

# Academics: Curriculum Vision, Performance Assessments

## Monument Valley Regional Middle School

### Program of Studies: Curriculum by Grade 2016-2017

#### Curriculum Vision

Monument Valley Middle school facilitates learning through a balanced and varied curriculum which stimulates intellectual interests, requires active participation, and enables positive contribution to society and employs curriculum and instructional methods which:

- Reflect specific, clearly stated, rigorous goals for each grade level and course which smoothly transition between grade levels.
- Incorporate advancements in technology to ensure mastery of academic content and acquisition of essential life skills.
- Strategically integrate differentiated instruction and Response to Intervention (RTI) to meet the needs and interests of students at all stages of learning in each subject. Result from collaborative efforts among teachers to connect and integrate curriculum as well as assess data and address gaps in students' knowledge.
- Utilize the full range of time and school resources provided during each period of instruction throughout the academic year.
- Allow for creative and non-traditional approaches to instructional delivery within the boundaries of professionalism and safe, appropriate conduct which serves as a foundation for rigorous and engaging curriculum and instruction.

## **Fifth Grade Curriculum Overview**

Fifth grade represents an important transition year for students. In order to prepare students for the middle school experience, the fifth grade program is departmental in design in which students experience working with more than one teacher in curriculum areas. Teachers provide a safe and structured learning environment to help students develop the social, emotional, and academic skills necessary for middle school success. Our goal is for students to feel confident and capable in their abilities, build important organizational skills, and accept more responsibility for their own learning.

### **Language Arts**

Fifth grade students read both literature and informational text on a variety of subjects. They continue to practice the foundational reading skills learned in previous grades, but the emphasis in fifth grade is on students' comprehension of narrative and informational texts. Students read texts and use comprehension strategies to compare, contrast, and integrate information from the texts. They analyze how structure, point of view, visual elements, and figurative language contribute to the meaning or tone of texts. As their skills deepen, students identify main themes of text, determine how evidence and reasons support the theme, and draw inferences or conclusions supported by details from the text. In their writing, students group related information logically and use narrative techniques to develop the story line or characters. They revise, edit, and rewrite compositions and try new approaches to improve their writing. Students conduct research projects that provide them with practice in gathering information, using print and digital sources, and summarizing information in notes.

### **Social Studies**

In fifth grade social studies, students will explore early human beginnings. They will learn about the capabilities each species developed which improved their chances of survival. Students also learn about primary sources, timelines and the relative distance between events, and they will create a personal timeline. These skills are embedded in the study of early civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt. We will learn to identify the traits of civilizations and how these civilizations developed. We will explore the political, religious, and social characteristics of each. We will also explore the influence these civilizations had on our present day world. Students will be conducting research and

writing simple research papers on one facet of a civilization. This will culminate in an exhibition of their hard work!

Current events will also be part of the curriculum through the use of Time for Kids and other periodical texts. Students will be asked to gather information about people and places that connect to the curriculum. This information will be compiled and used by the students to write paragraphs which answer basic questions about that topic.

## **Science**

Science in the 5th grade is a very hands on inquiry based program. We begin with the scientific process and explore the steps that scientist go through to problem solve. The first major unit is animal behavior and classification. During this unit we use meal worms to discover how animals use their senses to survive in their natural environment. Students also learn to write lab reports and come up with good thinking questions about the data they have recorded. They will create their own defining questions and then test their ideas. This unit then culminates in creating a field guide about a local animal that they have researched.

We will also be doing a plant unit where we learn the major functions of a plant and how changing one variable can affect how it thrives and grows.

Simple machines are also a major focus. The students learn about the six simple machines and then create a machine that helps them do work .This unit also has a technology component.

The final unit is the MCAS review unit. In this unit we do a variety of activities that include magnetism, weather, solar system, light, sound and rocks.

## **Math**

Instructional time in grade five focuses on developing fluency to add, subtract, multiply and divide with fractions, extending division to 2-digit divisors and integrating decimal fractions so students understand decimal operations to hundredths, and the development of an understanding of volume. Grade five students practice making sense of math problems and persevere in solving them. At the beginning of the year, classroom expectations are established to encourage all students to share their math knowledge through conjectures regarding mathematical procedures. Students use concrete models and illustrations to solve real world problems and use clear and accurate representations of their strategies.

### Units of Study:

- Multiplication and Volume with Whole Numbers
- Division with Whole Numbers/Order of Operations
- Place Value System/Addition and Subtraction with Decimals
- Addition and Subtraction with Fractions
- Multiplication and Division with Decimals
- Multiplication and Division with Fractions
- 2-D Shapes and Coordinate Geometry

### **Differentiation and Support**

Fifth grade classes are differentiated to help each student achieve their potential. All classroom teachers provide multiple opportunities for different learning styles. Fifth grade is committed to success and engagement for all students, which comes from a strong curriculum, solid instructional methods, a focus on community and authentic relationships with each student.

### **Sixth Grade Curriculum Overview**

Sixth grade is an exciting year for students at Monument Valley. Students are a year into middle school and are learning to be independent thinkers and learners. Teachers strive to help students make connections across curricular areas to provide experiences that stimulate learning in all developmental areas – physical, social, emotional and intellectual – through an integrated approach to learning. Our goal for their sixth grade experience is to have them take responsibility as for their own learning and ask important questions about the world.

### **Language Arts**

Students read and analyze a wide range of literature from different times and cultures, with an increasing emphasis on analyzing informational text on grade level topics in all sixth-grade subject areas. The emphasis in sixth grade is on students' comprehension of complex narrative and informational texts. Students read two or more texts on a topic and use a variety of comprehension strategies to compare, contrast, and integrate information from the texts. They analyze how

structure, point of view, visual elements, and figurative language contribute to the meaning or tone of texts. As their analysis skills deepen, students can identify key individual events and details and use them as evidence to support their analysis and to distinguish claims that are supported by and author from those that are not. Additional analysis skills call for students to compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with another interpretation. They learn academic language and domain-specific vocabulary through their reading and use it in their writing and speaking. In their writing, students in sixth grade develop more sophisticated skills, such as using evidence from a variety of sources to support their purpose or conclusion. They revise, edit, and rewrite their compositions and learn to try new approaches and use technology to improve their writing product. Students conduct research projects that provide them with practice in gathering information, using print and digital sources, and paraphrasing and summarizing information. Integrating reading and writing across the different content areas is emphasized through the addition of the standards for literacy in social studies and science.

### **Social Studies**

Sixth graders study the political and physical geography and embed five major concepts: location, place, human interaction with the environment, movement, and regions. Students study the major pre-Columbian civilizations in the New World; the 15th and 16th century European explorations around the world, in the western hemisphere, and in North America in particular; the earliest settlements in North America; and the political, economic, and social development of the English colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries.

### **Science**

Science students in the sixth grade will continue their exploration and discovery of the world without and the world within. Recognizing that science is a way of thinking about the world, we lead students to sharpen their powers of observation, to re-awaken their curiosity, and to forge new skills of analysis. The course is oriented toward experiencing phenomena in the fields of earth and space science, biology, physical science and some technology/engineering.

### **Math**

In grade 6, instructional time should focus on four critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division, and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking.

### **Differentiation and Support**

The sixth grade curriculum is differentiated for students so they can get the most out of each unit. Each classroom teacher has their own unique approach to teaching which provides multiple opportunities for different learning styles. As a team we are committed to success and engagement for all students, which comes from a strong curriculum, solid instructional methods, a focus on community and authentic relationships with each student.

### **Seventh Grade Curriculum Overview**

Seventh grade is an opportunity for students to mature and take on challenges that they have not experienced in previous years. Responsibility and organization are important themes in middle school. In the seventh grade teachers help students develop these qualities both socially and academically. Seventh grade continues to help develop an integrated approach to learning through a variety of interdisciplinary units. Our goal for an amazing seventh grade experience is to help students build the skills they need to become confident and success life-long learners.

### **Language Arts**

In seventh grade, students learn how to become better readers and writers through the study of literature. They understand that they are both readers and writers who interpret what they read and control what they write. Students become increasingly able to recognize excellence in the literature that they read and utilize authors' differing styles and approach to writing to enhance their own craft. Through the use of writer's notebook, students are able to try a new approach to writing and understand their individual strengths and the aspects of their writing that require improvement.

Through theme based units and independent reading, students focus on an integration of three main areas: oral communication, the meaning and structure of literature, and writing. Students are asked to explore a variety of genres both inside and outside of the classroom and often times are delighted to discover a new genre that appeals to them. As a result, the sense of discovery and excitement for reading powerful literature encourages them to improve their own writing, reading and independence towards learning.

## **Social Studies**

Social Studies in seventh grade builds on the knowledge and skills of a student's previous years. American History is taught in both seventh and eighth grade so there is a unique opportunity to expand learning. Ongoing communication within the department ensures that students will begin their study at the appropriate place in history. The goal of social studies in seventh grade is to not only learn about the past but to become aware as global citizens of the events that are going on around us today. We start our year with a brief review of map and geography skills and then move into a unit on archaeology. This unit provides students the "tools" to continue to research historical events that have changed over the years due to the discovery of new evidence. Topics that will be investigated include Colonial America, The French and Indian War, Causes of the American Revolution and Revolutionary America.

## **Science**

We continue with our spiral curriculum philosophy. The start of the year is a review of measurement (metrics) with a focus on inter-unit conversions and use of measuring tools. There is a progression in introducing the Scientific Method with an emphasis on independent, dependent, control and constant variables. This unit will take us into the first of our four main units.

The four main units are Inside Earth (Geology), Chemical Building Blocks (Chemistry), Astronomy (Earth and Space Science) and Cells and Heredity (Meiosis, DNA, Cell Organelles and Respiration). During these units we will incorporate seven Pre-AP labs during the year. These labs will help in differentiating instruction, critical thinking and to meet each of our students learning styles. There are

also long-term projects (earthquake proof buildings and balloon-powered cars) that students will also be assigned.

There will also be an emphasis on more writing components throughout the year. This emphasis will be directed with a persuasive essay directed toward the Space Race, an Astronomy research project and detailed conclusion writing from different lab reports. The Space Race and Astronomy research project will be in collaboration with the Seventh Grade English department and our Librarian.

## **Math**

Seventh grade math is taught by a team of teachers comprised of a regular education teacher, a special education teacher, title I teachers, and paraprofessionals. The curriculum uses the Common Core seventh grade math standards as a guide and is supported by Pre-AP math ideology, the Connected Math Program, and other professional resources. There is an emphasis on learning and applying skills, writing using rubrics, and developing and enhancing abstract thinking skills. Curriculum is differentiated based on student need.

Units of Study:

- Data Distributions
- Accentuate the Negative
- Stretching & Shrinking
- Shapes & Designs
- Filling & Wrapping
- Comparing & Scaling
- Moving Straight Ahead
- Comparisons & Predictions

## **Foreign Language**

Monument Valley offers a two-year, honors elective foreign language experience for eligible students in either French or Spanish in Grades 7 and 8. Upon successful completion of the sequential two-year program, students are awarded one high school credit, and normally move on to level II in Grade 9. Highly proficient students may be recommended for level III. Foreign language students at

the middle school are immersed in an environment conducive to natural language acquisition. In contrast to grammar-based language programs, communication is at the core of every lesson. Listening and speaking are the major focus in the beginning. Structure and support are given to students as they are immersed in the Spanish or French culture and language. As students become more proficient with oral skills, increasingly challenging reading and writing activities are introduced as students read and write stories and skits in the target language.

French and Spanish at Monument Valley are not text-book based courses. Teachers are trained in and practice the methodology of TPRS (Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling) based on the research of Stephen Krashen and his Natural Approach to second language acquisition. MVM foreign language teachers incorporate hands-on and multimedia activities into their lessons. The classes are media-rich, highly interactive, and are taught in the target language from day one.

By the end of the 8th grade, most students reach Novice-High or Intermediate-Low levels of proficiency according to the ACTFL (American Council of Foreign Language Teachers) proficiency guidelines. <http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org>

## **Differentiation and Support**

The seventh grade curriculum is differentiated for students so they can get the most out of their learning experience. Each classroom teacher has a unique teaching style which provides opportunities for different learning styles. As a team we are committed to success and engagement for all students, which comes from a strong curriculum, solid instructional methods, and an awareness and appreciation for each other.

## **Eighth Grade Curriculum Overview**

-

Congratulations, your student has reached the top of the heap! This is a pivotal year for your student; Eighth grade is the bridge between the middle and high school, between childhood and young adulthood.

Students will be expected to take responsibility for their learning, and to see that their educational journey is not just a completion of a list of tasks, but an experience in which they will broaden their understanding of the content material and themselves as learners.

### **Language Arts**

The eighth grade language arts experience this year will be founded upon thinking. Students will be challenged to think while they read. Not just about what is written, but why it is written. Author's message and purpose will be examined closely in everything we read from *The Diary of Anne Frank* to the OP-ED page of the New York Times. Students will be challenged to showcase their thinking both orally and, perhaps more importantly, through their writing. They will make declarative statements about their analyses of literature, and they will bolster their stance with textual evidence. Students will also write, edit, and revise their work and the work of their peers. They will write narrative pieces, opinion pieces, memoirs, poems, and informational pieces. They will demonstrate their thinking while they experiment with voice, style, and punctuation. Students will be required to provide feedback to their peers' writing. And, finally, the students will be putting their writing out into the open to be read.

### **Social Studies**

The eighth grade history curriculum is the continuation of the previous year's work in early American History. Students will open the year with a review of the consequences of the American Revolution. Considerable time will be spent investigating the origins and design of our federal system of government. We will use that knowledge to evaluate the policies of our early presidents. Students will then research the rapid social, economic, and physical growth of our nation, closing the year with the Civil War and Reconstruction unit.

### **Science**

Science in eighth grade is the culmination of a three year spiral in our curriculum. The focus of our studies will be on applying knowledge gained in previous years to more complex natural phenomena, while finalizing a student's understanding of some core concepts, including:

- Physical Science – energy transfer in systems (chemical and physical) and motion

- Life Science – heredity, evolution, and anatomy
- Earth Science – volcanic activity and earth mapping
- Space Science – solar system and stars

Significant time will be spent on labs and activities that challenge students to think critically about both concepts and process, educates them on how to be good investigators and make inferences, and strengthens their abilities to make decisions about science, technology and society.

Time will also be spent developing a student's ability to use and apply the scientific method through the use of writing assignments, formal written lab reports, and participation in science fair activities. These activities will help to hone a student's ability to perform science in preparation for more formal lab sciences in high school.

### **Math**

Instructional time will focus on three critical areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.

### **Foreign Language**

Monument Valley offers a two-year, honors elective foreign language experience for eligible students in either French or Spanish in Grades 7 and 8. Upon successful completion of the sequential two-year program, students are awarded one high school credit, and normally move on to level II in Grade 9. Highly proficient students may be recommended for level III. Foreign language students at the middle school are immersed in an environment conducive to natural language acquisition. In contrast to grammar-based language programs, communication is at the core of every lesson. Listening and speaking are the major focus in the beginning. Structure and support are given to students as they are immersed in the Spanish or French culture and language. As students become more proficient with oral skills, increasingly challenging reading and writing activities are introduced as students read and write stories and skits in the target language.

French and Spanish at Monument Valley are not text-book based courses. Teachers are trained in and practice the methodology of TPRS (Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling) based on the research of Stephen Krashen and his Natural Approach to second language acquisition. MVM foreign language teachers incorporate hands-on and multimedia activities into their lessons. The classes are media-rich, highly interactive, and are taught in the target language from day one.

By the end of the 8th grade, most students reach Novice-High or Intermediate-Low levels of proficiency according to the ACTFL (American Council of Foreign Language Teachers) proficiency guidelines. <http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org>

### **Differentiation and Support**

The eighth grade curriculum is differentiated for students so they can get the most out of each unit. We will assess students' understanding of the curriculum frequently both formally and informally (this could be as simple as overhearing two students discuss the procedures in which they solved a math problem).

Each classroom teacher is dedicated to moving students forward. We consider the growth potential for each individual student and are dedicated to seeing each individual student achieve growth across the curriculum.

We are committed to creating a community for the 8th grade team. We are proud of our rigorous yet differentiated curriculum. We are excited to facilitate positive connections not only between our students and their eighth grade community but also the community of the school as a whole.

### **Exploratory Curriculum Overview**

#### **Art**

Fifth 5th Grade Art encompasses an exploration of art methods and materials. Art Elements and principles of design are emphasized in units. In sixth grade students increase their technical skills, while thinking critically and creatively about their work. Seventh graders will develop an understanding of communication through art, art response, and art exploration. In the eighth grade

students will develop their capacity for imaginative and reflective thinking. Rigor in technical skill and creativity will be encouraged.

## **Design**

The Design program is a new sequence of learning experiences at Monument Valley. The program seeks to introduce students to a way of thinking that is becoming the way to think in the 21st century. Students work in traditional media such as wood, paper and cardboard to learn about the design process. They move to visual representations of their ideas and plans on paper and on the computer. The sequence of learning activities culminates in contemporary applications of coding and exporting of ideas. Older students work on synthesizing all of this technology into integrated projects. An example is the Future Cities project which shows students how to envision a future where humanity lives primarily in megalopolises and needs to figure out how to feed itself. The program compliments the visual arts curriculum, but also connects to science and other disciplines. The vision for the program is open up the learning environment to develop a MakerSpace that can be used by students when they need to solve problems, design solutions and have an open workshop to try out ideas using a variety of technologies.

## **Foreign Language**

The fifth and sixth grade Foreign Language Program provides all students with language learning opportunities in French and Spanish as part of the Exploratory Program. Students in both grades study French for one quarter and Spanish for one quarter. Classes are highly interactive with a focus on the culture of the target language. The goal of the fifth and sixth grade Foreign Language experience is to provide students with a positive experience in a nurturing environment where students feel comfortable learning a second (or third) language in anticipation of more formal language study in grades seven and eight. Research studies indicate that early study of a second language results in cognitive benefits, gains in academic achievement, and increases self-esteem, creativity, and positive attitudes toward diversity. Fifth and sixth grade Foreign Language classes prepare students to begin developing functional skills in listening and speaking in French and Spanish. The grade five and six classes also allow the Foreign Language teachers to get to know the students so that they are better able to assess which students will be eligible for formal language

study in seventh grade. By the end the grade six experience, most students have decided whether or not they are ready to sign up for French or Spanish as an honors elective in seventh grade.

## **Health**

In grades five and six, students have health for a quarter of the year. In grade 5 we discuss Self-Esteem, Decision making, Tobacco Information, Media Influences, Refusal Skills and Communication skills. A curriculum called Life Skills is used. In grade 6 we discuss, First Aid, Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug prevention using a curriculum from Project Northland called Slick Tracy and finally Puberty.

In grade 7 we discuss Stress, Nutrition, Drug Prevention using a curriculum from Project Northland called Amazing Alternatives and the Reproductive Systems. In grade 8 we discuss Addictions, Relationships, Flirting, Sexual Harassment, Dating, that includes information on Pregnancy and Prevention of Pregnancy and STI's.

## **Library**

The mission of the Monument Valley Library is to develop student researchers who will be competent in the key skills of selecting, evaluating, and processing information, and to provide access to a rich collection of information resources in all formats. Our 5th graders take Library class for one marking period as part of the exploratory rotation. Students learn about library organization and explore the content and effective use of magazines, non-fiction books, online encyclopedias, and the online catalog. Through our collaborative, integrated instructional program, our librarian and our teaching staff deliver engaging projects in which our students investigate and create using a wide variety of print, electronic, and audio-visual resources. Our 8th graders will graduate from MVM with the information skills they will need for high school. Our library supports curriculum-based and recreational reading with many selections of popular and classic novels, biographies and non-fiction titles, an annual book fair, and two student book clubs.

## **Physical Education**

In fifth and sixth grade, physical education class meets every other day for the entire school year and students earn a Pass/Fail grade. Students will continue to learn to analyze their performances in order to learn or improve a movement skill in a variety of sports and games. Students will also learn fitness concepts, participate in a variety of fitness development exercises, assess their personal fitness, compare their scores to a health related standard, and set goals for improvement or maintenance. Working in small groups, students will learn to accept personal differences (maturity levels, physical differences, physical abilities, cultures, and gender differences). Units of instruction include playground rules and games, fitness pre- and post-testing, jump rope, create-a-game, soccer, volleyball, and basketball; cooperative games; dance.

In Seventh and Eighth grade, the students continue to development movement skill combinations and an understanding of game strategy; the assessment and maintenance of physical fitness to improve health and performance, the requisite knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles and strategies; and the application of psychological and sociological concepts, including self-responsibility, positive social interaction, and group dynamics, in the learning and performance of physical activity. Units of activity include: physical fitness (activities and assessment, concepts, development and maintenance); cooperative activities, team sports such as team handball, ultimate frisbee, basketball, volleyball and flag football; racket sports such as badminton or tennis; dance and gymnastics. Students attend PE for 90 of the 180 school days and earn a numerical grade that is factored into their overall GPA.

## **Music**

Fifth grade students will use the instruments of the Orchestra as a basis for their 10 week study. They will learn about the families of the orchestra, the similarities and the differences. They will study famous compositions to determine how composers use instruments in their work. In collaboration with the librarian, they will use technology to research questions about their chosen composer and create a culminating project to show what they have learned.

Sixth Grade music students will integrate language arts and social studies with the music curriculum and develop a thorough understanding of pitch, rhythm and beat. In seventh grade, students will work to obtain optimum performance skills on keyboards and guitars which is individualized and

adjusted to appropriate skill levels of each student. The eighth grade music classes will identify and apply rhythmic notation, pitch, meter, dynamics, form, tempo, timbre, and harmony to their original compositions. Students will develop a thorough understanding of the effect and influence of music from the United States to the world. Students will continue to be introduced to the many opportunities open in the music business.

### **Academic Intervention and Support overview**

#### **Reading Intervention and Support program**

Individualized programs are created for each student receiving a reading intervention based on the student's performance in the areas of comprehension, fluency, and accuracy. All students read text at their instructional level. New academic vocabulary is pre-taught and students are encouraged to use context clues to learn new words on their own. Students apply word-solving strategies learned through weekly word-study lessons. Comprehension is measured with follow-up higher-level thinking questions to ensure understanding of the text. Students are encouraged to employ metacognitive strategies like visualizing, connecting, inferring and questioning. Writing and oral discussion are integrated into lessons as well. Graphic organizers are often used to scaffold comprehension and to provide structure for writing about reading. Students are assessed regularly to ensure progress and measure growth.

#### **Mathematics Intervention and Support Program**

Our goal for a student's intervention experience is to fill the gaps and to build the pre-requisite skills and confidence necessary to achieve in the regular mathematics classroom. We are committed to success and engagement for all students through a differentiated curriculum for each student so they can receive the appropriate instructional skill level and to provide independent practice so each student grows. The intervention teachers are dedicated to providing a safe environment and teaching skills and concepts in multiple ways to support students learning styles. Our goal is for students in fifth and sixth grade to develop number concept, number sense, and place value by the end of sixth grade so they are ready for the study of Pre-Algebra in seventh grade. Students in

seventh and eighth grade are working on developing their conceptual knowledge and problem solving skills to enhance their ability to effectively apply their knowledge of mathematical tools.

### **Academic Support Class**

Academic Support Class is designed to provide seventh and eighth grade students with a positive environment for the development of personal academic success. In addition to providing time for students to organize and complete schoolwork, it also provides instructional strategies in time management, goal setting, studying effectively and viewing Edline to monitor academic progress. Students are expected to complete work, use time well during class, be prepared for class, keep track of academic progress and fill in an agenda (paper or electronic device) for all assignments.

### **Enrichment Program**

Working within the data supported intervention and support framework, academically advanced students' needs are addressed through appropriate programming, resources, and special programs. Individual students, groups of students, as well as whole grade levels are the targeted groups for delivery of this facet of the intervention model. Students are provided with opportunities for advanced academic work and alternate programming that best meets their needs. Support for classroom teachers is also provided through implementation of differentiated instruction strategies, accessing advanced resources for classroom use, and arranging for alternative individual or group work through co-teaching and parallel teaching models.

### **English Language Learner program**

The fifth, sixth, and seventh grade English Language Learner (ELL) students at MVM get varied ELL services/support according to their needs. For students who are nearing exit status from the ELL program the work is focused in texts like Writer's Express Skills Book – Editing and Proofreading Practice. The goal of using this book is to further refine and advance the student's ability in written English while at the same time challenging him or her as a reader of well written examples of text. This book, by its nature, teaches language structures which are academic and higher level and

which will build up the student's English language facility. For students who are still in an intermediate range as English Language Learners, ELL specific instruction is focused on building up their academic language and vocabulary using the text *Newcomers*. Upper intermediate students also receive instruction in writing and reading using the text *Writer's Express Skills Book* as described above. In addition to specific ELL focused work; ELL students are also given additional classroom support in particular academic areas like math, ELA, Social Studies, or reading. In that case, the ELL teacher focuses on enhancing and in some cases clarifying the instruction that the student is receiving in his or her regular classroom setting.

### **The Therapeutic Learning Center**

The Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) provides direct academic instruction, academic and social skills support, life skills instruction, and inclusion support to learning disabled students. It is also a homeroom for some students. The TLC, staffed with educators specializing in a wide range of learning disabilities, is a dynamic and flexible program that welcomes those students for whom full inclusion is not currently feasible and those for whom a significantly separate classroom is too restrictive, and those in between. Most of our students participate in a number of general education classes and specials, such as P.E., art, computer, foreign language, and music, and come to the TLC for additional support or a "home base." Some spend more time with the program's educators in direct one-on-one or small group instruction. Some students come in for one period to learn important and practical life skills. Because each of our students is different we customize the educational experience for each student. We have a flexible space that allows us to re-configure as necessary to meet student needs. Our overriding goal is to guide each of our students to the most independent, inclusive and successful school and life experience possible.