Your child is entering fifth grade, the final year of elementary school, and you may be starting to think about what’s next - how will you know that they are ready for middle school and adolescence? Do they have the skills they need to read, write, speak, handle complex mathematics problems, ask questions, and apply evidence in science or social studies? Do you see interests in the arts or athletics starting to form? This is a year for you to work closely with your child’s teachers to understand where they are on track or challenged. Knowing the skills they need to learn and helping them develop strong habits for study, practice, social relationships and physical health will make a difference in their readiness to move to the next level of their education by the end of the school year.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) helps children manage emotions, set and achieve goals, express empathy, establish positive relationships, and make decisions. These skills are important for learning in school communities.

SEL skills are part of all subject areas so students learn and practice them through the school day. Teachers emphasize and evaluate these skills on elementary report cards:

- identifying strengths, feelings and needs
- seeking to understand others
- building cooperative relationships
- critical thinking
- decision making
- following safety standards and
- working through challenges

Teachers use the words Strength (S), Developing (D), and Emerging (E) to describe students’ SEL growth.

Strength = consistently uses skills across subjects and settings

Developing = uses skills in most subjects and settings

Emerging = beginning to use skills in some subjects and settings

Report cards may not be new to you by now, but some of the standards and expectations on them this year will be important for you to learn. When you share information about your child with their teachers and school staff, you can learn about your child’s role in a community, how they interact in discussions and quiet times, with friends and with people different from them. Teachers gain ideas about how to help your child by hearing from you about their strengths and challenges.

Fifth grade, teachers and families should work together to meet Social-Emotional Skills and Learning Readiness, as well as academic goals in English/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education and Arts sections on the progress report.

Questions? Please visit seattleschools.org/academics/curriculum for more info on any subject area
What Are 5th Graders Learning in Math?

Fluent in math means “fast and accurate.” One goal for your child’s learning is becoming fluent in their skills so they can move on to more complex mathematics.

In fifth grade math, students will become fluent in multi-digit multiplication. Students will also multiply fractions and subtract fractions with denominators that are different from one another, and they will calculate volume.

On the report card, 5th grade standards are arranged by section:

- **Operations and Algebraic Thinking** is about the language, patterns and symbols of math;
- **Numbers and Operations in Base Ten** relates to the decimal system;
- **Numbers and Operations - Fractions** is about amounts that are parts of a whole;
- **Measurement and Data** has to do with tracking information - sizes, amounts, and statistics;
- **Geometry** involves shapes and dimensions.

For more information, visit the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at: www.k-12.wa.us/parents-families

How Can Families Help Their Students in English/Language Arts?

5th grade students will be able to:

- Take part in collaborative classroom conversations
- Independently read different types of writing
- Summarize their reading, with main ideas and details to support thinking
- Compare and contrast characters, settings, and events in a story
- Read and comprehend grade-level texts accurately and fluently, figuring out the meaning of unknown words
- Write about their opinions or information with facts and details
- Plan, revise, and edit to make writing more clear and organized
- Write for different people, purposes

Encourage your child to read 20 minutes or more every day!

- Create a reading space that is comfortable and free from distraction
- Ask your child to share details and examples or compare and contrast characters from what they read
- Encourage your child to write and read their writing to you
- Talk about current events and share ideas and opinions together
- Go to the library and encourage your child to check out different types of books and tell you about them

When your child is reading, you can read too. Talk about what you both are reading!
What’s New in Elementary Science?  http://www.nsta.org/parents

This is a time for transition in science education, with teaching and learning focused on three key areas in Washington State Science Learning Standards:

1) Science/Engineering Practices used by professionals to explain the world or solve problems
2) Core Ideas that include fundamental scientific knowledge
3) Crosscutting Concepts frame scientific thinking across life, earth/space, physical sciences.

Your child’s report card shows Performance Expectations, for what students should be able to do by the end of a unit. The three dimensions are woven into each Performance Expectation.

Engage in Science at Home!!

Get outside together, taking time to notice, appreciate, and wonder about the natural world.

- Ask open-ended questions and take time to encourage thoughtful answers: “Tell me about what you made.” “What do you think caused the change?” “Can you think of a different way to do it?”

- Observe carefully and notice small details about natural and physical things like shapes in a spider web or types of bread.

- Make predictions and test how things work “How long will an ice cube last on the counter?” “Will it melt faster on another surface?”

- Encourage investigation. Try taking things apart to see how they work - from flowers to old appliances. Don’t worry about putting them back together!

- Let your child teach you by explaining or modelling through drawing, writing, or conversation.

- Challenge your student to argue from evidence. This is not fighting but using facts to explain their thinking. Ask: “How do you know that?” “Why is that so?”

You can support your child’s teacher by volunteering to help with classroom experiences or science related field trips.

Science learning is powerful!

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What’s Important About 5th Grade Social Studies?

The report card shows five areas of social studies that you and your child can discuss:

**Civics** - Understanding organization and participation in United States government

**Economics** - Understanding colonial laws, trade, and economic systems

**Geography** - Constructing and using maps to learn about U.S. culture and migration

**History** - Using multiple perspectives to learn about United States history

**Social Studies Skills** - Using questions and multiple primary and secondary sources to get information and make conclusions
PE and Arts are Part of Basic Education Too!

Visual and Performing Arts

Research shows that students with an arts education are more engaged, do better in school, and are more likely to graduate and participate in community life. In Seattle Public Schools, we want every student to receive a comprehensive, predictable arts education during their K-12 years.

Each elementary school offers different arts programs, from possibilities including visual arts, general music, theatre, dance, or instrumental music. Progress report standards come from the Washington State Arts Learning Standards, which focus on aspects of artistic process:

Creating: developing new artistic ideas and work.
Performing: interpreting and presenting artistic ideas / work
Responding: understanding and evaluating meaning in the arts
Connecting: Relating personally to artistic ideas and work

The arts are a core subject!

Physical Education

In physical education, students build movement skills, knowledge, fitness, social well-being, and confidence so they can enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle. Seattle Public Schools is committed to providing a quality physical education program to help students develop in these areas.

Our Physical Education (PE) standards are based on motor and movement patterns and skills, as well as concepts like physical literacy, which is the ability, confidence and desire to be physically active for life. PE is an instructional program, which makes it different from recess, free play, recreational sports or athletics. PE teachers work with general education teachers to provide high quality instruction for an average of 100 minutes per week, which is required by Washington State law. Schools organize PE times in different ways, but all students should be learning about their physical selves all year long!

Support the arts at home!

Ask your children what they created today.
Have your child describe what their art is about.
Art is an area children experiment and make mistakes. Ask them to tell you about a “beautiful oops”
Make art together!

Questions? Please visit seattleschools.org/academics/curriculum for more info on any subject area