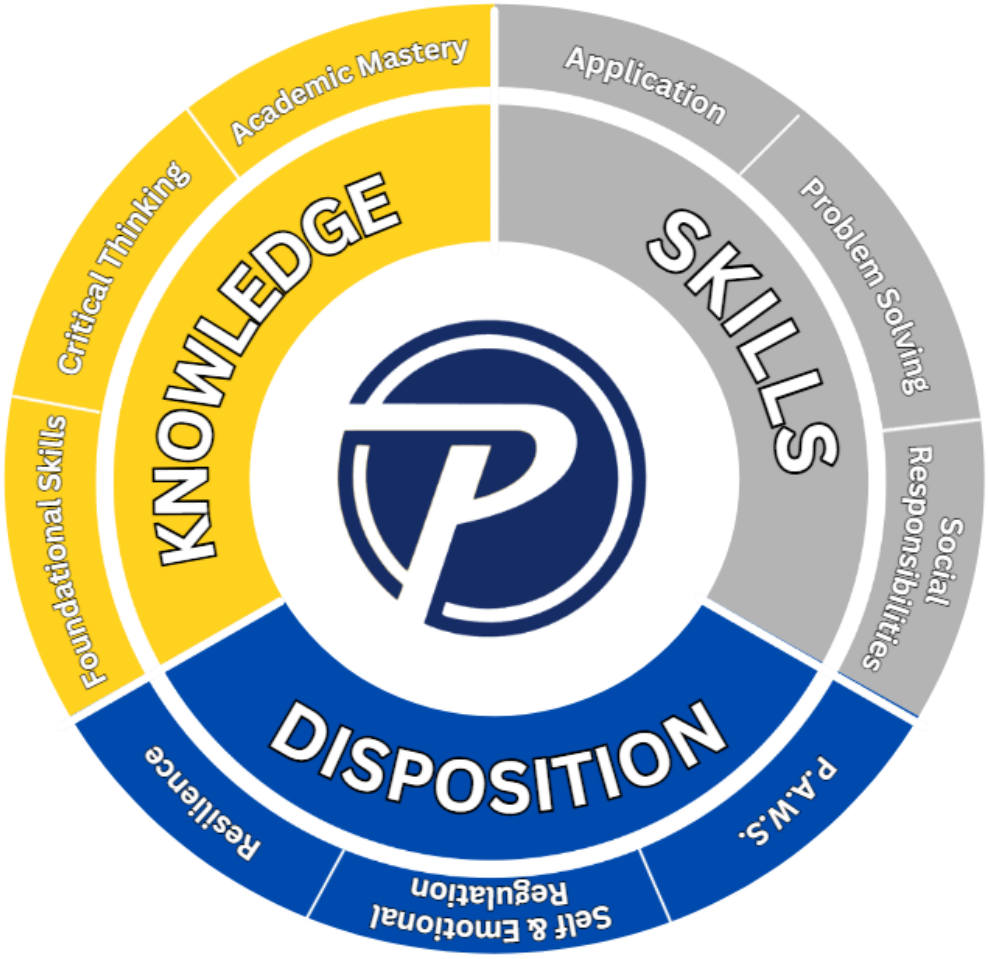
Portrait of a Graduate

Pioneer Elementary



PIONEER ELEMENTARY

Portrait of a Graduate

KNOWLEDGE:

Foundational Skills for K-2 (Early Learners)

- At the early elementary level, these definitions focus on the "building blocks" that make future learning possible:
  - **Phonemic Awareness & Decoding:** The absolute bedrock of literacy.
  - **Number Sense:** Developing an intuitive feel for numbers and how they relate to each other.
  - **Self-Regulation:** Often considered a "foundational skill" in early years—the ability to focus, follow directions, and manage emotions so that academic learning can take place.
  - **Key Distinction:** While "Knowledge" is the *content* (the facts and figures), "Foundational Skills" are the *tools* (reading, math, tech) used to access, process, and express that knowledge.

Critical Thinking

- For the **K-2 level**, Critical Thinking moves away from abstract logic and focuses on **curiosity, observation, and "thinking about thinking."** At this age, it is about moving students from simply following directions to asking *"Why?"* and *"What if?"*
  - **1. The Power of Observation (The "I Notice" Phase)**
    - Critical thinking begins with paying close attention to details.
    - **Definition:** Using the five senses to gather information about the world.
  - **2. Inquiry and Questioning (The "I Wonder" Phase)**
    - Encouraging students to move beyond "yes/no" questions to deeper inquiries.
    - **Definition:** Formulating questions that seek to understand the cause, effect, or purpose of something.
  - **3. Comparing and Contrasting**
    - This is the first step in analysis—looking for relationships between different ideas.

        - **Definition:** Identifying similarities and differences to organize information.
    - **4. Predicting and Inferring**
        - Critical thinking requires taking what is known and "guessing" what isn't yet visible.
        - **Definition:** Making an educated guess based on evidence or prior knowledge.
    - **5. Problem-Solving Strategies**
        - Teaching kids that there is often more than one way to reach a goal.
        - **Definition:** Identifying a challenge and testing different ways to fix it.

Academic Mastery:

- **Academic Mastery** is the shift from rote memorization to the ability to apply knowledge across different contexts. For an elementary setting, this isn't just about getting an "A"; it's about a student's ability to demonstrate they truly understand a concept well enough to use it in the real world.
    - **1. Depth Over Breadth**
        - Mastery focuses on a deep understanding of "power standards"—the most essential concepts—rather than rushing through a textbook.
        - **Definition:** The ability to explain the "how" and "why" behind a concept, not just the "what."
    - **2. Transfer of Knowledge**
        - This is the "gold standard" of mastery. It is the ability to take a skill learned in one lesson and apply it to a completely new situation.
        - **Definition:** Using prior learning to solve new, unfamiliar problems.
    - **3. Fluency and Automaticity**
        - Mastery includes a level of comfort where basic skills become second nature, freeing up "brain space" for higher-level thinking.
        - **Definition:** Performing foundational tasks accurately, quickly, and with little effort.
    - **4. Self-Correction and Reflection**

- A student who has mastered a topic can recognize their own mistakes and understand how to fix them.
- **Definition:** Monitoring one's own work for accuracy and meaning.

Skills:

Application:

- **Application** is the bridge between "knowing" and "doing." It represents a student's ability to take skills or information learned in a controlled classroom setting and use them to navigate real-world tasks, solve unexpected problems, or create something new.
  - For early elementary (K-2), application is where learning becomes "sticky" because it connects abstract concepts to the student's physical world.

  - **1. Functional Application (The "Tools" Level)**
    - This is the ability to use a learned skill as a tool to accomplish a daily task.
    - **Definition:** Using foundational literacy, numeracy, or motor skills to navigate the school environment.
  - **2. Contextual Transfer**
    - The ability to recognize that a strategy used in one subject can work in another.
    - **Definition:** Applying a mental process across different domains.
  - **3. Creative Production**
    - Application through creation. Students use their knowledge to produce something original that demonstrates their understanding.
    - **Definition:** Synthesizing information to build, draw, write, or perform.
  - **4. Real-World Problem Solving**
    - Using classroom knowledge to address a "live" challenge or social situation.
    - **Definition:** Deploying academic or social-emotional skills to resolve a conflict or improve a situation.

Problem Solving:

- **Problem Solving** is less about finding "the right answer" and more about the process of navigating a challenge. At this developmental

stage, it involves transitioning from "I'm stuck" to "I can try a different way."

- **1. Identifying the "Bumps in the Road"**
  - The first step in problem solving is recognizing that a problem exists and being able to name it.
  - Definition: Clearly stating what is in the way of a goal.
- 2**. The "Toolbox" Mentality (Strategic Thinking)**
  - Teaching students that they have a "toolbox" of strategies to draw from when they encounter a hurdle.
  - Definition: Recalling and selecting a specific method to address a challenge.
- 3**. Trial and Error (Persistence)**
  - Developing the stamina to try a second or third idea if the first one fails.
  - Definition: Seeing a "mistake" as a piece of information rather than a stop sign.
- 4. **Collaborative Brainstorming**
  - Learning that two heads (or three) are often better than one.
  - Definition: Listening to others' ideas and combining them to find a solution.

Social Responsibility:

- **Social Responsibility** for K-2 students is about moving from an "only me" perspective to a "we" perspective. At this age, it is defined by how a child cares for their classroom community, treats others with kindness, and understands their role in the world around them.
  - **1. Stewardship of the Environment**
    - This is the most "hands-on" version of social responsibility for young learners—taking care of the physical spaces they inhabit.
    - **Definition:** Respecting and maintaining shared spaces and resources.
  - **2. Empathy and Kindness (The "Heart" of Responsibility)**
    - Understanding that their actions and words have an impact on how others feel.

        - **Definition:** Recognizing the feelings of others and choosing to act in a way that is helpful and inclusive.
    - **3. Understanding Community Roles**
        - Learning that every person has a "job" to do to make the school or neighborhood run smoothly.
        - **Definition:** Recognizing how individuals contribute to the common good.
    - **4. Ethical Decision Making (Honesty & Fairness)**
        - Developing a "moral compass" to do the right thing, even when no one is watching.
        - **Definition:** Following group rules and understanding the importance of being fair and honest.

DISPOSITION:

P.A.W. S.:

- **P**roblem Solve
- **A**lways Care
- **W**ork So Hard
- **S**how Respect

***Continue our PBIS program at the school

- rewarding students for accomplishments both in the classroom and schoolwide.

Self and Emotional Regulation:

Self and Emotional Regulation is the foundational "disposition" that makes all other learning possible. It is the ability to monitor and manage one's energy states, emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in ways that are acceptable and produce positive results such as well-being, loving relationships, and learning.

- For early learners, this is often the most critical area of development as they transition from being co-regulated by adults to developing their own internal "brakes."

1. **Self-Awareness (Identifying the "Engine" Speed)**
   - The first step in regulation is recognizing what is happening inside the body.
   - **Definition:** Identifying physical sensations and emotions in the moment.
2. **Impulse Control (The "Stop and Think" Skill)**
   - The ability to pause between an urge and an action.
   - **Definition:** Managing immediate reactions to allow for a thoughtful response.
3. **Using "Calm Down" Tools (Co-Regulation to Self-Regulation)**
   - Moving from needing a teacher to help them calm down to reaching for a tool independently.
   - **Definition:** Deploying specific strategies to return to a "ready to learn" state.
4. **Persistence Through Frustration**

- Regulation is key to academic stamina; it’s the ability to stay with a task even when it gets hard.
- **Definition:** Managing the "big feelings" of failure or confusion without giving up.

Resilience:

Resilience is the "bounce back" factor. For K-2 students, it is less about enduring major life hardships and more about developing the **stamina** to handle the daily frustrations of learning—like a wobbly block tower, a difficult math problem, or losing a game at recess.

1. The "Growth Mindset" (The Power of "Yet")

- Resilience starts with the belief that abilities are not fixed; they grow with effort.
- **Definition:** Understanding that struggle is a natural part of the learning process.

2. Task Persistence (Stamina)

- The ability to stay engaged with a challenge even when it isn't immediately fun or easy.
- **Definition:** Maintaining focus and effort toward a goal despite obstacles.

3. Risk-Taking and "Productive Failure"

- Developing the courage to try something new without the fear of being "wrong."
- **Definition:** Viewing mistakes as "data" or opportunities to learn something new.

4. Resourcefulness

- Knowing that when you hit a wall, you can look for a different tool or path.
- **Definition:** Seeking out alternative strategies or help when a first attempt fails.