



# Program of Studies

Grades 6 - 8

2017-2018



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**Revised Fall 2017**

# Antilles School

## Mission

Inspired by learning and empowered by our diversity, outreach and distinct place in Caribbean culture, Antilles School is a college preparatory school committed to educational excellence.

## Vision

Together, we are ...

- Challenged to maximize potential
- Sustained by confident, ethical, and compassionate action
- Nourished with a sense of wonderment
- Characterized by intellectual growth and academic achievement
- Committed to the enhancement of critical thinking, problem solving, interpersonal communication, and reflection
- Grounded in culture, visual art, music, theatre, technology, and athletics
- Energized by a collaborative community
- Dedicated to life-long learning, global citizenship, leadership, and service

## Belief Statements

Collectively, we are committed to . . .

A belief in every child's genius and understanding that intelligence is expressed in many ways

Modeling ethical, compassionate actions to lead the way for children as they gain self-confidence, a positive attitude, flexibility, self-regulation, and mutual respect

Creating joyful classroom experiences to nourish each child's sense of wonder, imagination, creativity, intrinsic curiosity, discernment, and motivation to pursue life-long learning, leadership, and service

Pursuing a comprehensive, challenging student life program with a strong commitment to the Advanced Placement Program of the College Entrance Examination Board, and providing information, assistance, and support to each student that enables her/him to set appropriate educational and career goals

Establishing a learning community where dynamic teaching and learning teams exist for academic, physical, and social excellence

Providing time and opportunities for experiential education and social interaction to encourage a set of universal values that include: adaptability, cooperation, compromise, courage, goal-setting, friendship, honesty, humor, integrity, open-mindedness, optimism, perseverance, responsibility, tolerance, trustworthiness, and sense of justice

Providing time and opportunities for leadership and service to others that encourages the broadening of one's perspective, problem solving, and initiative

Fostering collegial collaboration, communication, and conscious improvement to develop a climate and culture supportive of reflective practice and systemic change

Supporting programs that enhance cultural diversity and outreach in our community

## Antilles Middle School

Antilles Middle School is a comprehensive 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade school, offering students and their families a dynamic, independent school education, which includes a strong academic core curriculum focused on preparing students to succeed in a high school college preparatory program and providing differentiation, along with a wide range of complementary courses in music, visual arts, theatre, writing, and physical fitness and health.

### Profile of Middle School Students

As students complete their middle school studies and prepare to enter high school, they are optimistic and confident, curious about the world around them, and a positive interest in learning. They possess foundational knowledge in the liberal arts, mathematics, and sciences. They demonstrate competencies with digital-age literacy and information literacy. They enjoy the visual and performing arts. They display creativity and imagination, critical thinking and effective communication skills, and the ability to apply problem-solving and decision-making skills. They take initiative and responsibility, working independently, as well as collaboratively with other students. They express confidence as learners, and they take pride in their work and achievements, while understanding mistakes are a natural to the learning process. They participate in physical exercise and practice healthy wellness habits. They act compassionately toward others and make positive contributions to the community, expressing social, environmental, and cultural awareness, along with an understanding social responsibility and ethics.

### Culture and Community

We are a community of learners. Characterized by friendships, spontaneity, inquisitiveness, and creativity, the culture of Antilles Middle School is inviting, responsive, encouraging and supportive of all. Appreciating the distinctive qualities and characteristics of middle school students, teachers and staff are mindful of the rapid and profound personal changes that middle-level students are experiencing as they transition from childhood through adolescence and into young adulthood.

Mirroring the research of Origins' *Developmental Designs*, faculty recognize each student's need for autonomy, competence, relationship and to have fun in constructive ways. Our programs and practices reflect, that for middle school students, relationships are paramount and emotions drive learning.

Advisory is a fundamental way in which we create our social lives together. The purpose of the advisory program is to establish trust, build positive relationships, cultivate a compassionate community, develop social skills, and make school meaningful and pleasurable. To those ends, each day begins with community time - an advisory team meeting, middle school morning meeting or

morning assembly - helping to shape a positive and caring school culture that is friendly, safe, inclusive, and supportive of academic and personal development.

Complementing the advisory program, the School's support services offer to students, their parents, and faculty, the information and guidance essential to support students' social, emotional, physical, and academic needs. Support services include: an Academic Resource Program led by a full-time Resource Teacher, who offers assistance during and after school, both to individual and groups of students; a School Nurse, who is available throughout the school day to assist individuals; a School Counselor, who meets one-on-one and with small groups of students, as well as with classes of students; a College Counselor, who guides students and parents with the college admission and acceptance process; Academic Assistance, a time set aside after the school day for students to meet with classroom teachers; Extended Day Study Hall, proctored in the library media center; and, an Extended Day Writing Lab and Testing Center staffed by student volunteers and teacher.

### **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

Within the framework of a flexible, college preparatory curriculum that encourages active and personalized learning, teachers work in partnership to foster students' natural curiosity and to create a collaborative community of learners. A wide range of teacher facilitated learning approaches, including project-based, inquiry-based, problem-based, cooperative, experiential, and blended learning, are used to engage middle schoolers in active, purposeful learning that is thought-provoking, exploratory, integrative, and relevant. Over time, students deepen their knowledge and broaden their appreciation of the liberal arts and natural sciences, acquiring creative and critical thinking skills along with content-specific knowledge and specialized vocabulary.

The middle school daily schedule provides sufficient time and opportunities for children to imagine and create, to read for pleasure and to research special interests, to explore questions and answers, and to socialize and play. Classroom, studio, laboratory, campus, and field experiences cultivate students' natural sense of intellectual curiosity and inventiveness; provide for the need to have fun and gain competence; foster individuality and empathy; offer opportunities to work cooperatively with classmates; guide reasoning to problem solve and make decisions; allow for making mistakes and taking safe risks as natural to the learning process; and, nurture responsibility, perseverance, and self-confidence.

Middle school core studies include: English language arts and reading; mathematics; laboratory sciences; history, geography and civics; and Spanish language and culture. Students continue to develop essential reading strategies; they learn to think analytically and critically; and they practice writing coherently and purposefully. Students expand their adeptness with mathematics and scientific inquiry as they learn to evaluate the reasonableness of their solutions. Students gain foundational communication skills in a foreign language while exploring aspects of Spanish-speaking culture. Students learn about ancient and modern world history, as well as American history, in the context of geography, culture, economics, government, and civics. In each of these classes, students learn critical

communication skills, how to take notes in a variety of ways, how to research and report given a well-defined thesis, how to work cooperatively with classmates, how to study for tests, and how to use advance organizers to manage information.

In addition to core studies, students participate in complementary coursework. In these classes, students gain confidence in their abilities to create and innovate in the visual and performing arts as they present unique works of art, act on the stage, and perform music on a band instrument. Students use technology and its applications to research, design, and publish individual and collaborative works. Students advance their writing skills in a variety of genres and publish a literary and art magazine. In the library, students read for pleasure and develop proficiency with library media and information literacy skills. Students learn about physical fitness and healthy lifestyle choices, spend team-time on the school's challenge course, and set and track personal fitness goals.

Middle school students participate in a variety of assessment measures, the primary purpose of which is to advance curriculum and instruction in order to enhance learning. In classrooms, teachers utilize multiple and varied assessment methods, including traditional and project-based approaches, to advance and measure learning. While all middle school students participate in chapter and unit tests, seventh and eighth grade students also participate in midterm and final exams, learning to sit for comprehensive exams and for longer periods of time. Information gleaned from standardized, norm-referenced testing provides important complementary information, which, along with what happens in the classrooms, influences lesson planning and programming decisions.

## Grade Six Program of Studies

### Grade Six Courses at a Glance:

#### Core Coursework

Reading and English Language Arts (RaLA)	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Spanish Language and Culture	Meets 3 times weekly	45-minute sessions
Geography and Ancient Civilizations (GAC)	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Math	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Integrated Science	Meets daily	45-minute sessions

#### Complementary Coursework

Studio Art	Meets 3 times weekly	45-minute sessions
Beginning Band	Meets 3 times weekly	45-minute sessions
Just·Right·Reading	Meets 2 times weekly	45-minute sessions
Academic Strategies	Meets 2 times weekly	45-minute sessions
Physical Education and Health	Meets 2 times weekly	45-minute sessions

### Grade Six Course Descriptions

#### Reading and English Language Arts

Reading both expository and narrative texts, students gain fluency in oral and silent reading and their reading comprehension matures with lessons focused on vocabulary and concept development, literature and literary response, character analysis, English language conventions, listening, and speaking. Students describe and connect essential ideas, themes, arguments, and perspectives, using text structure, organization, and author's purpose. Through guided reading, students apply reading strategies that require them to predict, visualize, connect, question, clarify, and evaluate. Students compare and contrast, connect and clarify, analyze and infer, summarize and report, and identify and interpret figurative language. Students are introduced to the conventions and format of MLA. Students' writings include expository reports and essays with emphasis on organization, strong topic sentences, supportive paragraphs, and smooth transitions between paragraphs.

Textbooks: *The Language of Literature Interactive Reader Plus-Grade 6*; *Wordly Wise-Grade 7* online site for vocabulary development; and *Grammar, Usage and Mechanics (G.U.M.)* workbook

Provided Texts: *Language of Literature* anthology and *Language Network* grammar textbook

Novels: *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor; *Song of Trees* by Mildred Taylor; and *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton

Summer Reading: *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

Note: G.U.M. workbook used two years, Grades 6 and 7

## Spanish Language and Culture

This introductory Middle School course builds on Spanish language and cultural studies from elementary school, and enhances students' basic skills of language acquisition. Students expand their knowledge of Spanish language while increasing their capacity for expression and their degree of fluency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students master new vocabulary and progressively more complex grammatical structures. Students actively participate in conversations with a variety of speakers including peers, instructors, community members, and native speakers. Students also find parallels and distinctions between their own cultures and Hispanic cultures.

Textbooks and Materials: *Auténtico*, Level 1; *Auténtico*, Level 1 vocabulary and grammar workbook

Provided Texts: Spanish dictionaries for classroom use

Note: textbook and workbooks used two years, Grades 6 and 7

## Geography and Ancient Civilizations

Focused on geography and its impact on the development of the world's ancient civilizations, students study the earliest human societies, including those of Mesopotamia and Hebrew kingdoms, ancient Egypt and Kush, and ancient India and China. Students read about, discuss, and report on the geographic, political, economic, and social structures of the world's earliest civilizations. Students practice thinking like historians and geographers, examining archaeological studies of the early human physical, social, and technological developments, from the Paleolithic era through the agricultural revolution.

Textbook: *World Civilizations*

## Math NEW program

Students engage in a range of mathematics lessons and a variety of activities and games designed to enhance number sense and increase fluency with computation, ease with estimates, and competence with measuring in metric and customary units of measurement. Through hands-on experiences and classroom conversations, students develop deepen their understandings of mathematical operations and their application, and they are able to describe the how these relate to one another. Highlights include problem-solving in real world situations; establishing links between experiences and novel concepts; sharing, justifying and clarifying mathematical reasoning through oral and written communications or proofs; and, cooperative and blended learning activities that provide review, practice and solidification of core concepts and skills

Textbook and Materials: *Math in Focus, Course 1 Books A & B* with associated workbooks

## Integrated Science

In this is a laboratory-based course, students use scientific investigation to understand the phenomena related to earth and space science. Students consider and question what they already know about topics to extend their thinking. They confront misconceptions productively and revise ideas based upon newfound knowledge. Students investigate topics by collecting first- or second-hand data; use a variety of representations to identify patterns in data; and, develop explanations to account for

identified patterns consistent with their prior knowledge and compare these ideas with established scientific theories. They gain experiences with mathematics as it applies to scientific practices and use technology to understand and represent scientific processes. Students acquire laboratory skills, conducting scientific research collaboratively and individually.

Textbook: *Interactive Science Grade 6*

### **Studio Art**

In this project-based course, students practice skill lessons with purposeful, creative exploration. Students recognize and work with the elements of art: line, shape, value, color, form, texture, and space and the principle of design: pattern, repetition, rhythm, unity, emphasis, and balance. Drawing, painting, and sculpture are the most frequently employed media for students' projects; however, collage, assemblage, mosaic, jewelry making, and papermaking are all possibilities. Students acquire a studio vocabulary of key art terms for the media in which they work. They have the opportunity to work with a visiting artist and go on a gallery field trip to connect with the local art community.

Materials: sketchbook required; all other materials provided

### **Band**

This beginning instrumental music course introduces students to the concepts of music literacy and develops their critical listening skills as students learn to play traditional band instruments. Through a series of sequential learning experiences and the performance of simple melodies, each student develops a level of musical enjoyment. The mechanics of instrument playing is introduced and reinforced through classroom experiences and home practice as students develop individual performance skills, leading to the successive development of group ensemble activities.

Musical Instruments and Materials: provided

Note: Students playing some instruments will need to provide their own mouthpieces and reeds. Students may purchase and use their own instrument if they wish to do so.

### **Just·Right·Reading**

Just·Right·Reading is a yearlong, non-graded class that familiarizes students with the library and its resources, both print and electronic. Students are introduced to a variety of literary genres and to Follet Destiny, the school's online card catalog. Students learn how to responsibly use the school's computers and computer network. Students are provided with abundant time to read books of their choosing, encouraging them to stay engaged or to become involved with the imaginary and factual world of literature.

Novels: *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio and *Chasing Lincoln's Killer* by James L. Swanson

### **Academic Strategies Grade 6**

Embedded in the newest research in education and theories of learning, sixth grade Academic Strategies students learn critical reading and study skills to foster success and independence in academics. Students practice research-based literacy strategies to build their vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension. Through individualized lessons and collaborative learning, students develop metacognitive and self-regulatory skills to increase their attention, organization, resilience, and

communication. Students learn the functions of the brain and develop a “growth mindset” to increase their motivation, effort and persistence in school.

Materials Needed: notebook

### **Academic Strategies Middle School**

Middle School students with modified educational plans, waiving the Spanish language requirement, meet in Academic Strategies class where lessons and guided practice instill students with learning habits and skills that support academic success. Students analyze the functions of the brain and learn brain-friendly strategies to study more efficiently and to reach individualized goals. Students strengthen cognitive and non-cognitive skills and develop their resilience, self-regulation, persistence, and engagement in school. Through individual conferences, study groups, and reflection, students cultivate an increased sense of ownership and responsibility for their own education and solidify the positive habits that inform long-term learning.

Textbooks and Materials: provided

### **Physical Education and Health**

Sixth grade students participate in fitness activities, continuing to develop their motor skills. Learning activities guide students to explore the interconnectedness of the physical, mental and social aspects of health and wellness. Topics for study include personal fitness, nutrition, personal hygiene, disease prevention, physical growth and development, tobacco, drug and alcohol use and abuse prevention, consumer health, and safety as it relates to our island community. These topics will be explored in greater depth in years to come. Students take part in team sports with instruction in game rules and skill development.

Materials: water bottle, physical education uniform (available in the school’s bookstore) with lace-up sneakers and socks, notebook and pens or pencils

## Grade Seven Program of Studies

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### Grade Seven Courses at a Glance:

#### Core Studies

Reading and English Language Arts	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Spanish Language and Culture	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Geography and World History	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Math	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Integrated Science	Meets daily	45-minute sessions

#### Complementary Coursework

Studio Art	Quarter-long	Meets 3 times weekly	90-minute sessions
Theatre	Quarter-long	Meets 3 times weekly	90-minute sessions
Write-in-the-Middle	Quarter-long	Meets 3 times weekly	90-minute sessions
Healthy Choices	Quarter-long	Meets 3 times weekly	90-minute sessions
Band	Year-long	Meets 2 times weekly	45-minute sessions
Physical Education	Year-long	Meets 2 times weekly	45-minute sessions

### Grade Seven Course Descriptions

#### Reading and English Language Arts

Students' appreciation for literature matures and their communication skills improve, as they read and respond to a variety of genres, seek meaning and clarify ideas, and make connections to other literary works. Through guided reading, students apply reading strategies that require them to predict, visualize, connect, question, clarify, and evaluate. They contrast points of view, examine first and third person, and identify and analyze recurring themes. Students study language conventions and grammar, explore writing approaches and applications, and practice strategies for listening, speaking, and viewing. Vocabulary studies include word origins and relationships, historical and literary clues, and knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes. Students analyze and define the purpose and characteristics of different forms of prose, including short stories, novellas, and essays.

Textbooks: *The Language of Literature Interactive Reader Plus-Grade 7*; *Wordly Wise-Grade 7* online site for vocabulary development; and *Grammar, Usage and Mechanics (G.U.M.)* workbook

Provided Texts: *Language of Literature* anthology and *Language Network* grammar textbook

Novels: *A Day No Pigs Would Die* by Robert Newton Peck; *Gathering Blue* by Lois Lowry; *Before We Were Free* by Julia Alvarez; and *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding

Summer Reading: *Children of the River* by Linda Crew

Note: G.U.M. workbook used two years, Grades 6 and 7

## Spanish Language and Culture

Seventh grade Spanish Language and Culture is an introductory course designed to further develop students' basic skills of language acquisition. Throughout the year, students expand their knowledge of the Spanish language and increase their capacity for expression and their degree of fluency, utilizing the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Students are expected to make an effort to speak Spanish in the classroom as much as possible and to seek opportunities outside the classroom to practice Spanish language in the "real world". Through their classroom studies, students find parallels and distinctions between their own culture and Hispanic culture from around the world. Authentic materials enhance students' linguistic and cultural learning experiences.

Textbooks: *¡Expresate!*; *¡Expresate! Cuaderno de actividades*; and *¡Expresate! Cuaderno de vocabulario y gramática*

Provided Texts: Spanish dictionaries for classroom use

Note: textbook and workbooks used two years, Grades 6 and 7

## World History and Geography

Students investigate social, cultural, and technological changes that occurred in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia (500-1945 CE), examining the impact of geography, economic interactions, and the exchange of ideas, beliefs, technologies, and commodities among civilizations. Students learn about the Enlightenment philosophy with its new examination of the concepts of reason and authority, the natural rights of human beings, the divine right of kings, experimentalism in science, and the dogma of belief. Students analyze, discuss, and report on the political forces let loose by the Enlightenment, particularly the rise of democratic ideas; and, they connect their understandings to the influence of these ideas in the world today.

Textbooks: *World History*

Summer Reading: *Facing the Lion, Growing Up Maasai on the African Savanna* by Joseph Lekuton

Note: textbook used two years, Grades 6 and 7

## Math

Students review basic concepts and operations with fractions, decimals, and percents, and reach into algebraic topics. They develop an initial understanding of the different uses of variables, learning basic operations, factors of integers and monomials, the rules of exponents, basic angle relationships, and perimeter, area, and volume. Students simplify ratios, solve proportions, and investigate probability. While studying each of these topics, they consider and apply problem-solving strategies. Students develop familiarity with the language, notation, and deductive nature of mathematics, and express quantitative ideas with precision. They analyze word problems, developing an understanding of what the question is asking and honing their ability to come up with a method or process needed to find a solution. Students begin using the language of algebra and solve equations and inequalities.

Textbook: *Big Ideas Math Advanced Level 2*

Provided: scientific calculator for classroom use

## **Interactive Science**

Through the study of earth and life history, students learn how modern living things have evolved, survive, and reproduce. In this laboratory-based course, students explore and compare living things in their world, including cell biology, cell processes, genetics, plants, animals, human biology, structure and functions of living systems, populations and communities, and ecosystems and biomes. Socratic seminar and lectures require students to practice critical listening and note-taking skills. Hands-on thought provoking activities include observing demonstrations, conducting laboratory experiments, and participation in dissections. Students formulate meaningful questions, conduct careful investigations, and gain a deeper understanding of scientific inquiry and the scientific method. By maintained a laboratory journal, students develop responsibility for information learned and reflect on the practice of scientific inquiry.

Textbooks: *Interactive Science Grade 7*

## **Studio Art**

This quarter-long, studio-based course takes advantage of the 90-minute time period to provide students an opportunity to work on extended projects. The inspiration for the project evolves out of an open-ended study of an individual artist, artistic style, or artistic movement where historical and cultural connections are discussed. Students, either individually or in collaboration with others, design a project. They brainstorm ideas, visualize, plan, create, and ultimately write to document the process as well as the outcome of their work. Throughout the process, students receive guidance, ongoing verbal assessment, and teacher and/or peer critiques.

Materials: sketchbook required; all other materials provided

## **Theatre**

In this intermediate-level, quarter-long course, students have 90-minute class periods to learn about the theatre and expanded opportunities to perform on stage with a small cohort of classmates. Students explore pantomime, mime, improvisation, vocal development, acting, and play reading. Students work with a small group of classmates and the teacher, experiencing group interactivities while utilizing creative and divergent thinking skills, practicing decision making skills, and developing memorization techniques, vocal skills and physical awareness.

Textbooks Provided: *Sorry, Wrong Number* by Lucille Fletcher

## **Write·in·the·Middle**

*Write·in·the·Middle* provides a backdrop for students to engage in the process of writing. This quarter-long course, features 90-minute class sessions that encourage experimentation with writing and allow writing to take different forms, genres, and styles, including narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive. The small class size supports high expectations, opportunities for mini-lessons based on individual needs, and occasions to work closely with the teacher. Students' writings include fascinating ideas, logical organization, interesting voice, creative word choice, smooth sentence fluency, accurate conventions, and attractive presentations.

Textbooks: *Grammar, Usage and Mechanics* (G.U.M.) workbook – used in Grades 6 and 7

## Healthy Choices

This quarter-long experiential learning class is conducted in part on the school's low and high elements challenge courses. During the 90-minute class sessions, a small cohort of classmates actively participate in cooperative learning activities that focus on team building, self-management and personal reflection, nutrition and fitness, substance use and abuse, personal safety and violence prevention, stress and energy management, and refusal skills. Students develop essential life skills, including personal reflection, interpersonal communication, goal-setting, decision-making, and teamwork. *Healthy Choices* is conducted in part on the school's low and high elements challenge courses as students participate in experiential learning and challenge by choice.

Textbooks: provided

Materials: water bottle, physical education uniform (available in the school's bookstore) with lace-up sneakers and socks, notebook and pens or pencils

## Band

This year-long course advances students' music knowledge and skillfulness, along with their critical listening and music performance skills. Through classroom learning experiences with the class as a whole and individual home practice, students advance their ability to produce music on traditional band instruments. Each student develops a level of enjoyment for music through performance of simple and more advanced melodies. The mechanics of instrument playing is reinforced and elaborated upon as students' individual performance skills mature, leading to the successive development of group ensemble activities.

Musical Instruments and Materials: provided

Note: Students playing some instruments will need to provide their own mouthpieces and reeds. Students may purchase and use their own instrument if they wish to do so.

## Physical Education

In this year-long course, students learn about health promotion and risk reduction, physical fitness, and team sports, deepening their understanding of the long-term benefits of personal activity, physical fitness, and lifestyle choices. Students establish personal fitness goals and participate in exercise activities to promote strength training and motor skill development. Lessons emphasize the importance of guidelines, procedures, and safe practice in physical activity settings. Students learn a variety of basic and advanced movement forms and rhythmical skills that are components of selected games, sports, and dances. Students use intermediate sport-specific skills for individual and team sports, outdoor activities, and dance.

Materials: water bottle, physical education uniform (available in the school's bookstore) with lace-up sneakers and socks, notebook and pens or pencils

## Academic Strategies Middle School

Middle School students with modified educational plans, waiving the Spanish language requirement, meet in Academic Strategies class where lessons and guided practice instill students with learning habits and skills that support academic success. Students analyze the functions of the brain and learn brain-friendly strategies to study more efficiently and to reach individualized goals. Students

strengthen cognitive and non-cognitive skills and develop their resilience, self-regulation, persistence, and engagement in school. Through individual conferences, study groups, and reflection, students cultivate an increased sense of ownership and responsibility for their own education and solidify the positive habits that inform long-term learning.

Textbooks and Materials: provided

## Grade Eight Program of Studies

### Grade Eight Courses at a Glance:

#### Core Studies

Reading and English Language Arts	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Spanish Language and Culture	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Civics and Early United States History	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Math: Pre-algebra or Algebra 1	Meets daily	45-minute sessions
Physical Science and Basic Chemistry	Meets daily	45-minute sessions

#### Complementary Coursework

<i>The Surge Magazine</i>	Quarter-long	Meets 3 times weekly	90-minute sessions
Theatre	Quarter-long	Meets 3 times weekly	90-minute sessions
Information Literacy	Quarter-long	Meets 3 times weekly	90-minute sessions
Healthy Relationships	Quarter-long	Meets 3 times weekly	90-minute sessions
Honors Band or Studio Art	Year-long	Meets 2 times weekly	45-minute sessions
Physical Education	Year-long	Meets 2 times weekly	45-minute sessions

### Grade Eight Course Descriptions

#### Reading and English Language Arts

Students advance their abilities to read both critically and imaginatively, exploring a range of literature and honing literary analysis skills. Students identify and examine recurring themes, such as good versus evil, across traditional and contemporary works; and, they identify significant literary devices, such as metaphor, symbolism, dialect, and irony that define a writer's style. Students begin to analyze idioms, analogies, metaphors, and similes to understand the literal and figurative meanings. They use elements of an author's style, dialogue, and details to interpret and compare works. Through guided reading, students apply reading strategies that require them to predict, visualize, connect, question, clarify, and evaluate. Grammar instruction focuses on the eight parts of speech and developing more sophisticated sentence structure. During vocabulary studies, students learn more Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes, and common word origins.

Textbooks: *The Language of Literature Interactive Reader Plus-Grade 8*; *Wordly Wise-Grade 8* online site for vocabulary development

Novels/Plays: *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck; *Night* by Elie Wiesel; *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros; and *Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare

Summer Reading: *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes

Provided Texts: *Language of Literature* anthology and *Language Network* grammar textbook

## Spanish Language and Culture

This introductory course is designed to develop students' basic skills of language acquisition. Students will expand their knowledge of Spanish language and increase their capacity of expression and their degree of fluency, utilizing the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students improve their abilities to express themselves in the target language. New vocabulary and progressively more complex grammatical structures will be acquired as students work through thematic units of study. Frequent exposure to authentic materials enhances students' linguistic and cultural experiences.

Textbooks: *Descubre 1; Descubre 1: Cuaderno de actividades; Descubre 1: Cuaderno de práctica;* and

Spanish Reader: *Pobre Ana*

Provided Texts: Spanish dictionaries for classroom use

Note: textbook and workbooks are used two years, Grades 8 and 9

## Early United States History and Civics

Students gain a foundation of knowledge for understanding American government and the early history of the United States, from its origins through the Civil War and Reconstruction. Major topics of study are Native Americans and their contributions, European explorations, the colonial period, Revolutionary War era, Constitution and Civics, "American" culture, Jeffersonian Democracy, Westward Expansion, Jacksonian Age, sectional differences, and the Civil War and Reconstruction. Students discuss citizenship and its importance to the American system of government and civil society. They practice using primary and secondary sources of information, read maps and interpret charts and graphs, participate in discussions and decision-making, and conduct research writing.

Textbooks: *United States History, Beginnings to 1877*

## Math: Pre-algebra

Extending the study of topics from level one pre-algebra, students develop greater familiarity and confidence with the language, notation, and deductive nature of mathematics. They analyze word problems, develop a problem solving method, and learn to express quantitative ideas with precision. Students expand their knowledge of beginning algebra topics such as solving single- and multi-step single-variable equations and inequalities and graphing linear equations. If time permits, students delve into geometry topics including congruence and similarity, patterns, and transformations.

Textbooks: *Pre-algebra*

Provided: scientific calculator for classroom use

## Math: Algebra 1 (a vetted course)

Offered for high school credit, Algebra I students focus their studies on solving one- and two-variable equations; operations with integers; rules of integral exponents; simplifying, adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing polynomials and algebraic fractions; factoring quadratic polynomials; finding slope of a line; and graphing two-variable equations. If time permits, students delve into direct and inverse variation, other methods of solving quadratic equations, solving inequalities, solving and

graphing linear systems, and radicals. Students successfully completing this course receive high school credit. Enrollment is vetted.

Textbooks: *Algebra: Structure and Methods*

Provided: scientific calculator for classroom use

### **Physical Science and Basic Chemistry**

Students explore matter and its properties during the first semester in chemistry and discover how matter moves in the second semester in physics. Through laboratory explorations and classroom discussions, students discover some of the many direct links of science to their own lives. There is a strong emphasis on project-based learning as students participate in hands-on activities, observe demonstrations, and conduct laboratory experiments. Socratic seminars and direct instruction require students to practice critical listening and note-taking skills. By maintained a laboratory journal, students develop responsibility for information learned and reflect on the practice of scientific inquiry. Students use mathematics as it applies to scientific practices and scientific research, and they utilize technology to collect and analyze data.

Textbooks: *Science Explorer Physical Science*; and *Guided Reading and Study Workbook*

Summer Reading: *Something Out of Nothing: Marie Curie and Radium* by Carla Killough McClafferty

### **The Surge, an Art and Literary Magazine**

In this quarter-long course, students have 90-minute sessions in which to collaboratively research components of a literary and art magazine and explore graphic design techniques. Students use publishing software applications to create content, design layout, and publish a literary and art magazine, *The Surge*. Students think and act creatively, working on a real world project, and making connections between the visual arts and the language arts. Students generate various pieces of original writing and illustrate an original written piece for publication, and they explore digital photography to infuse artwork into the magazine. Students develop and design the magazine layout and format; solicit work from the entire student body; and, generate and edit the content of the magazine.

Materials: pocket folder

### **Theatre**

In this intermediate-level, quarter-long course, students have 90-minutes to collaborate and perform on stage with a small cohort of classmates, as they continue to explore pantomime, mime, improvisation, vocal development, acting, and play reading. Students work in small groups with the teacher, experiencing group interactivities while advancing their creative and divergent thinking skills, practicing decision making skills, and developing memorization techniques, vocal skills, and physical awareness.

Textbooks: provided - *Antigone* by Sophocles

## Information Literacy and Writing

In this introductory, quarter-long class, students have 90-minute class sessions to learn about and use the library data bases. They further develop their information literacy skills, participating in the research process, evaluating the usefulness of information gathered, assessing the best way to assemble and present their findings, and producing and presenting a research project. During the course, students participate in a variety of writing genres, including informational, compare and contrast, biographical, and persuasive writing. Students learn more about MLA formatting, effective practices to use when conducting research, organizational techniques for the writing process, and applying their knowledge and skills to improve their writing.

## Healthy Relationships

In this quarter-long, 90-minute class, students explore relationships. Students identify what makes a relationship healthy, what can put a relationship in jeopardy, and how to communicate openly and honestly in order to maintain the integrity of a relationship. In the course, students also explore the differences in their values and beliefs, considering various perspectives and points of view and practicing tolerance and respect. Students learn about personal fitness and nutrition lessons to build a whole wellness picture, setting goals and practicing strategies for maintaining a balance between school work, relationships, and personal health and wellness. *Healthy Relationships* is conducted in part on the school's low and high elements challenge courses as students participate in experiential learning and challenge by choice.

Textbooks: provided

Materials: water bottle, physical education uniform (available in the school's bookstore) with lace-up sneakers and socks, notebook and pens or pencils

## Honors Band (or Studio Art)

This year-long course builds upon students previous music education experiences, advancing their music literacy and critical listening and performance skills. Participating in whole class instruction and practicing independently, students develop more advanced proficiencies in producing music on traditional band instruments. Through a series of sequential learning experiences, each student develops an appreciation for music through performance of simple and more advanced melodies. The mechanics of instrument playing is reinforced and elaborated upon as students' individual performance skills mature through classroom experiences and home practice, leading to the successive development of group ensemble activities.

Musical Instruments and Materials: provided

Note: Students playing some instruments will need to provide their own mouthpieces and reeds. Students wishing to do so, may purchase and use their own instrument.

## Studio Art (or Honors Band)

Diane ...

## **Physical Education**

In this year-long course, students learn about health promotion and risk reduction, physical fitness, and team sports, deepening their understanding of the long-term benefits of personal activity, physical fitness, and lifestyle choices. Students establish personal fitness goals and participate in exercise activities to promote strength training and motor skill development. Lessons emphasize the importance of guidelines, procedures, and safe practice in physical activity settings. Students learn a variety of basic and advanced movement forms and rhythmical skills that are components of selected games, sports, and dances. Students use intermediate sport-specific skills for individual and team sports, outdoor activities, and dance. Eighth grade students participate in *Dancing Classrooms*, a unique program designed to cultivate life skills through the art of social dance.

Textbooks: provided

Materials: water bottle, physical education uniform (available in the school's bookstore) with lace-up sneakers and socks, notebook and pens or pencils

## **Academic Strategies Middle School**

Middle School students with modified educational plans, waiving the Spanish language requirement, meet in Academic Strategies class where lessons and guided practice instill students with learning habits and skills that support academic success. Students analyze the functions of the brain and learn brain-friendly strategies to study more efficiently and to reach individualized goals. Students strengthen cognitive and non-cognitive skills and develop their resilience, self-regulation, persistence, and engagement in school. Through individual conferences, study groups, and reflection, students cultivate an increased sense of ownership and responsibility for their own education and solidify the positive habits that inform long-term learning.

Textbooks and Materials: provided

## **Required Summer Reading**

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### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Required Summer Reading**

*The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Reading and Language Arts

*Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator* by Roald Dahl – Science

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Required Summer Reading**

*Children of the River* by Linda Crew - Reading and Language Arts

*Facing the Lion, Growing up Maasi on the African Savanna* by Joseph Lekuton – Social Studies

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Required Summer Reading**

*Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes - Reading and Language Arts

*Something Out of Nothing: Marie Curie and Radium* by Carla Killough McClafferty – Science

### **Summer Reading and Classroom Assessments**

Students are expected to complete summer reading assignments before the first day of school and to bring the reading books to the first day of class. The initial classroom assessment for the Reading and Language Arts Summer Reading selection contains objective and subjective material. These written assessments will take place within the first three weeks of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Classroom assessments might include multiple choice questions or short answer questions about basic plot elements such as: physical or historical setting; characters and how they are characterized; major and minor conflicts; significant plot details; and general sequencing. Additionally, there will be at least one short in-class essay prompt that assesses the student's ability to analyze the text. This essay presumes that students read and understand the novel at a basic level and prompts readers to explore topics such as: characters, relationships, significant character decisions/choices, setting, conflicts, climax, and resolution.

Summer Reading for Science (6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) or Social Studies (7<sup>th</sup>) is an active part of the curriculum and teachers will assess the required summer reading objectively during the first three weeks of the first quarter.

## Student Life Activities

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Recognizing the importance of friendships, relationships, and social interactions in the lives of our students, student life activities are a vital component of the Antilles School educational experience. We appreciate team activities and individual achievements; we honor personal aspirations and service beyond one's self; we value experiences that stimulate imagination, creativity, and intrinsic curiosity; and we promote respectful, responsible, engaged citizenship along with the pursuit of life-long learning, leadership, and service given to benefit others.

Co-curricular, student life activities provide a framework for students to discover, explore, and expand their interests, pursuits, and passions. Designed to expand learning beyond the classroom walls and into the greater community, we weave a variety of engaging activities into the educational experiences of our students, including time and opportunities participate in organizations and clubs, academic and athletic contests, stage and studio experiences, school spirit days and school dances, and field trips and service activities.

Student life activities provide a framework and safety net for students as they develop a sense of responsibility to self and others, self-confidence and self-reliance, as well as chances to experience team-spirit. Planned during the school day and after school, as on-campus activities and off-campus excursions, student activities complement the curricular program, providing remarkable out-of-the-classroom occasions for students to learn from different points of view; to work as a part of a team toward a common goal; to communicate effectively in discussion and to participate in dialogue and debate; to perform on stage or to provide backstage and technical assistance; to generate ideas and to creatively solve problems and produce works of art; to act and be self-aware; to establish and achieve goals; to learn from experience, criticism, failure, and success; and, to become self-motivated and self-directed. Students are encouraged to generate, plan and lead campus activities and events, affording exceptional possibilities for social interaction, student leadership, and student choice.

Athletics is a valuable component of the learning and social experiences of our students, advancing opportunities to develop favorable habits of mind, to cultivate confidence and skills, and to commit and contribute to team endeavors. Athletics offers occasions for students to serve others, to develop fellowship and good will with the greater community and to promote self-realization of goals, contributing to students' preparation for adult life in a democratic society. Through participation in athletics, students experience interscholastic competition, coaches, teammates, opponents, game officials, spectators and fans, and the celebrations and challenges of competitive winning and losing. Student-athletes have opportunities to develop personal responsibility, self-regulation and self-confidence, and to learn the value of dedicated practice, teamwork, and sportsmanship. In addition, participation in athletics fosters school spirit, leadership, a sense of team, and unity of purpose.

## Community Service and Service Learning

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Service is an integral component of student life at Antilles School because we want students to be responsible, contributing citizens, who are knowledgeable of social, economic and environmental issues, locally and globally. Over time, students appreciate that community service affects not only the person or community they set out to assist, but it also influences their own social consciousness and personal confidence.

We believe community service and service learning activities present unique learning opportunities for individuals and groups of students of all ages to investigate social issues and to participate in civic action in order to affect valuable change for others. Community service is an independent pursuit, which challenges each student to find purposeful ways to serve the greater community. Service learning events enhance classroom learning experiences and expand students' creative thinking and problem solving skills with hands-on, team field experiences.

Community service provides students with many options for thoughtful exploration of beneficial service to others. Community service activities frequently include tutoring peers and younger children, befriending the elderly, helping feed the hungry and homeless, assisting animals and the humane society, volunteering to build shelters here and abroad, and organizing activities to provide water, food, clothing, school supplies, and shelter to others.

Service learning connects classroom learning to problems to be solved in the community. At Antilles, students study environmental science and then get involved in beach clean-ups and other environmental restorations; they learn about local history and participate in historic restoration and neighborhood beautification projects; they learn about hunger and share an 'empty bowls' meal to fund provisions for a local shelter; and, they learn about community resources for children, the elderly, and the mentally ill and volunteer to write books, read books, paint murals, build a roof, or just befriend someone else, in order to lend a hand.

Through service, students expand their perspectives and acquire respect and empathy for others; they apply critical thinking skills; they work collaboratively as team members and independently as helpful citizens; they gain personal confidence and a shared sense of purpose; and many identify career choices, as they learn ways to contribute to the many communities in which they live.