Literacy
Students will be immersed in literacy learning connected to the Social Studies content in exploration, country and states. Through the integrated study, students will develop their research skills in both reading and writing. As non-fiction readers, they will learn how to gather and synthesize new information, navigating more sophisticated text features and structures. As writers they will practice putting old and new information into their own words and crafting their writing using a variety of techniques. They will also create folktales rooted in the Native American tradition and refine their research skills in order to thoughtfully plan and organize their writing. Students will continue to work on their Word Study sorts and will increase their application of known spelling patterns to their ongoing writing.

Students will expand their ability to think and talk about texts with others, through Read Alouds and when they work in Book Clubs. These clubs offer them the chance to prepare for conversations by citing text evidence and developing theories, and then comparing their ideas with others and stretching themselves to consider differing opinions from others’ perspectives.

Mathematics
Fourth graders will be continuing to solidify computational fluency in whole number operations with the goal of becoming more flexible, accurate, and efficient thinkers. Along with developing their number sense through oral discussions they will also have the opportunity to problem solve and represent their thinking in a variety of authentic contexts. These experiences will range from exploring the measurement and design of their newly renovated classroom spaces to solidifying place value concepts by analyzing state population and area data. Students will also engage in both individual and collaborative work focused on deepening their mathematical understandings.

Performing Arts: Dance
The concept of Exploration has been integrated into many of our dance lessons. As budding choreographers, the fourth graders began the year immersed in a solo choreography project. Their task was to choreograph the letters of their first name using all of the elements of choreography, as well as a great deal of their own creativity. This project was a huge success! The students produced incredible work, which they truly enjoyed watching on The Tube and sharing with the fourth grade community. Next we will move toward a whole-class choreography project based on a Native American tale. This work will be further enhanced by a live Native American dance performance of the Redhawk Dancers. As we move toward the end of the end of the semester we will take a different look at Exploration and focus on the explorers of modern dance. Children will learn basic modern dance fundamentals as well as the history of this beautiful art form.

Performing Arts: Music
The fourth grade students started the year in music class with creating name dances. Working collaboratively in small groups, the students performed their dances as part of a larger rondo form incorporating movement, singing and playing on the barred instruments. Through this unit, the students reviewed the pentatonic scale, simple rhythmic patterns, ternary form (ABA), rondo form (ABACADA) and expanded upon their barred
instrumental technique to include the alternation of hands. Throughout the semester, the students will continue to master games and songs from around the United States that relate to their study of Country and support the development of healthy singing, recorder technique, collaboration skills and musical literacy.

Before the holidays, the students will master a variety of songs related to the winter season, some with instrumental accompaniment. This will include singing in two parts and in canon. The semester will culminate with learning American dance-songs called Play Parties and a colonial dance called “Gathering Peascods.”

Science
In conjunction with their study of Native Americans and Colonial times, the 4th grade students are exploring and measuring how simple machines make work easier. Experiments included designing and testing levers, quantifying the mechanical advantage of inclined planes and testing the effectiveness of pulleys when lifting loads. Throughout the unit, the students ask questions, make predictions, gather evidence, analyze data, and communicate their ideas orally and in writing. Late in the fall, as part of their study of the theme Exploration, the students will begin to learn to program robots to use sensors and move autonomously.

Social Emotional Learning
In Grade 4, social and emotional learning skills and objectives are investigated through the children's study of Country, Exploration and Justice. By examining the impact that exploration has had on another people, lessons looked at the consequences of these actions, as well as answering questions of responsibility and equity. Working in large and small groups, the children also developed towards meeting SEL objectives by practicing different constructive strategies for handling upsetting situations, continuing to show cooperative behaviors in group settings, and, in general, advocating for themselves and peers in various social interactions.

Spanish Language/Literacy
This semester in Spanish class students have been exploring the theme of country through a study of Central America. Students have engaged in activities in Spanish visually, verbally and kinesthetically through speaking, reading, writing, singing, dancing, drama, role-play and games. Connected with the concept of exploration and their study of regions, students studied the political and physical geography of countries in Central America. They learned and applied vocabulary to describe relative positions using prepositions and geographical location with cardinal directions. They learned to use the verb “estar” when referring to a location and to conjugate for singular and plural subjects. They applied their knowledge of geography to a country project, identifying the location of their chosen country, capital and geographical features in relation to others. Finally, integrated with the study of Native Americans, they studied indigenous population of Central America.

Visual Arts
In fourth grade visual art, students will continue to develop their technical skills and explore the expressive qualities of materials. Students will began the year creating a self-portrait through collage. In the process, students will make close observations to create and arrange shapes to capture their likeness. The fourth graders will then have the opportunity to work in clay to sculpt a figure. The challenging task requires creative problem solving and develops an understanding of attaching and balancing clay forms. The semester will close with an observational drawing study focusing on objects in nature. During the unit, students will investigate the possible line qualities of ebony pencils.
Wellness
Students began the year with fitness pre-assessments to find their baseline fitness levels from which they can build throughout the year. They have worked on their cooperative and teamwork skills through a series of games and problem-solving activities. Students focused their energies on accomplishing a team goal rather than simply achieving individual success. They began their study of the country and its geography through mapping and directional lessons that helped them to orient on a map and locate geographical features. In addition, students explored lacrosse in relation to its roots in the Native American culture and its evolution into a modern day sport.