

# EXCELLENCE — *in* — ACADEMICS

*Preparing students  
for tomorrow's world*



**2008-2009 ELEMENTARY PROGRAM**



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for tomorrow's world*

## 2008-2009 Elementary Program

At NCS, Excellence in Academics is a culture. It is our strategic plan for immersing students in a culture of excellence—in a culture where achievement is valued and excellence is encouraged; or even better, where excellence is required. Our goal is to help all students realize their God-given gifts and to create a learning environment that provides opportunities to develop and use their gifts to the fullest to the glory of God.

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*Northland Christian School's mission is to provide  
academic excellence in a Christian environment  
enabling children to grow spiritually, intellectually,  
physically and socially.*

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# 2008-2009 Elementary Program

## *About NCS*

Northland Christian School, a co-educational, college preparatory school, was founded in 1974. NCS currently enrolls more than 800 students in preschool through 12th grade. The faculty is composed of dedicated, degreed Christian professionals. Many hold advanced degrees and are leaders in their fields of study.

NCS offers a demanding college preparatory curriculum, which includes practical training to help students in each grade level cope with the stage of life they are facing. Sensitive, competent, Christian teachers implement a challenging and complex curriculum designed to meet individual needs.

NCS has two campuses in Northwest Houston. The preschool through 5th grade campus is housed in the Bammel Church of Christ facility on FM 1960 West. The 6th through 12th grade campus is located five minutes away on a beautiful 17-acre campus.

### **Accreditations/Affiliations/Memberships**

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Texas Private School Accreditation Commission
- National Association of Christian Schools
- Texas Association of Non-Public Schools
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

### **Admissions Office**

(Located at our Secondary Campus)  
4363 Sylvanfield  
Houston, TX 77014  
281-440-1060 Fax 281-440-7572  
[www.northlandchristian.org](http://www.northlandchristian.org)

#### **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Northland Christian School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin regarding her policies, educational offerings, financial assistance programs, athletic programs, or other school-sponsored activities.

## *Enrollment Requirements*

Northland Christian School is a college-preparatory school. Students wishing to make application to Northland Christian School must furnish evidence that they are physically and emotionally fit, of good moral character, and academically capable. All applicants must:

- Complete all of the application procedures;
- Be eligible for re-enrollment in all schools previously attended;
- Score at or above the 50th percentile or higher on the reading comprehension and math entrance exam;
- Be free of severe learning and behavioral problems;
- Must not be coming directly from any type of rehabilitation program (i.e., behavioral, mental);
- Agree to abide by the rules outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook;
- Participate in an interview with member/members of the enrollment committee.

It is standard procedure for new students to be placed on academic and behavioral probation for the first year. If the student maintains satisfactory grades, conduct, and work habits during the first year of enrollment, the probationary status will be lifted.

## *Testing Procedures*

In order to maintain our high academic standards, prospective students will be required to complete and pass a battery of tests during the admissions process. These tests include the following:

### **Preliminary Assessments:**

- IQ testing with the school counselor;
- Stanford Early Achievement Test (K only);
- Assessment for reading comprehension and mathematics (grades 1-5);

### **Further Assessments:**

- Learning Styles Inventory;
- STAR reading level assessment (grades 1-5);
- Fluency/comprehension benchmark assessment (grades 1-3);
- Further diagnostic testing may be required.

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# Kindergarten Core Curriculum

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The NCS kindergarten curriculum is very academic in nature while remaining developmentally appropriate. Students have a one hour rest time in the afternoon. Parents may choose to have their child participate in extra-curricular activities during this time for an additional fee. These activities are listed on page 17. Student-teacher ratio is low, allowing for one-on-one interaction and individualized attention. Small learning groups encourage students to participate in lessons and centers.

## *Bible*

The Biblical Choices for a New Generation curriculum is designed specifically for private Christian schools. Students study Old Testament stories in the fall and New Testament stories in the spring. Weekly memory verses help students “hide God’s Word” in their hearts. Bible crafts are done weekly, encouraging students to be artistic and creative with the gifts God has provided them while reinforcing the concepts of the lesson. NCS does not teach a particular doctrine, but simply focuses on the stories read directly from the Bible.

## *Reading Readiness*

The Neuhaus Reading Readiness curriculum place students into small groups for direct instruction in the English alphabet. Word play, patterns, songs and hands-on activities are utilized to ensure all students master the skills of the alphabet, which is the foundation for reading. Memorization of the 11 Dolch sight word lists is highly recommended during the spring semester. Students who are academically ready are encouraged to participate in the Accelerated Reader program.

## *Guided Reading*

Students who are ready for more advanced reading challenges are able to participate in guided reading groups using the Wright Group’s Gear Up! guided reading series. This series teaches a good balance of fiction and non-fiction selections using leveled readers. It is our policy at NCS to provide opportunities for students to excel in the areas in which they are ready to be academically challenged.

## *Fluency*

The Wright Group’s Fluency First program is taught in the spring semester of kindergarten. This program is based on The Fluency Development Lesson, which was highly researched by Drs. Timothy Rasinski and Nancy Padak of Kent State University. Daily lessons use simple and brief reading selections. Students practice these lessons multiple times before performing for their peers. Teachers assess students on reading rate, accuracy, expression, volume, clarity, eye contact and gestures. Vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and word recognition skills are the focus of this entertaining and motivating curriculum.

## *English*

The Houghton Mifflin English program for kindergarten is age-appropriate, utilizing centers, bulletin boards, and small groups for instruction. Students are taught skills that form the basic foundation for writing and communication. Parts of speech, rhyming words, listening, and basic sentences are introduced. Modeled writing prepares the students for the higher-level writing of personal narratives, descriptions, stories, instructions, and reports.

## *Writing*

Colorful oral language and enriching vocabulary provide a basic foundation for future writing skills. Houghton Mifflin’s English series introduces students to various types of writing based on teacher modeling. Correct letter formation and good penmanship are stressed at this crucial stage of development. Storybook Weaver software allows students to create their own stories with full-color illustrations on the computer.

## *Math*

The Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions curriculum guides students to an understanding of patterns, shapes and relationships to build a foundation for higher level math. Manipulatives provide a developmentally appropriate method for reinforcing the concepts being taught.

## *Science*

The kindergarten science curriculum is teacher-created and includes many hands-on activities that are engaging and age-appropriate. Short units focus on areas that are interesting and relevant to the students. Seasonal topics are included. The science curriculum is taught from a Christian perspective.

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# Kindergarten Core Curriculum *continued*

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## ***Social Studies***

The social studies curriculum for kindergarten is teacher-created to meet the needs of students at this age. Certain topics coincide with the seasons so that they are relevant to the students. Basic globe and map skills are taught, along with patriotic symbols. Native Americans and Pilgrims are the focus for the fall season. Students also learn the concept of families, communities, community helpers and basic safety practices. Christian values are included in this curriculum.

## ***Music***

Musicplay for kindergarten by Denise Gagne, published in 2003, helps students learn to distinguish between the speaking and singing voice. Movement is a key aspect of this curriculum. Students learn to enjoy listening to different types of music. They also gain the experience of performing their newly-learned skills in front of an audience. Kindergarten students participate in a spring musical each year.

## ***Art***

Art is integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. Bible crafts and seasonal art projects allow students to be creative on a weekly basis. Students enjoy making Christmas crafts during the holiday season. Special projects include Rodeo Art drawings for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and a family heritage art project for Multicultural Week.

## ***Physical Education***

The elementary Physical Education program was developed by SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) and is taught by two highly-qualified coaches who have many years of teaching and coaching experience. P.E. classes are designed to develop skills that enhance learning in the classroom. All students participate in 30 minutes of P.E. daily. Classes are taught in the school's gymnasium and are highly structured in nature. Our belief is that daily physical activity is essential for good health and well-being. Kindergarten students focus on balancing skills and tumbling. Large-motor and fine-motor skills are further developed through various games and activities.

## ***Computer/Technology***

Kindergarten students are introduced to computer basics designated by the NETS (National Educational Technology Standards). Fundamental computer terminology becomes more familiar to students as they experience lessons integrated into their regular classroom studies. Students have facilitated time to use individual computers in the school's computer lab. Storybook Weaver software by RiverDeep is a kindergarten favorite that allows students to perfect their writing skills using basic technology. Classroom computers allow students to use educational software to develop math and alphabet skills.

## ***Junior Achievement***

NCS participates in the Junior Achievement Program. Trained community volunteers present five lessons during the spring semester. Students are exposed to personal economics through a collection of short stories read aloud by the volunteer. Children learn the role of self and of appreciating individual differences. They are introduced to the concept of money, spending and saving. They also learn to recognize the importance of working together. Lessons are designed around the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills).

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# L.E.A.P. Core Curriculum

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Learning Enrichment at an Accelerated Pace (LEAP) serves as a bridge class between kindergarten and first grade. This class is comprised of two different groups of students. One group includes students who have completed kindergarten and need another year for academic growth or maturity before moving on to first grade. The other group includes students who have completed preschool and have already mastered the concepts needed for the kindergarten class. The curriculum for LEAP is more challenging than our kindergarten program. Since LEAP students do not have a rest time in the afternoon, the entire day is spent focusing on academics and social interaction.

## *Bible*

The LEAP class uses the Positive Action Bible curriculum designed specifically for private Christian schools. Students study major Bible characters and their faith in God. Weekly memory verses help students to “hide God’s Word” in their hearts. Bible crafts encourage students to be artistic and creative with the gifts God has provided them, while reinforcing the concepts of the lesson. NCS does not teach a particular religion, but simply focuses on the stories read directly from the Bible.

## *Guided Reading*

LEAP students participate in guided reading groups using the Wright Group’s Gear Up! guided reading series and the Wright Group’s Take-Two’s reading series. These series provide a good balance of fiction and non-fiction selections using leveled readers. Students experience learning in small groups with individualized attention. The five components of reading are taught explicitly with this curriculum. Phonics, phonemic awareness, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency are all addressed. It is our policy at NCS to provide opportunities for students to excel in areas where they are ready to be academically challenged.

## *Fluency*

NCS recently adopted the Wright Group’s Fluency First program to be used during the spring semester of LEAP. This program is based on The Fluency Development Lesson, which was highly researched by Drs. Timothy Rasinski and Nancy Padak of Kent State University. Daily lessons use simple and brief reading selections that students practice multiple times before performing for their peers. Teachers assess students on reading rate, accuracy, expression, volume, clarity, eye contact and gestures. Vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and word recognition skills are the focus of this fun and motivating curriculum.

## *English*

NCS recently adopted the Houghton Mifflin English program. This program is very age-appropriate, utilizing centers, bulletin boards and small groups for instruction. Students are taught skills that form the basic foundation for writing and communicating. Parts of speech, rhyming words, listening, and basic sentences are introduced.

## *Writing*

LEAP students use writing curriculum developed by Schoolwide Publishers. Students are provided with multiple examples of excellent writing by published authors of children’s literature. Various genres are taught throughout the year through the use of small groups and guided instruction. Touchstone texts, mini-lessons, feedback and assessments give students the best environment possible for the Writing Workshop experience.

## *Math*

NCS recently adopted the Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions curriculum for LEAP. Students are guided to an understanding of patterns, shapes and relationships to build a foundation for higher math. Manipulatives provide a developmentally appropriate method for reinforcing the concepts being taught.

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## L.E.A.P. Core Curriculum *continued*

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### ***Science***

LEAP students use the Scott Foresman Science Diamond Edition published in 2008. Units of study include life science, physical science, earth science and the human body. Science is taught from a Christian perspective using labs and hands-on activities.

### ***Social Studies***

LEAP students use the MacMillan/McGraw-Hill Social Studies curriculum. A basic introduction to life in our society comes through the use of bulletin board activities, songs and games. Students are able to grasp basic social concepts that are taught using all learning modalities.

### ***Music***

NCS uses the Musicplay curriculum, 2003, by Denise Gagne. Students spend 30 minutes 3 times per week with a trained music professional. Beat, rhythm and meter are introduced at this level. Melody and basic harmony are taught as well. Students learn to distinguish different voices, instruments and environmental sounds. LEAP students sing in a spring program every year.

### ***Art***

Art is integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. Bible crafts and seasonal art projects allow students to be creative on a weekly basis. Students enjoy making Christmas crafts during the holiday season. Special projects include Rodeo Art drawings for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and a multicultural art activity for Cultural Awareness Week.

### ***Physical Education***

The elementary Physical Education program was developed by SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) and is taught by two highly-qualified coaches with many years of teaching and coaching experience. PE classes are designed to develop skills that enhance learning in the classroom. All students participate in 30 minutes of PE classes daily. Classes are taught in the school's gymnasium and are highly structured in nature. At NCS we believe that daily physical activity is essential for good health and well-being. LEAP students continue to hone large and fine motor skills through various games and activities.

### ***Computer/Technology***

NCS integrates the use of computers and technology into the regular curriculum. First grade has access to computers in the classroom as well as a fully equipped computer lab, providing a computer for each individual. Basic terminology is taught based upon the NETS (National Educational Technology Standards). Students use the Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing software to learn basic keyboarding skills. Students are periodically assessed on their keyboarding skills. Storybook Weaver, Accelerated Reader and other educational software are incorporated into the curriculum.

### ***Junior/Achievement***

NCS participates in the Junior Achievement program. Trained community volunteers present five lessons during the spring semester. The LEAP class is provided with practical information about family members and their interdependence. Lessons are designed around the TEKS. This program utilizes technology enhancements.

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# First Grade Core Curriculum

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The first grade curriculum is academically challenging while remaining developmentally appropriate. Students are expected to enter first grade with a good working knowledge of the English alphabet and basic reading and math skills. Students are frequently placed into small groups for guided instruction and centers. Basic organizational skills and small amounts of daily homework help develop increasing independence and time management skills. Students in the first grade are encouraged to take more responsibility in managing themselves in centers and in small groups.

## *Bible*

The Biblical Choices for a New Generation curriculum is designed specifically for private Christian schools. Students study Old Testament stories in the fall and New Testament stories in the spring. Weekly memory verses help students to “hide God’s Word” in their hearts. Bible crafts are done weekly, encouraging students to be artistic and creative with the gifts God has provided them, while reinforcing the concepts of the lesson. NCS does not teach a particular doctrine, but simply focuses on stories read directly from the Bible. Weekly chapel services provide an opportunity for all elementary students, faculty, staff and parents to enjoy a time of praise and worship.

## *Reading*

Through use of the Wright Group’s Gear Up! guided reading series, students are leveled using benchmark assessment books. They are then placed on an individualized reading plan. Teachers give direct instruction in comprehension, vocabulary, phonics, phonemic awareness and fluency. Small groups of students who are on similar levels work together with the teacher to progress in their reading skills. First graders are expected to finish the year on an independent reading level of J or higher. This is the national standard. NCS utilizes the STAR assessment program to determine the exact reading level at which a student is proficient. Levels are reassessed each month. The online Accelerated Reader program encourages the love of reading while developing comprehension and vocabulary skills. Students progress through seven different AR levels, attempting to earn either a bronze, silver or gold medal at the end of the year. The Reading A-Z program allows teachers to provide supplemental readers to students who need additional instruction and for students in need of greater challenges. Students are also expected to master all eleven Dolch sight word lists by the end of first grade.

## *Fluency*

The Wright Group’s Fluency First! Program curriculum is based upon The Fluency Development Lesson, which was highly researched by Drs. Timothy Rasinski and Nancy Padak of Kent State University. Daily lessons use simple and brief reading selections that students practice multiple times before performing for their peers. Teachers assess students based upon reading rate, accuracy, expression, volume, clarity, eye contact and gestures. A total of six formal assessments are conducted each year. Vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and word recognition skills are the focus of this entertaining and motivating program.

## *Phonics*

Explicit phonics and phonemic awareness is taught in grades 1-3 using the Neuhaus Language Enrichment method. The Neuhaus program, developed here in Houston, uses research-based methods of literacy instruction. This curriculum caters to all learning styles, whether auditory, visual or kinesthetic. Research shows that emerging readers who receive phonemic awareness training score significantly higher in reading and spelling in the early elementary years.

## *English*

The Houghton Mifflin English curriculum is used to teach basic sentence structure and types of sentences. Nouns, pronouns, verbs and adjectives are explored as well. Capitalization and punctuation skills are reinforced throughout the year. Cumulative reviews help students continually revisit skills previously learned. Student workbooks are colorful with large easy-to-read print. Technology links are included in this curriculum.

## *Writing*

The first grade writing program correlates with our Houghton Mifflin English curriculum. Students learn the basics of writing complete sentences. Teachers model the various types of writing with the help of the class. The steps in the writing process are directly taught and practiced throughout the year. Students utilize journals to document weekly events in their lives and to develop writing fluency. Storybook Weaver, a computer-based writing program that allows students to write creative stories using colorful illustrations, is also used.

## *Spelling*

The Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary series, published in 2006, is used to focus on basic letters of the alphabet, short and long vowels, consonant blends, suffixes and compound words. Daily exercises provide practice with handwriting, spelling and vocabulary. The

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# First Grade Core Curriculum *continued*

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Neuhaus Scientific spelling method dovetails nicely with the Houghton Mifflin curriculum and provides additional instruction in phonics and the spelling patterns.

## **Math**

Through use of the Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions curriculum students are expected to memorize and master the 0-9 addition facts. This curriculum challenges students to think critically in order to apply what they learn in class to everyday situations. Students are expected to analyze and evaluate the thinking of other students. They are taught how to communicate mathematical thinking and how to organize their thinking. First grade covers addition, subtraction and multiplication skills. Place value, patterns and equations set the stage for later algebraic math. Basic geometry and measurement concepts are also introduced. Data analysis, probability and problem solving are continually reinforced throughout the year.

## **Science**

The Scott Foresman Science curriculum focuses on life and earth sciences. Weather, plants and animals, rocks and minerals, the human body and health are just a few of the concepts covered at this grade level. Basic science concepts are reinforced by various field trips to the Houston Zoo, the Children's Museum and a local strawberry orchard. Students experience science with a teacher who loves to share from a Christian perspective. Labs and hands-on activities help make science a favorite among our first grade students.

## **Social Studies**

The MacMillan/McGraw-Hill Adventures in Time and Place curriculum encourages students to focus on the world around them beginning with their own neighborhoods and communities. Basic geography skills are included. A brief overview of America's beginnings is addressed during the spring semester.

## **Music**

The Musicplay curriculum is used to teach students about beat, rhythm, melody and harmony. Students learn to distinguish different voices, instruments and environmental sounds. Students participate in a spring program.

## **Art**

Art is integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. Bible crafts and seasonal art projects allow students to be creative on a weekly basis. Students enjoy making Christmas crafts during the holiday season. Special projects include Rodeo Art drawings for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and a family heritage art project for Multicultural Week.

## **Physical Education**

The elementary Physical Education program was developed by SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) and is taught by two highly-qualified coaches who have many years of teaching and coaching experience. P.E. classes are designed to develop skills that enhance learning in the classroom. All students participate in 30 minutes of P.E. daily. Classes are taught in the school's gymnasium and are highly structured in nature. Our belief is that daily physical activity is essential for good health and well-being. First grade students continue to hone large-motor and fine-motor skills through various games and activities.

## **Health**

The Healthy and Wise curriculum from Caprock Press is used in each grade level 1-5. Students study the same topics throughout the year. Lessons change from one year to the next. Major topics include: Sports, Exercise, Nutrition, Food, Health Research/Updates, Body Basics, Safety/Health Awareness, Relationships and Social/Mental Health. Groups of our fifth grade students utilize the curriculum to design specific lessons, discussion questions, quizzes, projects, etc. for our teachers to present in their classrooms.

## **Computer/Technology**

NCS integrates the use of computers and technology into the regular curriculum. First grade has access to computers in the classroom as well as in a fully equipped computer lab, providing a computer for each individual. Basic terminology is taught based upon the NETS (National Educational Technology Standards). Students use the Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing software to learn basic keyboarding skills. Students are periodically assessed on their keyboarding skills. Storybook Weaver, Accelerated Reader and other educational software are incorporated into the curriculum.

## **Junior Achievement**

NCS participates in the Junior Achievement Program. Trained community volunteers present five lessons during the spring semester. The first grade curriculum is designed to provide practical information about family members and their interdependence. Lessons are designed around TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). This program utilizes technology enhancements.

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# Second Grade Core Curriculum

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The second grade program is designed to prepare our students for the upper elementary experience. This is a pivotal age where children are beginning to soar with their math and reading skills, opening up new opportunities for more advanced learning. A higher level of expectations regarding responsibility and independence is a hallmark of this grade level. The curriculum challenges students to think critically and promotes problem-solving skills that are vital in today's society.

## *Bible*

The Biblical Choices for a New Generation curriculum is designed specifically for private Christian schools. Students study Old Testament stories in the fall and New Testament stories in the spring. Weekly memory verses help students "hide God's Word" in their hearts. Bible crafts and activities are done weekly, encouraging students to be creative with the gifts God has provided them, while reinforcing the concepts of the lesson. NCS does not teach a particular doctrine, but simply focuses on the stories read directly from the Bible. Weekly Chapel services provide an opportunity for all elementary students, faculty, staff and parents to enjoy a time of praise and worship.

## *Reading*

Through the use of the Wright Group's Gear Up! guided reading series, students are leveled using benchmark assessment books. They are then placed on an individualized reading plan. Teachers give direct instruction in comprehension, vocabulary, phonics, phonemic awareness and fluency. Small groups of students who are on similar levels work together with the teacher to progress in their reading skills. NCS expects students to finish second grade on an independent reading level of M or higher. This is the national standard. NCS utilizes the STAR assessment program to show teachers and parents the exact reading level at which a student is proficient. Levels are reassessed each month. The online Accelerated Reader program encourages the love of reading while developing comprehension and vocabulary skills. Students progress through seven different AR levels, attempting to earn either a bronze, silver or gold medal at the end of the year. The Reading A-Z program allows teachers to provide supplemental readers to students who need additional instruction and for students in need of greater challenges. Students are also expected to master all eleven Dolch sight word lists by the end of first grade.

## *Fluency*

The Wright Group's Fluency First curriculum is based upon The Fluency Development Lesson, which was highly researched by Drs. Timothy Rasinski and Nancy Padak of Kent State University. Daily lessons use simple and brief reading selections that students practice multiple times before performing for their peers. Teachers assess students based upon reading rate, accuracy, expression, volume, clarity, eye contact and gestures. A total of 6 formal assessments are conducted each year. Vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and word recognition skills are the focus of this entertaining and motivating program.

## *Phonics*

Explicit phonics and phonemic awareness is taught in grades 1-3 using the Neuhaus Language Enrichment method. The Neuhaus program, developed here in Houston, uses research-based methods of literacy instruction. This curriculum caters to all learning styles, whether auditory, visual or kinesthetic. Research shows that emerging readers who receive phonemic awareness training score significantly higher in reading and spelling in the early elementary years.

## *English*

The Houghton Mifflin English series is used to teach grammar and writing. The second grade curriculum focuses on basic parts of speech and complete sentences. Capitalization and punctuation are stressed. Daily editing practice is included. This curriculum includes technology links for students and parents to reinforce skills at home.

## *Writing*

The Houghton Mifflin English curriculum is used to reinforce writing skills. Students are specifically taught the various genres of writing. Different professional models show students examples of good written composition. Storybook Weaver and Inspiration software allows students to create stories with colorful illustrations. Frequent journal writing encourages students to be comfortable with writing informal thoughts, feelings and responses on a regular basis. This also helps our students become fluent writers.

## *Spelling*

The Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary series focuses on short and long vowels, words with suffixes, compound words and contractions. Daily practice reinforces concepts. Weekly tests are administered to check for mastery. Houghton Mifflin provides an educational website for students, teachers and parents that assist with lesson extensions and additional practice. The Neuhaus Scientific Spelling method is used to enhance the teaching

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## Second Grade Core Curriculum *continued*

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of phonics and the reliable spelling patterns of our language, as well as the exceptions to the rules.

### ***Math***

The Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions curriculum provides an excellent balance between computation skills and analysis. Students are expected not only to derive answers, but to justify them as well. Math Expressions focuses on Math Talk, Quick Practice, Student Leaders, Building Concepts and Helping Community. Second grade students learn to add, subtract and multiply. They are introduced to higher level thinking using real-world story problems that may require multiple steps. Hands-on manipulatives and math boards help students understand concepts more fully.

### ***Science***

The Scott Foresman science curriculum focuses on life, physical and earth science throughout the year. The spring semester concludes with a unit on how the body functions, nutrition and basic health. Writing and technology are incorporated into the curriculum. Students experience science from a Christian perspective. Labs and hands-on activities help make science a favorite among our second grade students.

### ***Social Studies***

The MacMillan/McGraw-Hill Adventures in Time and Place curriculum encourages students to focus on people living and working together in harmony. An overview of U.S. history is included in the spring semester. Special people, U.S. holidays and historical places are discovered during the spring as well.

### ***Music***

The Musicplay curriculum is used to teach students very specific skills using flashcards, games, hands-on activities, listening and singing. Music is always one of the students' favorite classes in elementary school. Second graders perform in the spring musical program.

### ***Art***

Art is integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. Bible crafts and seasonal art projects allow students to be creative on a weekly basis. Students enjoy making Christmas crafts during the holiday season. Special projects include Rodeo Art drawings for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and a family heritage art project for Multicultural Week.

### ***Physical Education***

The elementary Physical Education program was developed by SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) and is taught by two highly-qualified coaches with many years of teaching and coaching experience. P.E. classes are designed to develop skills that enhance learning in the classroom. All students participate in 30 minutes of P.E. daily. Classes are taught in the school's gymnasium and are highly structured in nature. Our belief is that daily physical activity is essential for good health and well-being. Second grade students continue to develop large-motor and fine-motor skills through various games and activities.

### ***Health***

The Healthy and Wise curriculum from Caprock Press is used in each grade level 1-5. Students study the same topics throughout the year. Lessons change from one year to the next. Major topics include: Sports, Exercise, Nutrition, Food, Health Research/Updates, Body Basics, Safety/Health Awareness, Relationships and Social/Mental Health. Groups of our fifth grade students utilize the curriculum to design specific lessons, discussion questions, quizzes, projects, etc. for our teachers to present in their classrooms.

### ***Computer/Technology***

NCS integrates the use of computers and technology into the regular curriculum. Second graders have access to desktop computers in the classroom, as well as in a fully equipped computer lab, providing a computer for each individual. Basic terminology is taught based upon the NETS (National Educational Technology Standards). Students use the Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing program to learn basic keyboarding skills. Students are periodically assessed on their keyboarding skills. Storybook Weaver, Accelerated Reader, Inspiration, Power Point and other educational software are incorporated into the curriculum.

### ***Junior Achievement***

NCS participates in the Junior Achievement Program. Trained community volunteers present five lessons during the spring semester. The second grade curriculum is designed to provide practical information about businesses and the many occupations found in those businesses in a typical community such as ours. Lessons are designed around the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). This program utilizes technology enhancements.

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## Enrichment Opportunities Grades K-2

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Our belief is that meaningful enrichment activities are vital for extending the learning that takes place in the regular classroom. These activities provide students the opportunity to explore their gifts, talents and interests. The following activities are available on campus either during or after school hours for an additional fee.

### *Ballet*

- September - May
- Available to boys and girls in kindergarten only
- 45-minute classes Wednesdays during regularly scheduled nap-time
- Classes coincide with the NCS school calendar
- Taught by Angela Jackson from the American Academy of Dance
- Enables students to develop mind and body through movement to music
- French terminology is taught
- Ballet helps to refine language, music, math and artistic skills

### *Gymnastics*

- Athletics On Wheels full gymnastics program
- Available Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:00 (Kindergarten)
- Available Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:15-4:15 (1st & 2nd grades)
- Coached by Jeff Martin, BS Ed, University of Houston
- Students are taught the same skills as in a full-size gymnastics facility
- Promotes physical fitness, balance, strength and coordination
- Gym Exhibition at end of year
- All-school competition during the year

### *Junior Cheer*

- September - May
- Fridays 1:00-2:00 (Kindergarten only) and 3:15-4:15 (1st & 2nd grade)
- One additional day of gymnastics through Athletics On Wheels is required
- Coached by Daysha Sanford, 17 years of cheer coaching experience
- Students are taught cheer skills, jumps and dance routines
- Tumbling and athleticism are stressed
- Performances at Spirit Games, high school football games and the NCS P.E. Show
- Cheerleaders wear matching cheer T-shirts for performances

### *Spanish*

- September - May
- Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:10-4:10
- Taught by the High School Spanish instructor, Multi-sensory program designed to excite students and keep them engaged
- Encourages students to develop a love for new languages

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# Third Grade Core Curriculum

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Third grade is truly a rite of passage into the upper-elementary program. Students are given more opportunities to develop their independence and to make certain choices in areas of study. Third graders are expected to take responsibility for their actions. They have the opportunity to experience all of the third grade teachers and other specialists in various subject areas throughout the week. This allows for exposure to different perspectives and various teaching styles. Students are placed in reading and math classes (based on test scores and teacher recommendations) that adequately meet their individual learning needs. Third grade requires more rigorous study than the earlier grades, yet remains enjoyable and rewarding.

## *Bible*

The Biblical Choices for a New Generation curriculum is designed specifically for private Christian schools. Students study Old Testament stories in the fall and New Testament stories in the spring. Weekly memory verses help students “hide God’s Word” in their hearts. Bible crafts are done weekly, encouraging students to be artistic and creative with the gifts God has provided them, while reinforcing the concepts of the lesson. NCS does not teach a particular doctrine, but simply focuses on stories read directly from the Bible. Weekly Chapel services provide an opportunity for all elementary students, faculty, staff and parents to enjoy a time of praise and worship.

## *Reading*

Third graders move from guided reading instruction to a more advanced approach using class chapter books. Various genres of literature are studied, including a balanced combination of fiction and non-fiction selections. Literature units are designed to meet the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) and allow for curriculum integration of other subjects. Students are evaluated monthly using the STAR assessment program. Reading progress is tracked for teachers and parents to see. Students are encouraged to take Accelerated Reader tests on a regular basis. Weekly visits to the school’s library keep students well supplied with good books. Third grade students are placed in reading classes that are designed to meet their individual learning needs.

## *Fluency*

The Wright Group’s Fluency First curriculum is based upon The Fluency Development Lesson, which was highly researched by Drs. Timothy Rasinski and Nancy Padak of Kent State University. Daily lessons use simple and brief reading selections that students practice multiple times before performing for their

peers. Teachers assess students based upon reading rate, accuracy, expression, volume, clarity, eye contact and gestures. A total of six formal assessments are conducted each year. Vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and word recognition skills are the focus of this entertaining and motivating program.

## *Phonics*

Explicit phonics and phonemic awareness is taught in grades 1-3 using the Neuhaus Language Enrichment method. The Neuhaus program, developed here in Houston, uses research-based methods of literacy instruction. This program caters to all learning styles, whether auditory, visual or kinesthetic. Research shows that emerging readers who receive phonemic awareness training score significantly higher in reading and spelling in the early elementary years.

## *English*

The Houghton Mifflin English curriculum is used to teach basic grammar. Good sentences versus run-on sentences are explored in depth. Parts of speech are reinforced as well as using punctuation correctly. Editing skills are honed during weekly exercises. Mastery of the basic grammar skills is expected by the end of 3rd grade. The Houghton Mifflin educational website provides teachers, parents and students additional resources to extend each lesson.

## *Writing*

The Houghton Mifflin English curriculum is used to reinforce writing skills. Students are specifically taught the various genres of writing. Students are expected to be able to write a personal narrative, a story, detailed instructions and a research report. Different professional models from the curriculum show students examples of good written composition in these areas. Storybook Weaver software allows students to create stories with colorful illustrations. Frequent journal writing encourages students to be comfortable with writing informal thoughts, feelings and responses on a regular basis.

## *Spelling*

The Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary series utilizes daily activities to reinforce concepts such as short and long vowels, consonant patterns and other spelling patterns. Tests are given weekly. The Neuhaus Scientific Spelling method is used to enhance the teaching of phonics and the reliable spelling patterns of our language, as well as exceptions to the rules.

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## Third Grade Core Curriculum *continued*

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### **Math**

The Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions curriculum provides an excellent balance between computation skills and analysis. Students are expected not only to derive answers, but to justify them as well. Math Expressions focuses on Math Talk, Quick Practice, Student Leaders, Building Concepts and Helping Community. Third grade students learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide. They are introduced to higher-level thinking using real-world story problems that require multiple steps. Hands-on manipulatives help students understand concepts more fully.

### **Science**

The Scott Foresman curriculum focuses on life, physical and earth science. The year begins studying a unit on the human body. Students experience science with a science teacher who loves to share from a Christian perspective. Labs and hands-on activities help make science a favorite among our third grade students.

### **Social Studies**

The MacMillan/McGraw-Hill social studies curriculum focuses on various types of communities in the United States both today and throughout history. Students are required to complete a community scrapbook project that encompasses the exploration of the Spring/Klein area and its history. Basic geography skills are reinforced during the year.

### **Music**

The Musicplay curriculum is used to teach students very specific skills using flashcards, games, hands-on activities, listening and singing. Music is always one of the students' favorite classes in elementary school. Third graders perform in the Christmas musical program.

### **Orchestra (elective)**

This program is conducted by the NCS high school orchestra teacher using the Suzuki method. Students may choose between the violin, viola, cello or bass. Students learn to play by ear and progress to actually reading music by the end of the year. Students are given the opportunity to perform at the annual Christmas concert and at the Community Open House. Additional off-campus community service performances are offered. An instrument rental fee applies. Purchase of music books is required as well. Students who participate in orchestra class do not attend regular music classes.

### **Art**

Art is integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. Bible crafts and seasonal art projects allow students to

be creative on a weekly basis. Students enjoy making Christmas crafts during the holiday season. Special projects include Rodeo Art drawings for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and a family heritage art project for Multicultural Week.

### **Physical Education**

The elementary Physical Education program was developed by SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) and is taught by two highly-qualified coaches who have many years of teaching and coaching experience. P.E. classes are designed to develop skills that enhance learning in the classroom. All students participate in 30 minutes of P.E. daily. Classes are taught in the school's gymnasium and are highly structured in nature. Our belief is that daily physical activity is essential for good health and well-being. Third grade students continue to hone large-motor and fine-motor skills through various games and activities.

### **Health**

Through the use of the Healthy and Wise curriculum from Caprock Press students in grades 1-5 study the same topics throughout the year. Lessons change each year to the next. Major topics include: Sports, Exercise, Nutrition, Food, Health Research/Updates, Body Basics, Safety/Health Awareness, Relationships and Social/Mental Health. Groups of our fifth grade students utilize the curriculum to design specific lessons and create discussion questions, quizzes, projects, etc. for teachers to present in their classrooms.

### **Computer/Technology**

Reinforcement of keyboarding skills continues with the use of Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing. These skills are assessed on a regular basis. Students become more adept at using the Microsoft Office suite. Storybook Weaver software allows students to write original creative stories with brightly colored illustrations. Classroom computers, a fully equipped computer lab, Smart Boards, projectors in each room and accessible Tablet PC's enhance the learning experience.

### **Junior Achievement**

NCS participates in the Junior Achievement Program. Trained community volunteers present five lessons during the fall semester. The curriculum is designed to provide practical information about businesses and the many occupations found in those businesses in a typical city such as ours. Lessons are designed around TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). This program utilizes technology enhancements.

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## Fourth Grade Core Curriculum

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Fourth grade provides an excellent balance between very challenging academics and the pure enjoyment of learning. Students are placed in reading and math classes that meet their individual needs. Placement is based on test scores and recommendations. Students are offered more options for areas of study. Activities such as the Gen Yes program, orchestra, cheerleading, TGI Fridays and TCSA Academic Meet are only a few of these options. The opportunity for such challenging and enriching activities make this grade level one of the highlights of our students' elementary years.

### *Bible*

The Picture This! curriculum for Bible presents stories that are read directly from the Bible rather than using a storybook. Students make detailed drawings of symbols that represent events from each book of the Bible. This curriculum is excellent for children who are word smart, picture smart, body smart and is appealing to all students. Fourth graders often beg to stay in from recess in order to continue their Bible lessons. Weekly memory verses help students "hide God's Word" in their hearts. Weekly Chapel services provide an opportunity for all elementary students, faculty, staff and parents to enjoy a time of praise and worship.

### *Reading*

The fourth grade reading curriculum is teacher-created. It is challenging as well as enjoyable. Students are now truly "reading to learn". Higher level thinking skills are needed to evaluate and respond to various genres of literature. Students are expected to be able to compare/contrast, make predictions, note important details and support judgments in their readings. Book reports and various projects enrich the lessons. An "Expert's Journal" project is created in the spring semester, covering a period of four months. Students are evaluated monthly using the STAR assessment program and reading progress is tracked. Students are encouraged to take Accelerated Reader tests on a regular basis. Weekly visits to the school's library keep students well supplied with good books. Students are placed in reading classes that best meet their individual needs.

### *English*

The Houghton Mifflin English curriculum is used to reinforce basic grammar skills mastered in the 3rd grade. Daily editing procedures ensure regular practice. The Houghton Mifflin company provides an educational website that assists teachers, parents and students with additional practice for each lesson.

### *Writing*

The Houghton Mifflin English curriculum further develops writing skills. Students are specifically taught the various genres of writing and students are expected to be able to write a personal narrative, a story, detailed instructions and a research report. Different professional models from the curriculum show examples of well written composition in these areas. Storybook Weaver software allows the creation of stories with colorful illustrations. Frequent journal writing encourages students to be comfortable with writing informal thoughts, feelings and responses.

### *Spelling*

The Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary series uses an emphasis on spelling patterns, phonics, vocabulary and editing. Houghton Mifflin provides an educational website for students, teachers and parents to reinforce concepts learned in the classroom and to further extend lessons. The Neuhaus Scientific Spelling method is used to enhance teaching of the reliable spelling patterns and words that are the exceptions to the rules. Daily practice and weekly tests help ensure mastery of this subject.

### *Math*

The Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions curriculum provides an excellent balance between computation skills and analysis. Students are expected not only to derive answers, but to justify them as well. Math Expressions focuses on Math Talk, Quick Practice, Student Leaders, Building Concepts and Helping Community. Students review addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They are introduced to higher-level thinking using real-world story problems that require multiple steps. Hands-on manipulatives help students understand concepts more fully.

### *Science*

The Scott Foresman curriculum focuses on life, physical and earth science. A unit on the human body concludes the year. Students experience science with a science teacher who has a passion for this subject and loves to share it from a Christian perspective. Labs and hands-on activities help make science a favorite among our fourth grade students.

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## Fourth Grade Core Curriculum *continued*

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### ***Social Studies***

The MacMillan/McGraw-Hill Adventures in Time and Place curriculum is used to explore Texas History. Various regions, people and landmarks are discovered. Research on classroom tablet computers allows the development of broader perspectives. Various field trips reinforce skills learned in the classroom. These trips include a tour of the Taste of Texas restaurant and the San Jacinto Monument. A look at local, state and national government is also a part of the curriculum.

### ***Music***

The Musicplay curriculum is used to reinforce concepts taught in earlier years, while new concepts are introduced. Students study beat, rhythm, melody, harmony and are given the opportunity to create and perform music using basic instruments. Listening to various types of music and playing musical games help develop an appreciation for this area of the performing arts.

### ***Orchestra (elective)***

This program is conducted by the NCS high school orchestra teacher using the Suzuki method. Students may choose between the violin, viola, cello or bass. Students learn to play by ear and progress to actually reading music by the end of the year. Students are given the opportunity to perform at the annual Christmas concert and at the Community Open House. Additional off-campus community service performances are offered. An instrument rental fee applies. Purchase of music books is required as well. Students who participate in orchestra class do not attend the regular music class.

### ***Art***

Art is integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. Bible lessons are taught using student artwork and seasonal art projects allow students to be creative on a regular basis. Students enjoy making Christmas crafts during the holiday season. Special projects include Rodeo Art drawings for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and a family heritage art project for Multicultural Week.

### ***Physical Education***

The elementary Physical Education program was developed by SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) and is taught by two highly-qualified coaches who have many years of teaching and coaching experience. P.E. classes are designed to develop skills that enhance learning in the classroom. All students participate in 30 minutes of P.E. daily. Classes are taught in the school's gymnasium and are highly structured in nature. Our belief is that daily physical activity is essential for good health and well-being. Students continue to hone large-motor and fine-motor skills through various games and activities.

### ***Health***

Through the use of the Healthy and Wise curriculum from Caprock Press students in each grade level 1-5 study the same topics throughout the year. Lessons change each year. Major topics include: Sports, Exercise, Nutrition, Food, Health Research/Updates, Body Basics, Safety/Health Awareness, Relationships and Social/Mental Health. Groups of our fifth grade students utilize the curriculum to design specific lessons, discussion questions, quizzes, projects, etc. for our teachers to present in their classrooms.

### ***Computer/Technology***

Reinforcement of keyboarding skills continues with the use of Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing. These skills are assessed on a regular basis. Students become more adept at using the Microsoft Office suite. Storybook Weaver software allows students to write original creative stories with brightly colored illustrations. Classroom computers, a fully equipped computer lab, Smart Boards, projectors in each room and accessible individual Tablet PC's enhance the learning experience.

### ***Junior Achievement***

NCS participates in the Junior Achievement Program. Trained community volunteers present five lessons during the fall semester. The curriculum is designed to provide practical information about natural, human and capital resources found in regions and used by businesses to produce goods and services. Lessons are designed around TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). This program utilizes technology enhancement.

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# Fifth Grade Core Curriculum

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Fifth grade students are the leaders on campus. They provide models of behavior and citizenship for our younger students to follow. This grade level is designed to prepare students for the middle school years. A higher level of responsibility is expected to ensure success in the years to come. Fifth grade provides more opportunities for various learning activities than the previous grades. A special relationship with Exxon Mobil allows for field trips, science fairs, and labs that other grade levels are not able to experience. Nine months of rigorous study, research, testing, and presentations culminate in the anxiously anticipated graduation day.

## *Bible*

A teacher-created curriculum is used during the fall semester to help students discover the “Fruits of the Spirit” in depth and understand how to apply those characteristics in their own lives. Weekly memory verses help students “hide God’s Word” in their hearts. The spring semester is spent studying a “Purity” series developed by our teachers and the school’s registered nurse. Students discover ways in which to keep their minds, bodies and hearts pure, not only in the teenage years, but in the adult years as well. Weekly Chapel services provide an opportunity for all elementary students, faculty, staff and parents to enjoy a time of praise and worship.

## *Reading*

The reading curriculum is teacher-created and is challenging as well as enjoyable. Higher level thinking skills are needed to evaluate and respond to various genres of literature. Students are expected to be able to compare/contrast, make predictions, note important details and support judgments in their readings. Book reports and various projects enrich the lessons. Students are evaluated monthly using the STAR assessment program and reading progress is tracked. Students are required to read outside of class and to take Accelerated Reader tests on a regular basis. Weekly visits to the school’s library keep students well supplied with good books. Students are placed in classes that best meet their individual needs.

## *English*

The Houghton Mifflin English series is used to help students hone their grammar, usage and mechanics skills, preparing them for the more intense middle school years. Higher level concepts are taught such as subject and object pronouns, double subjects, and negatives. Irregular verbs, linking verbs, and plural possessive nouns are taught in-depth. The curriculum publisher provides an educational website for students, teachers and parents to use for additional practice and for extending classroom lessons.

## *Writing*

The Houghton Mifflin English curriculum is used to enhance writing skills. Students are specifically taught the various genres of writing. Fifth grade students are expected to be able to write a personal narrative, a story, detailed instructions, a research report, an opinion essay, and a persuasive essay. Different professional models from the curriculum show students examples of well written composition in these areas. The skill of writing outlines and bibliographies will serve our students well as they enter the upper grades. Storybook Weaver software allows students to create stories with colorful illustrations. Frequent journal writing encourages students to be comfortable with writing informal thoughts, feelings and responses on a regular basis.

## *Spelling*

The Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary series emphasizes spelling patterns, phonics, vocabulary and editing. Houghton Mifflin provides an educational website for students, teachers and parents to reinforce concepts learned in the classroom and to further extend lessons. The Neuhaus Scientific spelling method is used to enhance the teaching of the reliable spelling patterns and words that are exceptions to the rules. Daily practice and weekly tests help ensure mastery of this subject.

## *Math*

The Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions curriculum provides an excellent balance between computation skills and analysis. Students are expected not only to derive answers, but to justify them as well. Math Expressions focuses on Math Talk, Quick Practice, Student Leaders, Building Concepts and Helping Community. Students hone their addition, subtraction, multiplication and division skills. Students are expected to utilize higher level thinking using real-world story problems that require multiple steps. Hands-on manipulatives and math boards help students understand concepts more fully. Fifth grade students develop their foundation for middle school and high school math courses.

## *Science*

The Scott Foresman curriculum focuses on life, physical and earth science. A unit on the human body concludes the year. Students experience science with a teacher who loves to share it from a Christian perspective. Labs and hands-on activities help make science a favorite among our fifth grade students. A spring science fair sponsored by Exxon Mobil is one of the many ways our fifth graders are challenged to show their research from throughout the year.

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## Fifth Grade Core Curriculum *continued*

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### ***Social Studies***

The MacMillan/McGraw-Hill curriculum focuses on the history of the United States. A unit on Native Americans is always a favorite. Students learn about the 13 original colonies and America's founding fathers. An in-depth look at World Wars, the Great Depression and the Civil Rights Movement conclude the year. Several field trips to historical sites provide additional enrichment.

### ***Music***

NCS uses the Musicplay curriculum for fifth grade. This curriculum does an excellent job of integrating music and other arts and disciplines outside the arts. Fifth grade students spend time in review of concepts from previous years while building on new concepts as well. Fifth graders learn how to play various notes on their own recorders. Listening to masterpieces from famous composers helps students acquire an appreciation of music. Fifth grade music students perform in the Christmas program and at fifth grade graduation.

### ***Orchestra (elective)***

This program is conducted by the NCS high school orchestra teacher using the Suzuki method. Students may choose between the violin, viola, cello or bass. Students learn to play by ear and progress to actually reading music by the end of the year. Students are given the opportunity to perform at the annual Christmas concert and at the Community Open House. Additional off-campus community service performances are offered. An instrument rental fee applies. Purchase of music books is required as well.

### ***Art***

Art is integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. Bible lessons are taught using student artwork. Seasonal art projects allow students to be creative on a regular basis. Students enjoy making Christmas crafts during the holiday season. Special projects include Rodeo Art drawings for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and a family heritage art project for Multicultural Week.

### ***Physical Education***

The elementary Physical Education program was developed by SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) and is taught by two highly-qualified coaches who have many years of teaching and coaching experience. P.E. classes are designed to develop skills that enhance learning in the classroom. All students participate in 30 minutes of P.E. daily. Classes are taught in the school's gymnasium and are highly structured in nature. Our belief is that daily physical activity is essential for good health and well-being. Students continue to hone large-motor and fine-motor skills through various games and activities.

### ***Health***

Through the use of the Healthy and Wise curriculum from Caprock Press students in each grade level 1-5 study the same topics throughout the year. Lessons change from one year to the next. Major topics include: Sports, Exercise, Nutrition, Food, Health Research/Updates, Body Basics, Safety/Health Awareness, Relationships and Social/Mental Health. Groups of our fifth grade students utilize the curriculum to design specific lessons, discussion questions, quizzes, projects, etc. for our teachers to present in their classrooms.

### ***Computer/Technology***

Reinforcement of keyboarding skills continues with the use of Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing. These skills are assessed on a regular basis. Students become more adept at using the Microsoft Office suite. Storybook Weaver software allows students to write original creative stories with brightly colored illustrations. Students participate in the Gen Yes program where they work in groups to develop technology projects that will benefit the school. Classroom computers, a fully equipped computer lab, Smart Boards, projectors and accessible individual Tablet PC's enhance the learning experience.

### ***Junior Achievement***

NCS participates in the Junior Achievement Program. Trained community volunteers present five lessons during the fall semester. The curriculum examines how businesses operate in the U.S. and explores various economic issues that impact those businesses. Lessons are designed around TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). This program utilizes technology enhancements.

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# TGI Fridays

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**It is our belief that all students are gifted by God with special talents and abilities just waiting to be discovered and developed for the purpose of furthering His kingdom. Students in grades 3-5 are given the unique opportunity to apply for different clubs on campus that utilize their strengths and skills. Students are assigned to clubs based upon interest level, test scores and parent/teacher recommendations. All students are allowed to participate in 2 different clubs per semester, one hour each in length, every Friday afternoon. These clubs are led by NCS faculty/staff members and parent/community volunteers during school hours. Frequently professionals in these fields are our honored guests. Students are given the opportunity to explore and apply the skills they have learned in the regular classroom.**

This innovative new program makes us unique among the other elementary schools in the area. Students are able to put their various multiple intelligences to work and to assist with career development. Examples of clubs available:

**Honor Choir** (by audition only) – More advanced than general music class. Close two-part harmony and reading choral scores are emphasized. The Honor Choir performs on various occasions for community and school functions.

**Math Olympiads** – designed for the child who passionately loves math and wishes to further expand his or her skills in this area. Teams participate in international competitions.

**Science Club** – designed for the student who has a passion for more in-depth labs and experiments that cannot be completed during the regular science time. The various areas of life, earth and physical science are explored.

**Geography Bee** – designed for students who want to discover more about the world around them. National competitions are held each year.

**Art Club** – designed for students who are interested in drawing, designing and other art media. Guest artists enrich and enhance this experience.

**Foreign Language (Spanish) Club** – designed for the child who is interested in learning a foreign language. Technology skills are utilized.

**Creative Writing Club** – designed for the child who is interested in writing his or her own book, short story or collection of poems. Published student books are displayed in the school's library. Various genres of writing and the writing process are explored in depth.

**Technology Club** – designed for the child who loves to explore the realm of computers and other technological tools. Gen Yes projects are created and perfected during this time as well.

**Jump Rope Club** (by audition only) – Designed for the child who is agile and athletic. Students explore basic jump rope skills and prepare to compete with other teams. Creativity and teamwork are emphasized.

**Drama Club** – designed for the child who loves to be on stage. Specific acting skills and terminologies are emphasized. This class culminates in a final performance at the end of the semester.

**Cooking Club** – designed for the child who loves to create culinary works of art. The most recently published food pyramid, balanced menus on restricted budgets and accurate measuring are explored in depth. Guest chefs add varied perspectives to this area of interest.

**Elementary Red Cross Club** – NCS is one of only three elementary schools in the state of Texas who have officially registered Red Cross Clubs. The school's registered nurse facilitates this club. Students completing the required hours become Red Cross Basic First Aid certified at the end of the semester.

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# Enrichment Opportunities Grades 3-5

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It is our belief that meaningful enrichment activities are vital for extending the learning that takes place in the regular classroom. These activities allow students to explore in further depth their gifts, talents and interests. The following activities are available on campus, some for an additional fee.

## *Gymnastics*

- Athletics On Wheels full gymnastics program
- Available Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:15-4:15
- Coached by Jeff Martin, BS Ed, University of Houston
- Students are taught the same skills as in a full-size gymnastics facility
- Promotes physical fitness, balance, strength and coordination
- Gym Exhibition at end of year
- All-school competition during the year

## *Cheerleading*

- Wednesdays and Fridays 3:15-4:30
- Choose between Cheer Recreation & Cheer Plus
- Available to students in grades 3-5
- Conducted by Athletics On Wheels
- Gymnastics and dance skills taught
- Cheerleaders order professional style uniforms
- Performances at monthly Spirit Games, NCS high school football games and P.E. Show
- Registration and tuition fees apply

## *Spanish*

- September - May
- Thursdays from 3:10-4:10
- Taught by the high school Spanish instructor
- Multi-sensory program designed to excite students and keep them engaged
- Encourages students to develop a love for new languages

## *Orchestra*

- Optional elective for grades 3-5
- Meets during choir class
- Conducted by NCS high school orchestra teacher
- Suzuki method taught
- Requires dedicated practice and parent involvement
- Complex music reading and theory skills
- Choose between violin, viola, cello and bass
- Performances at Christmas and Open House
- Off-campus community service performances
- Fee required for instrument rental and music books

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# School-wide Activities and Programs

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## ***Compassion International***

It is our belief that service to others is at the heart of our relationship with God. The Bible specifically directs us to care for the orphans and widows. Students in grades K-5th grade participate in the Compassion International program headquartered in Colorado Springs. This program began in 1952 when Rev. Everett Swanson had contact with the Korean War orphans. Since then more than one million children in 20 different countries have been helped. Each grade level sponsors one boy and one girl who are in need. Classes will continue to sponsor these children until they graduate from high school. Our sponsorship allows these children to participate in a non-denominational church-based program that offers direct benefits, such as education, health care, Christian training and social skills. Students write letters to these children and pray for them on a regular basis.

## ***Good Will Tours***

Each December our 3rd-5th grade students visit local nursing homes to sing and visit with the residents. This act of service not only uplifts the residents but brings a blessing to the students as well.

## ***Souper Bowl of Caring***

Each spring semester students participate in the city-wide Souper Bowl of Caring. Students provide a service to the community by collecting canned goods for those in need. Students celebrate the culmination of this service project by wearing their favorite team jerseys.

## ***Elementary Chapel***

Students in grades 1-5 gather together each Friday morning to spend time in praise and worship to God. Chapels are student-led and include songs, prayers, Bible readings and skits. Students are given the opportunity to develop leadership skills in these areas. Kindergarten students participate in their own individual chapel time on Fridays as well.

## ***Field Trips***

NCS students are privileged to be able to take several educational field trips throughout the school year. Trips include plays, symphonies, museums, historical sites, etc. Most grade levels take six trips per year. Previous destinations have included Main Street Theater, Exploration Station, George Observatory, Moody Gardens, San Jacinto Monument, George Ranch and Exxon Mobil Refinery.

## ***Orchestra***

Students in grades 3-5 have the option of choosing orchestra in lieu of choir. Students are taught by a Suzuki trained professional. The Suzuki method of teaching reinforces that all children have the ability to learn and play an instrument through daily listening and repetition of pieces, dedicated practice and parent involvement. Students choose from the violin, the viola, or the cello. An additional instrument rental fee is required. Training at the elementary level prepares students to be a part of our secondary orchestra. The elementary program includes school performances and off-campus community service performances.

## ***Stone Soup***

It is an NCS tradition to celebrate Thanksgiving by making Stone Soup. Each class reads the book Stone Soup and makes its own version of the stew for lunch that day. Other traditional Thanksgiving foods are served as well. Students take this time together to focus on the blessings God has given us all.

## ***Christmas Programs***

Students in grades 3-5 perform each December in the school Christmas program. Both choir and orchestra students are given the opportunity to perform in separate programs. Auditions for solo and speaking parts are held for all students who are interested. These programs are always a favorite of NCS students!

## ***Rodeo Art***

It is a tradition at NCS for students in grades K-5 to participate in the annual Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Art Contest. Students are given the opportunity to creatively express themselves using various media to show their Texas pride. Many of our students earn red and blue ribbons at the show.

## ***Spelling Bee***

In coordination with the Houston Chronicle, a 1st-5th grade student from each homeroom participates in the annual Spelling Bee. The winner competes with the NCS middle school winner to determine the overall NCS champion. The champion then goes on to compete with other schools in the area.

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## School-wide Activities and Programs *continued*

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### ***Physical Education Show***

Students in grades K-5 spend several months preparing for the annual P.E. Show in the spring. This show is open to parents, family members and friends. Students have the opportunity to show off the amazing physical skills they learn throughout the year. Each student is showcased during the program and is given the chance to shine. This is one of NCS's favorite traditions!

### ***Grandparents' Day***

An NCS favorite is our annual Grandparents' Day. Grandparents play such a vital role in the development of our children. Weekly Chapel services, classroom visits, a special encore performance of the P.E. Show and a catered lunch provided by the PTO make this day one of the most memorable during the year.

### ***Science Fair***

Our 5th grade students, in coordination with Exxon Mobil, participate in our annual Science Fair. Categories include life science and physical science. Projects are displayed for the rest of the school to enjoy. Judges from Exxon Mobil choose winners in each category and ribbons are awarded.

### ***Mad Science***

The NCS PTO funds the Mad Science program for our school. Each homeroom class is treated to a special workshop from a Mad Science trained instructor. Categories include life, health and physical science. Through its innovative concept of "Edu-tainment", Mad Science has been able to spark the imagination and curiosity of children everywhere. Their goal is to provide fun, entertaining and exciting activities that instill a clearer understanding of what science is really about and how it affects the world around them. 713.663.7623 <http://www.madscience.org/houston> [www.madscience.org/houston\\_](http://www.madscience.org/houston_)

### ***Mobil Education Assemblies***

Each year our generous PTO funds two Mobile Ed. Productions assemblies for our students. This company has been providing assemblies throughout the US since 1979. They are members and supporters of the National Education Association. One of our assemblies focuses on a science topic and the other focuses on a history or social studies topic. Students enjoy these assembly times that bring a unique enhancement to what they are studying in the classroom.

### ***Field Day***

Students in grades K-5 look forward to the annual Field Day. The P.E. coaches and parent volunteers prepare many events in which all students are given the opportunity to compete. Ribbons are awarded as well as good sportsmanship certificates. The focus is on team work and encouragement.

### ***Recess***

We believe it is extremely important for children to participate in free play to develop social skills and creativity. Exercise also promotes good physical, mental and emotional health. Students in grades K-5 participate in 30 minutes of outdoor recess per day, weather permitting.

### ***Library***

Our library houses a wonderful selection of fiction and non-fiction selections on every grade level. New books are added each year. Accelerated Reader books are clearly marked so that students know immediately which books will have quizzes available. A full-time librarian is available to assist students in checking out age-appropriate books and research materials. Several computers are located in the library for student use.

### ***Book Fairs***

The school hosts two Scholastic Book Fairs during the year. Students and parents are able to purchase top quality books at reasonable prices on our campus. Proceeds benefit the NCS library.

### ***Read-A-Thons***

Many grade levels enjoy several Read-A-Thon days throughout the school year. Students often wear comfortable pajamas and bring pillows and sleeping bags. A relaxed environment for reading is a big hit with our students!

### ***Accelerated Reader Program***

The on-line version of Accelerated Reader was recently adopted. This allows students to take quizzes from any computer with Internet access. This flexibility allows students to test from school or home. Each child reads books at his or her own assessed level to earn points toward an individual goal. Top level readers are awarded medals at the end of the year.

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## School-wide Activities and Programs *continued*

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### ***Nursing Services***

A full-time registered nurse is on campus for your child's medical needs.

### ***Guest Author Day***

Guest authors are invited to speak to the students each year. It is important for children to interact with published authors to create excitement for continued reading and writing. These authors are great examples of people who have often tried and failed, but were not willing to give up on their goals and dreams.

### ***Red Ribbon Week***

Each October our students participate in Red Ribbon Week to learn more about saying "no" to drugs and standing up for what is right. Fifth grade students are given the opportunity to prepare a Power Point presentation that is shown to the entire school. Students enjoy dressing up during the week to reinforce the importance of remaining pure.

### ***Homecoming***

Each fall the elementary campus joins with the secondary campus to celebrate Homecoming Week. Students enjoy activities that surround the Homecoming theme. Special dress days, an elementary pep rally and the Homecoming football game are always favorites.

### ***Fall Festival***

Each year our school celebrates the beginning of the fall season with a special Fall Festival celebration. Our students always look forward to this family-friendly event. Students from the high school plan and run all booths.

### ***Breakfast With Santa***

Each December the NCS senior class hosts Breakfast with Santa. Elementary students are given the opportunity to eat a special breakfast and to sit on Santa's lap to reveal their wish lists! The younger students look forward to this event where they can get a sneak peek at the man in red.

### ***Student Safety Patrol***

Fourth and fifth graders have the opportunity to serve the school through the Student Safety Patrol program. Students are selected to leadership positions by their teachers based on grades, behavior and work habits. Students serve one month shifts. This duty is considered an honor. Safety patrol members lead the pledges and patriotic songs every week at the end of Chapel.

### ***Spirit Games***

Once each month the entire elementary school gathers in the gymnasium for a Spirit Game. Each grade level is given one opportunity per year to show off the skills they are learning in P.E. The PTO provides free popcorn and Sprite to all the students and faculty. Parents are always invited. The elementary and junior cheerleaders kick off the games with dances routines and cheers. This is one of the students' favorite memories of elementary school.

### ***See You at the Pole***

Every September the elementary school gathers at the flagpole for this nationally recognized day. The services are student-led. Fifth grade students lead various prayers for our families, our government leaders and our troops. The Boy Scout troop leads the flag ceremony. We are so blessed to live in a country where we are free to gather in such a way to praise God and to ask for His blessings upon us.

### ***TGI Fridays***

Talents/Gifts Investigations Fridays are designed for students in grades 3-5. Students participate in various academic clubs on Friday afternoons. These are designed to challenge students to discover and utilize their gifts and talents to enrich their learning experience. Detailed descriptions of possible club choices are listed on page 31.

### ***Kindergarten Graduation***

Kindergarten students look forward to the day they will graduate on the big stage and receive their kindergarten diploma. The students conduct the major portion of the assembly by singing and leading prayers. A nice reception in the gymnasium follows.

### ***Fifth Grade Graduation***

The fifth grade students are always proud to receive their elementary school diplomas after years of hard work. The assembly is special, complete with a Power Point slide show of photos throughout the years. The fifth grade teachers sing a good-bye song to the students each year, sure to bring tears to even the driest of eyes. A nice reception is included, with a graduation party the following day.

### ***Counseling Services***

A full-time certified school counselor is on campus to minister to students and families. The counselor provides monthly guidance lessons for each class.

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# Student Recognition Programs

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**It is extremely important for our students to be recognized for their outstanding academic efforts, achievements and leadership skills. NCS provides multiple opportunities to nominate students for various programs and awards. Below are some of the ways our students are recognized each year.**

## ***Summer Institute for the Gifted***

This program is nationally recognized and has been in existence for over 20 years. Many of our academically advanced students who meet strict criteria are nominated for summer programs at various prestigious universities throughout the United States. Residential programs for grades 4 and 5 are available at institutions such as Emory University, UCLA, UC Berkeley, University of Michigan, Amherst College, Vassar College, Bryn Mawr College and the University of Texas at Austin. Students take courses that cover humanities, sciences and math, visual and performing arts, and fitness and recreation. A fee for this program applies.

## ***Duke Talent Identification Program***

Students in grades 4 and 5 who meet the strict criteria for Gifted and Talented are invited to register with the Duke TIP program. Students may also qualify in 7th grade.

## ***Lone Star State Scholars***

Many of our students in grades 3-5 are named as Lone Star State Scholars each year. These students are required to not only be dedicated to academics, but also to community service and extra-curricular activities. We are proud to have many well-rounded students who attend NCS.

## ***National Young Scholars Program***

Students in grades 2-5 who are mature and independent with outstanding academic achievement are nominated each year by their teachers for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate in a six-day residential program in the Texas Hill Country. Students choose between various Discovery Strands of study including science and leadership.

## ***Texas Gifted And Talented Summer Programs***

Many of our students in grades 4 and 5 are invited to attend various programs of study at well-known universities across the state of Texas. Texas Tech, TSU and Rice are among the participating universities. A fee applies for these programs.

## ***Tcsa Academic Meet***

Texas Christian Schools Association hosts an annual Academic Meet for students in grades 4 and 5 during February. The meets are held in various cities throughout Texas. Strict requirements allow us to register a limited number of students. Qualification depends upon grades, conduct and work habits. Nominated students must be approved by the Academic Meet Committee in order to participate. Students are awarded ribbons based upon individual performance.

## ***Fruit of the Spirit Awards***

Each week various students are recognized by their teachers or other faculty and staff members for exhibiting a particular fruit of the spirit in their actions. Examples of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are commended. Students receiving these awards are announced weekly during Chapel services.

## ***Citizenship Awards***

Each homeroom teacher chooses two students to receive the citizenship award for the year. Students are chosen based upon character, behavior, willingness to be a good friend, etc. This is a very prestigious award at NCS and is considered one of the highest honors.

## ***Accelerated Reader Awards***

All students in grades K-5 are eligible to win either a bronze, silver or gold medal for Accelerated Reader depending upon the number of points earned throughout the year. Point levels are individualized and are determined by the child's STAR Reading Assessment score.

## ***Honor Roll Awards***

All students in grades 1-5 are eligible to receive the Honor Roll award based upon each nine weeks' report card grades. "A" Honor Roll and "A-B" Honor Roll students receive recognition for their academic achievement.

## ***Math League Press Award***

Fourth and fifth grade students participate each spring in the national Math League Press competition. The top ten scorers in each grade level receive awards at the end of the year.

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## Student Recognition Programs *continued*

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### ***National Geography Challenge Award***

Students in grades 4 and 5 participate each spring in the National Geography Challenge. The top ten scores in each grade level are compared with other schools across the nation. The top NCS award winner in each grade level receives a medal. Several years ago NCS ranked 11th in the nation in this competition!

### ***National Science Challenge Award***

Students in grades 4 and 5 participate each spring in the National Science Challenge. The top ten scores in each grade level are compared with other schools across the nation. The top NCS award winner in each grade level receives a medal at the end of the year.

### ***Presidential Physical Education Award***

This award recognizes our students who achieve an outstanding level of physical fitness. Boys and girls who score at or above the 85th percentile (based on the 1985 School Population Fitness Survey) on all five events are eligible for this prestigious award. Many of our students qualify each year.

### ***National Physical Education Award***

This award recognizes students who score above the 50th percentile on all five physical events. Students must be able to demonstrate a basic, yet challenging level of physical fitness. Many of our students qualify for this award each year.

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8/12/08