location
- Understand and use time-sequence terms, change over time
- Understand concept of goods to market

Third Grade

The focus of study is our diverse and growing city, beginning with its early history and continuing with its growth to modern times. With an overarching theme of cultures throughout the Los Angeles area, students explore and research the various groups of people who have shaped our city. Guided by the essential question, “What is culture?” 3rd graders learn about ethnicity, religion, family values, the arts, politics, and language. The concepts of culture and community are covered through the exploration of ancient Los Angeles, the Tongva and their contact with Europeans, the El Pueblo settlement, and how other cultural groups contribute to Los Angeles as the city changes over time. Through field trips to significant locations and landmarks in Los Angeles, including the Japanese American National Museum, Watts Towers, Olvera Street, La Brea Tar Pits, and the Central Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library, 3rd graders gain an understanding of the rich and diverse cultural contributions from Angelinos past and present. Third graders enjoy learning in hands-on ways (harvesting tule from Madrona Marsh to build a life-size Native American dwelling) to using appropriate technological tools (inspiration, podcasts, and Keynote in their individual research projects). The Los Angeles Basin provides a backdrop for 3rd graders to enlarge their repertoire of geographic and mapmaking skills.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Correctly apply terms related to time and chronology
- Read and create maps using a key, compass rose, and elevation symbols
- Describe the cultural interaction among people in Los Angeles
- Demonstrate an understanding of a historical figure’s point of view

Fourth Grade

Launched by the essential question, “What happens when one culture encounters another?” 4th graders consider the beauty and diversity of California’s people, history, land, and animals. The yearlong Voices of the West project invites student inquiry and evaluation of the impact that Native Americans, Spanish explorers, missionaries, rancheros, gold rush 49ers, pioneers, and Asian- and African-Americans had on the Old West, on one another, and on the natural environment. Students write from the perspective of each of these groups, and they discuss intent, impact, and community building. California’s regional contrasts and commonalities come into focus through field trips and individual reports on a California animal. Exploring questions of statehood and citizenship, students access primary and secondary sources.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Identify similarities and differences between the past and present
- Understand how the natural resources of a geographical location influence culture
- Read and create maps using a key, scale, compass rose, and grid lines
- Demonstrate an understanding of another culture or historical figure’s point of view
- Describe the social, political, cultural, and economic life and interaction among people in California
- Demonstrate understanding of California’s diverse geographical regions

Fifth Grade

Forming Our Nation

Guided by the essential questions, “What contributed to America’s quest for independence?” and “How did American values develop?” students begin to understand the perspective and experiences of the many people who made early America. They explore Native Americans, explorers, colonists, immigrants, slaves, free African-Americans, pioneers, and government leaders. Students develop a growing awareness of the ways they learn about the past and the methods and tools of the historian. Fifth graders study how events and ideas shaped the United States. Considering history through the eyes of the people they study, students are asked to reflect on how gender and ability may have affected lives and the course of events. Students deepen their understanding of the interrelatedness of geography, economics, culture, ethics, and political systems. Students gain an appreciation for the democratic system, the value of our nation’s diversity, and a sense of empowerment to work for change within the framework of the law. Research projects involve multiple technologies, including Google Docs, iPhoto, Comic Life, iPads, and Keynote.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Identify and interpret multiple causes and effects of historical events
- Place key historic events and people in chronological sequence in a geographic context
- Differentiate between primary and secondary resources
- Pose relevant questions and draw conclusions about information encountered in documents, photographs, maps, and artifacts

SCIENCE

Our inquiry-based program encourages children to satisfy their curiosities through experiences. Presented with open-ended questions, students gather evidence, conduct experiments in the lab and in the field, propose solutions, and collaborate with one another to defend their thinking. Experiential lessons deepen content knowledge in relevant ways. Students gain awareness of the natural world while enhancing skills needed in a world of rapidly expanding scientific knowledge. Students connect concepts, develop critical-thinking skills, and gain confidence in communicating their ideas clearly.

Pod students are introduced to the scientific method by considering the five senses, the concept of gravity, and plant and animal life cycles. Second graders use questioning, observing, measuring, and concluding skills while exploring the properties of matter. In 3rd grade, students study the more complex systems of food, nutrition, and digestion, using Wildwood’s community garden as a lab. Our 4th graders apply scientific methods in studying the solar system, astronomy, plate tectonics, and earthquakes. Fifth graders consider the building blocks of the universe through the study of atoms, machines, robots, and Newtonian physics.

Pods (K-1)

Students begin their time in the science lab exploring the five senses to make careful scientific observations. From these observations, Pod students construct realistic animal habitats. During a unit on plant and animal life cycles, Pod students plant seeds and observe their growth over time. Dissecting lima beans, children see firsthand that seeds contain new baby plants. They also study the four stages of a ladybug’s life cycle, learning that ladybugs are beneficial insects when they release them into the Wildwood community garden.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Learn and use laboratory and equipment safely

- Children identify themselves as scientists breaking stereotypes
- Make accurate observations using the five senses
- Conduct experiments to gather data in pictures, words, and numbers
- Determine properties of objects: magnetism, buoyancy, and flexibility
- Understand the role of beneficial insects

Second Grade

Using the scientific method, students “think like a scientist.” Students challenge claims by various paper-towel brands, and they invent original experiments testing properties such as strength and absorbency. Furthering their exploration of properties of matter, 2nd graders compare fruits and vegetables to determine differences and similarities in shape, size, weight, and color. Second graders also experiment with liquids, gases, and solids to expand their knowledge of matter.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Understand and use the scientific method
- Understand components of an ecosystem
- Determine how different organisms survive in various environments
- Learn how plants convert energy in the process of photosynthesis
- Understand that matter is composed of liquids, solids, and gases

Third Grade

Food, nutrition, and digestion are the focus as students gain an understanding of more complex systems. Students learn about the structure of organisms and discover how the human digestive system takes the nutrients out of food, delivers it to other systems in the body, and disposes of waste. Students learn which nutrients are essential for the body and how good eating habits contribute to good health. In conjunction with the 3rd grade social studies curriculum, 3rd graders study the water cycle. Guided by the essential question, “How do natural cycles balance and regulate the earth and its atmosphere?” students use their knowledge of the water cycle and Los Angeles’ water consumption to search for ways to better conserve this natural resource.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Understand that the food chain consists of producers, consumers, and decomposers
- Understand that plants are the primary source of energy entering the food chain
- Know sequential steps of digestion and the role of each organ and component
- Know that most of Earth’s water is present as saltwater in oceans covering most of the planet
- Learn why the amount of freshwater in rivers, lakes, underground sources, and glaciers is limited

Fourth Grade

A focus on earth sciences is guided by essential questions, including, “What makes Earth different from all the other planets?” and “How do scientists use their knowledge of our planet to understand other planets?” Fourth graders gain a foundation for geology, including the study of Earth’s structure, plate boundaries and plate tectonics, earthquakes, minerals, weathering and erosion, and the rock cycle. Students are introduced to astronomy with a concentration on our solar system, covering such topics as the basic organization of our universe and where our galaxy and solar system fit into that structure, the planetary moon system, the composition of the planets, asteroids, meteorites, and comets.

- Determine cause and effect
- Understand matter as small particles called atoms that combine to form molecules
- Identify igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks
- Compare and contrast characteristics of each planet
- Understand basic plate tectonics, earthquakes, and volcanoes

Fifth Grade

Students begin their focus on the physical sciences, answering the essential question, “What is the building block of everything in our universe?” Students learn how to build models of atoms and molecules, understand chemical and physical properties to determine an unknown substance, draw diagrams of slide samples, and use microscopes to solve a forensic mystery. The 5th grade intensive science unit centers on Newton’s three laws of motion, simple machines, car building, and programming NXT Mindstorms robots.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Demonstrate understanding Newton’s laws of physics
- Identify the purpose and functions of simple machines
- Design and build simple series and parallel circuits
- Plan, conduct, and record a simple investigation
- Predict the outcome of an investigation and monitor results for accuracy

MATHEMATICS

Wildwood’s mathematics program gives students a deep understanding of math concepts, emphasizing skills and strategies to solve problems in multiple ways. The curriculum makes math meaningful by connecting lessons and projects to everyday life and by building “math esteem,” which is crucial for every student.

Our elementary program Primary Mathematics out of Singapore Math as its primary resource and guide. Linked to the nationally recognized Common Core State Standards. The Primary Mathematics program allows for the appreciation of children’s intuitive mathematical thinking, emphasizes problem-solving, and builds mathematical understanding through a CPA approach. The CPA approach is a three-step process that takes children from concrete, to pictorial, then abstract. Students first encounter the mathematical concepts through the use of manipulatives. They then move on to the pictorial stage in which pictures are used to model problems. When students are familiar with the ideas taught, they progress to a more advanced or abstract state in which only numbers, notations, and symbols are used. Concepts are addressed from a number of directions that challenge students to think and understand.

Pods (K-1)

Children discover the value of knowing many ways to solve a given problem. Teachers guide students through a series of strategies to help them solve problems and to express mathematical thinking.

Each student keeps a math journal to create a record of their mathematical thinking in pictures, numerals, and words. Orally sharing their problem-solving strategies provides an opportunity to practice clear mathematical communication.

In kindergarten, the math curriculum reinforces concepts and essential skills relevant for this age, enhances student understanding of what is around them, and motivates children to explore and learn more. First graders

begin the year with ways to count to 10, and within a short amount of time move into learning about and working with subtraction. Single-digit multiplication is introduced later in the year with division introduced very briefly immediately after. Students are not expected to memorize multiplication facts yet. Teachers stress conceptual understanding over math-fact drill at this level. Practical applications are used in lesson presentation and word problems. In addition to the arithmetic operations, this first level teaches ordinal numbers, shapes, measurement, time telling, money, and graphs.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction
- Understand and apply properties of operations and the relationship between addition and subtraction
- Add and subtract within 20
- Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract
- Reason with shapes and their attributes

Second Grade

Students learn addition and subtraction with renaming (carrying and borrowing), multiplication and division, place value, measurement, money, introduction of fractions, writing numbers in words, time telling, graphs, and very introductory geometric shapes and area.

Students begin to use various Web-based games and software programs to enhance agility with math facts.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction
- Work with equal groups of objects to gain foundations for multiplication
- Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract
- Measure lengths indirectly and by iterating length units
- Work with time and money

Third Grade

Students focus on more advanced math work on the four arithmetic operations including long division, fractions (equivalent fractions plus adding), measurement, graphs, time, and geometry. Two-step word problems and mental calculation are also taught. Embedded in each core unit is the opportunity for students to further develop number sense and computation skills acquired in the primary grades. Connecting student interest with imaginative projects keeps math fun and engaging. Projects include visually and numerically illustrating repeated addition and multi-digit multiplication. To support this learning in years past, students have created "Crazy Bug Books," explored ice-cream-scoop fractions, and engaged in GoAnimate to create multiplication cartoons.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Develop an understanding of multiplication and division strategies for multiplication and division within 100
- Develop an understanding of fractions, beginning with unit fractions
- Develop an understanding of the structure of arrays and of area
- Describe and analyze two-dimensional shapes

Fourth Grade

Focusing on five main units of study, this year progresses through place value, numbers and operations, patterns, functions and change, geometry, and data analysis and probability. Fourth graders continue to develop multiple strategies to solve problems and spend a great deal of time explaining their thinking with one another.

Students learn all four functions with both fractions and decimals. Geometry coverage is also very advanced as students compute the degrees of angles and solve complex area and perimeter questions. Students work with advanced whole number concepts (e.g., factors, multiples, rounding off), money, other geometric concepts, graphs, and averages. Two-digit multipliers are introduced at this level. Students complete computation problems and the number of word problems gradually increases at this level.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Build fluency with multi-digit multiplication
- Use division to find quotients involving multi-digit dividends
- Develop an understanding of fraction equivalence
- Add and subtract fractions with like denominators and multiply fractions by whole numbers
- Analyze and classify geometric figures based on their properties

Fifth Grade

This year the areas of study include numbers, operations and algebraic thinking, fractions, percentages, measurement and data, and geometry. Students engage in advanced work with decimals, as well as, multiplication and division with two-digit multipliers and divisors. They learn to work with percentages and continue with advanced work on fractions, geometry, and graphs. Time and rate word problems, as well as other types of word problems, are given a great deal of attention. Classes meet in whole class and small instruction groups. Each student is challenged appropriately with no ceiling as to what can be learned.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Write and interpret numerical expressions
- Understand the place value system
- Perform operations with percentages
- Use equivalent fractions as a strategy to add and subtract fractions

SPANISH

Spanish language and culture is interwoven throughout the school K-5. In Kindergarten and First Grade, it appears through songs and games when connected to the curriculum or through family shares.

Beginning in 2nd grade and on through 5th grade, Spanish language and culture takes on a larger and deeper role using an intensive model approach. Over an entire semester, Spanish is taught in conjunction with the on-going classroom studies, thoughtfully interwoven through projects and lessons and tiered in order to meet the needs of students with varying skill levels. Through meaningful projects, students gain an understanding of cultural elements of Spanish-speaking people and countries, exploring food, clothing, recreation, and so much more.

Second Grade

Keeping in line with the Social Studies theme of “Community”, students begin to notice Spanish culture and language in our immediate community and surrounding neighborhoods. The semester is spent focusing on the essential question, “In what ways does Spanish language and culture impact our neighborhood and community?”

Language is integrated throughout daily Morning Meeting times. Students explore the calendar, learning about the months of the year, seasons, and birthdays. Conversational phrases are also introduced. Students compare and contrast the Spanish and English alphabets and begin to recognize written words. By listening and interacting, students comprehend basic vocabulary, syntax, and idiomatic expressions essential for everyday communication. Favorite stories are read in Spanish and English.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Use of the verbs tener, querer, hacer (to have, to want, to make)
- Make requests (i.e., I am hungry, May I please have ...)
- Say and read the alphabet and basic words
- Order of the seasons
- Identify classroom and community objects
- Increase awareness of Spanish language and culture within our neighborhood

Third Grade

Staying closely connected to the Social Studies theme of “Los Angeles,” students begin to deepen their understanding of Spanish language and culture in the city of Los Angeles. They also learn to ask and answer questions and focus on correct pronunciation. Students learn by singing songs and playing games in class. They are introduced to the cultures of many Spanish-speaking countries and create national flags. Spanish reading and writing also increases in 3rd grade.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Pose questions using who, what, when, where, and how
- Increase awareness of Spanish language and culture within the city of Los Angeles
- Tell time, position, and place
- Use action verbs
- Write autobiographically

Fourth Grade

Students continue to develop the ability to understand spoken and written Spanish and to build confidence in writing and speaking at a basic level. Vocabulary expands to include terms used to describe geographic features, the weather, verbs in present tense, and expressions with the verb tener (to have). Students’ knowledge of vocabulary is assessed regularly by evaluating responses to direct questions about stories and songs, writing and using the vocabulary creatively, and actively participating in games.

STANDARDS AND SKILLS:

- Explore and examine the impact of Spanish language and culture throughout California history
- Introduction of verbs of emotion (happy, angry, tired, etc.)
- Adjective gender agreement
- Use and understand geographic terms and directions

- Use compare and contrast language
- Ask and answer questions with peers on a given topic

Fifth Grade

In 5th grade, Spanish is year-long and work continues to build on the skills learned in the previous year's Spanish program. Projects become more independent and require self-reflection of all their learning.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Wildwood's elementary visual arts program promotes confidence with materials, techniques, skills, and a genuine enjoyment of the creative process. Each child is challenged to closely observe, experiment, make decisions, and find personal meaning in his or her work. Every student has opportunities to draw, paint, sculpt, and experiment with printmaking, ceramics, and technology. Art projects are often linked to learning in other disciplines and inspired by visits from local artists and by field trips to the Los Angeles County of Museum of Art, the Getty, and Fowler Museum. Students are immersed in two-week rotations to create several projects focused on a specific theme. All 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students also participate in a five-week intensive unit culminating in an exhibition of their work.

Through drama, music, dance, and movement, students learn different forms of expression and cultivate the unique beauty of their own imaginations. Our program recognizes each creative voice and nurtures and expands each child's ability to work productively in a group of peers. Music and performances reflect a range of cultures, celebrating the similarities and differences among us. All students enjoy classes in our light-filled studio.

Visual Arts

Pods (K-1)

Fundamentals of Visual Arts

Students discover elements of art and principles of design through color, texture, line, shape, form, and pattern in fundamentals of drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, mixed media, and new genres. In collaboration with their social studies theme, Homes and Habitats, Pod students create ceramic objects for their homes. Pots, cups, and plates are formed, glazed, and fired in the Wildwood kiln. Students are encouraged to have free expression while experimenting with learned techniques and skills in every project.

Second Grade

Portraits and Place

Linking humanities and science, students connect their artwork with the study of "Our Coastal Community" as well as the multicultural theme "Appearance." Students draw and paint portraits and self-portraits as they consider skin tones, smiles, and personal style. Students are introduced to art history as they explore a variety of genres. They connect their own realistic and abstract self-studies to well-known artists such as Frida Kahlo, David Hockney, and Fahr El Nissa Zeid. Units of study include drawing with a focus on 2-D and 3-D portraiture, painting with a focus on color mixing, printmaking, and sculpturing, using found and natural materials to create textured works.

Third Grade

Landscape and Los Angeles

Students collaborate to create murals for public spaces. From design concept to execution, these large and site-specific works of art evolve as students communicate with one another and incorporate multiple perspectives. Students also enjoy landscape and plein air painting in the Wildwood garden and on location in the Los Angeles area. Independently, each student produces a series of weavings using a range of local materials and techniques while gaining an appreciation for contrast and unity in the visual arts. Interdisciplinary collaborations with performing arts include scenic and set design for dramatic productions.

Fourth Grade

Sculpture and Architecture

Students develop their approaches to 3-D art making by visiting the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Hammer Museum, and the Adamson House. They study the works of artists and art movements such as Calder, Louise Nevelson, and Dada. Abstract installations, mobiles, and clay relief sculptures are some of the work created by 4th grade hands and imaginations. Each student also creates a ceramic project, including a realistic animal sculpture connected to his or her studies of California indigenous species, including starfish, whales, and pumas.

Fifth Grade

Human Figure

With an emphasis on identity, self, and the human figure, students create a variety of masks using ceramics, plaster, and paper. Students practice proportion in representational figure drawing, and they incorporate ideas of what we don't see when looking at someone. Students refer to the elements of art and principles of design throughout the year.

Performing Arts

Pods (K-1)

Essential Question: "How can we use our bodies and voices to explore different characters?" Students experiment with the many colors in our world and celebrate them through poetry, singing, rhythm instruments, sign-language songs, games, and stories.

Essential Question: "How can stories inspire us?" Students read many stories that open a world of ideas for creating inventions, constructing imaginary worlds, and exploring how different characters walk and talk. A rainforest unit is filled with singing while playing nature-inspired musical instruments and learning about the animals that live in the jungle. The students bring a classic children's story to life in their performance of The Great Kapok Tree.

Alternate Year

Essential Question: "How do we learn by using our own imaginations?" Students are launched into outer-space exploration, learning many songs, playing space games, talking into a space microphone, and traveling throughout the room "without gravity" as imaginations soar on a space adventure. Students later dive into the world of dragons where they learn to sing Puff, the Magic Dragon in sign language, read many dragon stories, and meet the Dragon Queen.

Essential Question: "How can performing arts help our problem-solving and cooperation?" Children learn to square dance, play percussion instruments, and rehearse and perform The Hoedown. This original play takes place on a farm and teaches the value of helping our friends.

Second Grade

Essential Question: "How are music, movement, and acting connected?" Second graders explore the ocean as inspiration. They sing songs, explore the motions of different sea creatures, dance with sails, build an underwater world out of blocks and fabrics, and learn to hula dance. Students are introduced to music theory, listening to famous classical composers such as Ludwig van Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Clara Schumann. Taking turns, students read and act out the story Loud Emily in class, gaining confidence in using a big projected voice.

Essential Question: "How many different ways are there to perform?" In the spring, students turn the Wildwood studio into a circus. Students play kazoos, juggle, sing, learn acrobatics, and clown around. They also study and appreciate the moral of the stories in Aesop's Fables and turn Aesop's short stories into a 2nd grade play. Students explore the music of Duke Ellington and his impact on America and music. With twists and turns, students learn to swing dance.

Third Grade

Essential Question: "How do we learn about different cultures and how they view community by exploring folk tales, cultural songs, and dances?" Folk tales from around the world and a wide range of cultures are illuminated in a story, onstage, and through video. Students gain insights into global cultures and how various cultures view community. Each student spends six weeks investigating one culture, collaborating with classmates to perform a traditional folk tale. Each student is expected to memorize lines, remember stage blocking, and learn a traditional dance from cultures, including African, Chinese, Native American, and others.

Mime

Students are introduced to this silent art form by watching a professional mime troupe performance. Next, through silent games and using the mime laws of handling, students begin handling objects, creating characters, and telling stories, culminating in a final project titled "A Day in the Life of ..." that encourages acting an imagined character. Third graders also enjoy learning Stomp—music and dance with original instruments.

Fourth Grade

Shakespeare

Essential Question: "How do we learn about Shakespeare, his language, and times by performing a Shakespearean play?" The world and words of William Shakespeare are at the core of this year's intensive study. This focuses on A Midsummer Night's Dream. Fourth graders investigate and make meaning of the text,

play several roles, memorize lines, sing, learn stage blocking, and learn about vocal projection onstage. Many students create and perform original musical compositions, always the highlight of an evening performance for family and friends.

Hand Bells and Anthems

As part of their music theory study, 4th graders learn the chromatic scale and note lengths, and they receive a basic introduction to reading music. After listening to and watching a performance by the acclaimed Sonos Handbell Ensemble, students learn to play the hand bells and perform as an ensemble at All School Meeting. Fourth graders are also introduced to the dance form created by the troupe Pilobolus, which expands the definition of dance and sparks creativity in the Wildwood dance repertoire. Next, the students take a look at a variety of different national anthems, from South Africa to Canada, and discuss the meanings behind each. The students' work culminates with writing their own anthems.

Fifth Grade

Essential Question: "How are we inspired to create original work?" Students gain sophistication in developing interesting characters and humorous sketches within the world of silent films and Vaudeville.

Broadway Musicals

An intensive study begins by exploring the period and history of this American art form. Students work within the structure of a traditional Broadway show, writing and participating in a number of creative musical acts. Students take on a variety of roles such as creative director, costume designer, choreographer, photographer, light designer, program maker, and many more. The result of their hard work is a true sharing of artistry and ideas.

Square Dancing

Students swing their partners, call dance steps, and have a good ole time as they learn to appreciate traditional square dancing.

Music

Instruction in music theory and instrumentation continues as students learn to play Orff Xylophones. Fifth graders also learn elements of ensemble singing in weekly rehearsal with Wildwood Chorus.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Wildwood's physical education program promotes the use of Life Skills to help children develop physical and social skills and a lifelong love for healthy physical activity. The program's four essential components are reinforced through play and practice:

- Sportsmanship—Each student learns positive social behavior through movement and interaction with others.
- Physical fitness—Students learn to develop and maintain the best possible level of performance, understanding, and appreciation for physical fitness.
- Skill acquisition—Each student learns specific skills, such as throwing, catching, striking, and kicking.
- Self-image—Students develop a positive self-image that includes awareness and understanding of one's body, the use of the body as a means of expression, and the body as an instrument for self-realization.

Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd Grades

Physical education classes begin with warm-up activities. Jogging, jumping rope, parachute games, tumbling, and dance activities build aerobic and anaerobic endurance. Games designed to develop physical skills that include agility, balance, object manipulation, spatial awareness, directionality, and creative movement are enjoyed in large and small groups. Foundational sports skills of jumping; catching and throwing; kicking, trapping and dribbling; and volleying and striking are learned in a fun, noncompetitive atmosphere. All partner and group play is supervised to help children develop positive personal skills, self-esteem, and ease in cooperative social situations.

Third, 4th, and 5th Grades

As children develop, games and sports help in refining fundamental skills and learning the specialized skills, rules, and strategies needed to play soccer, volleyball, flag football, basketball, field hockey, softball, and other sports. Sportsmanship and collaborative team play are emphasized. Cooperative games help students build relationships, enhance communication skills, and provide opportunities to work together and solve challenges.

All P.E. activities focus on the five components of health-related fitness: aerobic capacity, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and body composition. Children learn to set and maintain physical fitness goals and develop a positive attitude about leading an active and healthy lifestyle.

HEALTH

Wildwood's health curriculum lays the foundation for each child's goal of physical well-being. Our health curriculum helps students become good decision-makers with healthy goals when faced with lifestyle choices. The health program consists of the following components:

- Physical health–The health of the developing body
- Mental and emotional health–The health of the mind, including feelings and thoughts
- Social health–Relationships with other people, including family and friends

Through discussions and activities, students develop Life Skills and tools to lead healthy lives. These skills include decision-making, goal setting, how to obtain help, stress management, refusal skills, and conflict resolution. By developing these skills, students enhance their self-esteem and their ability to be effective communicators, critical thinkers, respectful citizens, and responsible and health-conscious individuals.

Topics include the following:

- Life Skills
- Conflict resolution
- Nutrition
- Substance abuse prevention (presented in an age-appropriate manner)
- Safety
- Fitness
- Mindfulness

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Pods

- Librarians read stories that focus on Wildwood's Life Skills.
- With the help of parent volunteers, every student is supported in finding a just-right book (a book they can read on their own), a storybook (a book someone at home reads to and with them), and a free-choice book (any book they are interested in). After checkout, students read their new books with each other or parent volunteers.
- Students are also encouraged to come to the library before school, during Big Yard, and after school to check out books.
- Pod students participate in the California Young Reader Medal. The CYRM is a program in which participating California schools read the same five books and vote on which should win. There is a book discussion and a related activity for each book as well as a lesson on the importance and procedures of voting. Life-size voting booths add a fun seriousness to the occasion.

Second Grade

- Students learn the sections of the library and literary genres through stories and activities.
- Students participate in the California Young Reader Medal.
- Students are introduced to the online catalog. They are able to locate books in the Fiction, Series Fiction, and Storybook sections.
- Students check out a just-right book, a free-choice book, and a storybook.

Third Grade

- Students learn about Melvil Dewey and the Dewey Decimal System. They are able to use the online catalog in order to find any book in our library and any other library.
- Students take a field trip to the downtown Los Angeles Public Library where they get library cards and use their book-searching skills in a new environment.
- Internet Safety/Digital Citizenship: Using class discussions, online games, and literature, 3rd graders explore what it means to be a responsible Internet user. The Internet is a powerful tool for all, and we emphasize responsibility and wise decision-making for our students.

Fourth Grade

- Working closely with teachers, the technology and visual arts departments for the animal research project, students choose their California animal and research through books, encyclopedia articles, fact folders, and Internet resources to become an expert on their animal.
- Literacy Promotion: Through advertising, students are able to persuade others to read their favorite books. This could be in the form of a written card that hangs from their book suggestion, an audio ad from GarageBand that is attached to their book in the online catalog, or a Keynote presented to the class.

Fifth Grade

The Time of Your Life Books: Working with the 5th grade language arts teachers, the librarians put together a list of more than 100 books that students are encouraged to read before they leave elementary school. This list was compiled for 5th graders because of the push of students wanting to read books that were appropriate for older readers. Our message is that there will be time for those books when they are older.

Right now, all these wonderful books are not just appropriate but designed for their age. This is the time of their life to read them. Students are not asked to read all these books. Teachers read a teaser from a few books, and students browse all the books on the tables to choose a few they are interested in. Language arts teachers organizes them into book groups, and students are encouraged to choose books from this list throughout the year.

Wildwood Medal

The Wildwood Medal is a student-driven literature award for 5th graders. All 5th graders nominate a book that is medal worthy in that it has Life Skills, broad appeal, literary merit, and originality. Language arts teachers and librarians choose five of the nominated books for the final nominees. Every 5th grader reads at least one book. To be on the committee (which is voluntary), a student must read all five books, complete written assignments for each book, and schedule and attend five discussions with faculty/staff. These deep discussions last about 15 to 20 minutes and focus on character development, Life Skills, and other substantive topics, just like adults do when they read a book.

When a student has earned a spot on the committee, they meet during their Big Yard/lunchtime and go over the evidence of which book should win and why. These meetings are confidential during the process, and what goes on is not to be discussed until after the winner is announced. Students agree on one overall winner and give the other books honorary mentions for their strongest qualities. The winner is announced at the last All School Meeting during a presentation that students create. Students do all this committee work on top of their regular assigned class work. It is completely optional.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology at Wildwood is not seen as a separate subject area but rather as a tool that supports and enriches the curriculum. Students are encouraged to experiment, explore, create, and collaborate in a supportive environment. Technology at Wildwood is ever-changing, ever-growing, and always evolving.

The Tec D.E.C. is a place for students to discover, explore, and create. The space design breaks from the traditional media lab and can be transformed to meet specific technology needs including (but not limited to) video production (including green screen effects), 3D design and printing, building, robotics, and tinkering. The Tec D.E.C. serves as a resource to support classroom teachers as students tackle design thinking challenges..

The Technology Department works closely with classroom teachers and specialists to integrate technology into the curriculum in an appropriate and meaningful way. With flexible scheduling, we are able to see students in a manner that best supports the current project or area of study.

We see Pod students on a regular basis, helping to build a foundation of technology skills. As students move through the grades, we are always mindful of reinforcing skills previously taught as well as introducing new skills. The following is a sampling of activities and topics the students experience (by grade level).

Pods

Pod students learn and use a variety of programs and apps in their exploration of technology including Kid Pix, My Story, and Puppet Pals. Starfall, an online resource, is available to students, as well. Additionally, students have an opportunity to experiment with Makey-Makeys and begin to explore the exciting world of robotics.

Second Grade

As students transition into 2nd grade, they begin to work in earnest with word-processing programs such as Pages and Word. They are introduced to Keynote and iPhoto. Online resources such as Google Maps are explored. Each class has a cart of six laptops available at all times. Additionally, students have an opportunity to explore circuits with littleBits, create stop-motion animation films, experiment with green screen, and develop coding skills while learning to program robots in both the virtual and real worlds.

Third Grade

Third graders are 1:1 with iPads. They incorporate their own voice and other audio into digital projects. They receive age-appropriate instruction on how to gather research and perform queries. Third graders continue to work in Keynote and Pages. Formal keyboarding is introduced and can be practiced at school and at home. Students also dive deeper into coding and robotics as well as try their hands at game design.

Fourth Grade

Fourth graders are 1:1 with iPads. They participate in conversations about website credibility and use the Internet and library resources to gather information for their research projects. They continue to develop as filmmakers working with stop-motion animation and green screen effects. They have multiple opportunities to create and print 3D designs on the Tec D.E.C.'s 3D printers.

Fifth Grade

Fifth graders are 1:1 with iPads and using technology is a regular part of the student's day, helping to prepare them for the transition into middle school. Students collaborate using tools such as Google Docs. They continue to develop as filmmakers creating silent films and commercials. They further their exploration of 3D design and printing, circuits, robotics, stop-motion animation and the green screen to bring projects to life.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Wildwood's elementary Community Involvement program engages students in class and schoolwide projects and partnerships that aim to be mutually beneficial, that are related to classroom learning, and that respond to a real need. Our community involvement endeavors are designed to create relationships with people, organizations, and the environment over the school year, and often many years.

As Pod themes vary, student service learning projects follow coursework. For "The World of Work," students organize and run a post office for the Wildwood community and write letters to the elderly at a nearby nursing home. Pod students have the job of organizing the Lost & Found for Wildwood. They also collect egg cartons that are needed by St. Joseph's Center to disseminate, and they aid the homeless population during their Homes and Habitats study.

Second graders engage in various interdisciplinary projects, such as the Planned Community Project, building a model city that incorporates fundamentals of sustainability, then applying their learning to the very real need to provide more trash cans in the neighborhood. The service project begins with the mayor's visit to Wildwood.

Third graders work at Ballona Wetlands or Madrona Marsh removing nonnative plants. Harvesting tule that needs to be thinned provides a needed service, and it also provides students with the raw materials to build a model Native American dwelling, employing an authentic method used by the Tongva people who inhabited the

Los Angeles area. In addition, 3rd graders organize Veterans Day activities and send care packages and letters to our troops overseas.

As part of their study of California, 4th graders realize that the population of food-insecure people is rising, so they make regular visits to the Ocean Park Community Center, where they prepare and distribute lunches to people at the shelter.

Aligned with the 5th grade multicultural curriculum of ability/disability, students develop meaningful relationships with the children at HELP Center. Wildwood students work and play with their friends with special mental and physical needs.

The Community Involvement Kids, a student leadership organization, focuses on sustainability and environmental issues, as well as responding to a natural disaster such as the tsunami in Japan.

MULTICULTURAL PROGRAM

Wildwood is committed to the continuing process of developing and sustaining an inclusive and equitable community where all members feel valued and recognized. Multiculturalism is integral to the Wildwood community in a variety of ways. A thematic scope and sequence is intentionally integrated into the advisory program and academic curriculum, and student support programs are in place at every grade level. At the elementary school, Cultural Connections, a student club, offers opportunities to explore diversity themes. At the middle and upper schools, a range of multicultural offerings include student affinity groups, a Straight and Gay Alliance (SAGA), a student of color peer mentor group, regular discussions of multicultural current events, and an annual multicultural symposium. Wildwood's Parent Multicultural Collaborative (PMC) hosts community events for parents, including Multicultural Community Dialogue, Multicultural Family Story Night, an annual picnic for families of children of color, and more.

Wildwood's full-time director of multicultural equity and inclusion leads and closely collaborates with Wildwood's Multicultural Leadership Team made up of faculty members and administrators from the elementary, middle, and upper schools. The team participates in extensive training to guide the multicultural program throughout the school. The team also focuses on personal, interpersonal, cultural support and continuing reflection on institutional practice. The goal of Wildwood's student multicultural programming is to help each student develop an understanding of his or her own multicultural identity while fostering a better understanding and ability to relate to the experiences and perspectives of others. We believe that such awareness, along with skill development and practice in cross-cultural communication and critical thinking, will enhance our students' ability to collaborate effectively within our community and in the global context as they engage the world beyond our community.

ADVISORY

Wildwood School believes advisory is essential for student success. Our Advisory program begins in 5th grade and continues through senior year. Like all classes, Advisory offers a structured curriculum that integrates academic support, peer bonding and team building, multicultural programs, community involvement, and activities designed to enhance higher-level thinking and communication skills.

Advisory classes are led by teachers who serve as students' mentors, advocates, and primary links between home and school. The small group setting encourages the development of supportive relationships with peers and adults who students grow to know well and can trust. Advisory becomes a safe space where kids try out new ideas and explore their own identities. In the process, they cultivate a sense of self—academically, emotionally, and socially.

With a focus on relationships and exchange of ideas, one of the primary objectives of Advisory is to provide students with a comfortable place to engage in thoughtful—and often lively—discussions about national and world events. Guided by their advisor, students learn to share their thoughts, listen to others' opinions, analyze sources, and respect differing points of view.

Part of the Advisory curriculum focuses on learning about and participating in local community involvement projects, both on campus and at local social-service agencies. Projects are age appropriate and selected to demonstrate to students what they can give and gain as they become aware of a range of community needs in human services and environmental stewardship.

Today, Wildwood's Advisory program is internationally recognized and is used in diverse settings around the country and abroad, ranging from classrooms in public schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District to the American School in Singapore. Hundreds of educators across the country use our strategies as a result of attending Wildwood Outreach Center's advisory workshops or by applying concepts from *The Advisory Toolkit*, a Wildwood publication that offers detailed information on creating and maintaining an Advisory program.