Science

The science curriculum in third grade builds scientific process skills within three units of study. In the physical science unit, "*Circuits and Pathways*", students learn about electricity by conducting simple investigations using batteries, light bulbs, motors and buzzers. The earth science unit, "*Rocks & Minerals*" covers volcanoes, rock cycle, minerals, and gems. The life science unit, "*Fossils*", focuses on fossil evidence and students compare dinosaurs, birds and reptiles using observed characteristics. **In 2018-19, several NPS teachers will pilot a new unit on adaptations and habitats to replace the *Fossils* unit. In 2018-19 pilot teachers can record a dash for the older life science standards on the progress report**.

Social Studies

Third graders learn about the historical events that shaped Needham as a community and connected it to Boston. They learn about the regions of the United States and develop an understanding of how the physical characteristics of the regions affect the way people live. They learn about states, their capitals, the continents, and the oceans. They are able to use appropriate map skills to locate and identify states, capitals, continents, and oceans.

Visual Art

In third grade, students are introduced to simple perspective and direct-observational drawing with emphasis on greater detail. They develop self-assessment skills, and use problem solving, observation, analysis to create, analyze, and refine works of art. Students create works that express specific scenes or feelings, using the **Elements of Art**, focusing on space, and the **Principles of Design**, focusing on perspective. They follow a sequential creating process and can communicate this process to others. Work includes drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, construction, and clay modeling. All of these are used to enhance and refine skills in the Visual Art domains of **Communications and Expression, Design and Composition,** and **Methods, Tools and Techniques.**

Music

Singing continues to be the central activity of most third grade music classes, covering a variety of American folk songs and songs from diverse cultures. The soprano recorder is introduced, along with added classroom keyboard and percussion instruments. Third Grade Music also begins to emphasize reading traditional music notation. Students may elect to begin the violin, viola, or cello. All of the above are used to enhance and refine skills in the Music domains of **Creating**, **Performing,** and **Responding**.

Physical Education

The third grade elementary physical education program is designed to teach children motor skills and skill themes that are developmentally appropriate for their age. Motor skills are taught within the context of skill themes. "Skill themes are fundamental movements that are later modified into the more specialized patterns on which activities of increasing complexity are built. Once the basic skills are learned to a certain degree of proficiency, they are combined with other skills and used in a more complex setting, such as those found in dance, games, and gymnastics." (Graham, Parker, Holt/Hale, 1999)

Library & Digital Learning

The library and digital learning curriculum integrates information and technology literacy skills with classroom curriculum learning. Students learn to use a variety of tools and resources to become information gatherers and creators of new knowledge products. They practice reading, writing and mathematics skills while engaged in research and information tasks for science and social studies learning. For instance, students studying Massachusetts or other states gather facts, read maps, write articles, collect artifacts, and acquire new information by actively searching, recording and presenting their work. This area of the curriculum is assessed within the context of the activity in which it is embedded.

NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grade 3 Progress Report
Parent Brochure

The Progress Report

This progress report is intended to *complement* existing parent conferences and to better communicate with you about your child's progress toward mastering the learning expectations for his/her grade level. It is a reflection of the district's goal to have a system in place that enables students to be engaged in challenging academic experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards. It also represents how schools across the state and country are now reporting student learning. These types of reporting systems communicate students' progress in a way that descriptively reflects what s/he knows and what s/he is able to do in relation to the state curriculum standards. A student's achievement is reported separately from effort.

The parent brochure outlines the categories that are included in the report for each curriculum area and provides a description of the characteristics associated with proficiency in that category. In each reporting period, the skills that are taught are assessed against a benchmark. Numerical levels are used to report performance with respect to the grade level learning goals. The system is designed to describe how well a student is progressing with respect to mid and end-of-year grade level expectations, rather than in relation to other students in the class. It is a snapshot of a child's progress towards the mastery of grade level learning goals at *a particular point in time*. The scale *cannot be equated to traditional letter grades*. An explanation of these markings appears in this brochure.

Across the district, this type of reporting system is now in place for grades 1-5. It is designed to be responsive to updates in curriculum programming and state requirements as they occur. The progress report that you are seeing today represents the work of many thoughtful individuals and groups. We thank you for working with us to ensure a meaningful system for communicating student progress.

1330 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA 02492
Dr. Daniel E. Gutekanst, Superintendent

Proficiency Scale – Social/Emotional	
C	Consistently
O	Often
S	Sometimes
I	Infrequently
*	See separate progress monitoring report

Social & Personal Competencies

Social/Emotional/Interpersonal Skills--The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum. To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Students who develop skills for decision-making, communication, cooperation, conflict resolution and problem solving develop healthy relationships for work and play. They become self-aware, self-managed and self-directed.

Work Habits--How children learn is as important as what they learn. Process and content go hand in hand. As students become emotionally and socially competent, they are more able to focus themselves, persevere through a difficult task, collaborate in group tasks, learn from a mistake, set goals, and use other skills that positively impact academic achievement.

English Language Arts (Reading)

Third grade readers use a system of strategic actions that include phonics and word analysis, meaning, and language structure in an integrated way to read texts with understanding. They read fluently with phrasing and expression. When reading new texts, they slow down to problem-solve unknown words and quickly pick up the pace again to focus on the meaning. The students learn to use comprehension strategies such as making connections to their own lives, their world, and other known texts; making and confirming predictions; and summarizing important ideas. They develop their ability to infer what's implied but not stated and integrate text information with their own knowledge to create new understandings (synthesize). Third graders analyze texts, examining the author's craft (e.g. words that create sensory images or feelings), and evaluate and think critically about the ideas.

Adjusting their reading for different purposes, third graders learn to read a variety of texts such as informational texts, poetry, fiction, drama, and traditional literature from diverse cultures. They read to learn new information as well as for enjoyment. Readers learn to distinguish the characteristics of different genres (e.g. fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry). They identify themes and main ideas, distinguish among multiple points of view, and find evidence (details) from texts to support their thinking. Third graders learn how non-fiction texts are organized (e.g. cause and effect) and how to use charts, graphs, diagrams and other features of informational texts. They learn the structures and elements of fiction (e.g. plot, setting, characters, problem, solution). The students learn about literary elements in poetry and other texts (e.g. sensory images, rhyme, repetition) as well as structural elements (stanza/verse).

Third graders use language to communicate their ideas in discussions. They listen to other students' ideas, pose questions, and add their own information. They communicate their understandings of texts in written form, using evidence to support their thinking.

Language and Word Study-- The students learn and use new vocabulary in the context of texts, as well as solidify their phonetic and word analysis knowledge (e.g. letters, syllables, word families, root words, prefixes, suffixes). They use grammar knowledge (e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives) to read and write texts. Third graders recognize many regular and irregular words that appear frequently in texts and learn about words that sound alike but are spelled differently (homophones), multiple meanings of words (homographs), and words that have the same or opposite meanings (synonyms, antonyms).

English/Language Arts (Writing)

In third grade, teachers look for evidence that a student can independently understand and use the steps of the writing process. Students write in a variety of genres, including personal narrative, fiction, informational, and persuasive pieces. Multiple samples of writing inform a student's grade. Because various genres are taught at different times during the year, a student's grade in June could differ from that in January.

Writing Process-- Proficient writers write for a sustained amount of time. They generate ideas, plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing, incorporating feedback from adults and peers.

Structure-- Proficient writers provide a meaningful introduction and conclusion. They organize and connect ideas in logical order according to genre.

Development--Proficient writers include well-developed and organized paragraphs that support the main ideas or story. They elaborate with details and evidence that support the reader's understanding, using voice appropriate to the genre.

Conventions--Proficient writers apply rules for punctuation, grammar and usage, paragraphing and capitalization.

Mathematics

Needham's new elementary mathematics program, *Think Math!* balances mathematical skill fluency with the development of conceptual understanding and problem solving within the five domains of the new MA Common Core standards:

Operations & Algebraic Thinking--Proficient students understand the concepts of the four basic operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They fluently know all addition and subtraction fact combinations to 20 by January. They know all multiplication facts through 10 x 10 by June. They are able to solve word problems, find patterns, and are able to assess the reasonableness of their answers.

Number & Operations in Base Ten--Proficient students use place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. They fluently add and subtract numbers within 1,000. They use place value knowledge to break apart large numbers in order to multiply.

Number & Operations—Fractions—Proficient students understand fractions as quantities formed when a whole (a shape, a set, a number line) is partitioned into equal parts. They can explain equivalence of fractions and can compare fractions by reasoning about their size.

Measurement & Data--Proficient students are able to tell, write and measure time intervals to the nearest minute. Using standard units, they are able to solve problems involving measurement and estimation of volume and mass. They are able to measure lengths using rulers marked with centimeters, or halves and fourths of an inch. Students are able to measure perimeter and area and relate these to addition and multiplication. Students are able to interpret and create a variety of graphs, including scaled graphs.

Geometry--Proficient students identify two-dimensional shapes. Students compare and categorize polygons based on attributes.

Proficiency Scale - Academic	
4	In addition to meeting the standard, the student is able to make in-depth inferences and applications that extend beyond what was taught. The student exceeds the January/June standard.
3	The student meets the January/June standard.
2	The student is progressing towards meeting the January/June standard.
1	The student needs more review & reinforcement, requires constant teacher support and assistance to learn and use information. The student is having difficulty meeting the January/June standard.
-	Not taught during this reporting period.
*	See separate progress monitoring report.