

# Riverstone International School

## Mission Statement

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Riverstone International School is a unique independent school offering an education based on the world-renowned programs and philosophy of the International Baccalaureate Organization. Through a strong foundation built on the five pillars of Academic Excellence, International Understanding, Community and Service, Leadership, and Outdoor Education, Riverstone knows and nurtures every child and ensures that they reach their potential in a respectful environment.

The mission of Riverstone International School is best demonstrated through its graduating students and their values:

*Riverstone students are independent lifelong learners who take the most challenging courses that prepare them for entrance to the best universities around the world. They are passionate and caring about their community and the environment, thinking globally and acting locally. They are confident communicators and active listeners. They are empathetic, inquisitive, creative, respectful, principled and balanced individuals. Riverstone students are leaders by example; they are our hope for a better future.*

Riverstone International School; an International Education for a Global Future

## **A Letter from the Middle School Director**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Riverstone International School's Middle School. We look forward to working with your child and are excited to welcome your family to our school's wonderful community.

As you may know, the years encompassing the Middle School student's experience at school is a time of significant social, emotional, and physical growth. This stage of early-to-mid adolescence is a particularly critical phase of personal and intellectual development and requires a program that helps students participate actively and responsibly in a changing and increasingly interrelated world. Learning how to learn and how to evaluate information critically is as important as learning facts.

Riverstone's Middle School provides a unique learning environment for the young adolescent learner in several ways. To begin, the school's recent authorization in the International Baccalaureate's Middle Years Programme (MYP) enables the school to offer an internationally renowned program that encourages students to make connections between traditional subjects and the real world, while challenging them to become critical and reflective thinkers. The MYP curriculum offers a holistic approach to learning, providing opportunities that allow students to see the connections among all subjects they are studying. The emphasis is on the fluidity of the curriculum and the interrelatedness between the core subjects and the real world.

Taken as a whole, the MYP teaches students how to learn, think critically, and apply their knowledge in meaningful ways. Emphasis is placed on application of knowledge and skills rather than the mere recall of facts. In addition, students learn to analyze their work, reflecting on their progress and development. Active student participation in the learning process is a hallmark of the program.

The Middle School's small class size is another noteworthy aspect of the school that gives each student the individual attention they require to be challenged at their level and ability as well as the opportunity to become actively engaged in their education. Activities are student-centered, and promote active participation and reflection. Because of this unique learning environment, students can't help but to become engaged in their learning.

In addition to the skills and knowledge that are taught through the curriculum of the MYP, an equal emphasis is placed on developing the social and emotional well-being of the student. Through the Middle School's social welfare system, comprised of the Homeroom and Advisory programs, the school fosters an environment of responsibility, leadership, and respect. In the homeroom for each grade level, a faculty leader oversees both the academic and social development of the class as a whole. Homeroom leaders meet with their students daily and are responsible for all communication with families regarding the academic and social development of their students. In the Advisory program, students are given the opportunity to forge lasting and positive relationships

with a faculty mentor and students from all grade levels within the Middle School. Faculty advisors serve as an advocate for their students and provide guidance and support in order to help them through their middle school years.

Because a strong connection between home and school is an important ingredient of success at the middle school level, we encourage families to communicate regularly with the school. Expect regular communication from us in the form of weekly updates from the Homeroom leader, quarterly phone calls from your child's Advisor, and frequent communication from your child's teachers. And of course, you will hear from me quite regularly as well, as I update you on the latest news in the Middle School and invite you to the various informational meetings and community building events that take place throughout the year.

Once again, welcome to Riverstone International School. Please refer to this handbook to become more familiar with Riverstone's Middle School program. In the pages to follow you will find an introduction and explanation of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, useful information pertaining to basic daily middle school operations and procedures, and a complete overview and explanation of the curriculum in each grade level.

I look forward to working closely with you as we prepare your child for the future. Please feel free to contact me at the school if you have any questions or comments.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad Carlson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chad Carlson  
Middle School Director

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## Middle School Faculty Contact Information

<b>Staff Members</b>	<b>Duties</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
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## Calendar for 2009-2010 School Year

*Please see [www.riverstoneschool.org](http://www.riverstoneschool.org) for most current information*

<b>AUGUST</b>	
Wednesday, Aug 26	High School Registration and Back to School Party Broadway Campus 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Thursday, Aug 27	Middle School Registration and Fiesta Warm Springs Campus 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM Grades 1 & 2 Back to School Parties Warm Springs Campus 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM Kindergarten Back to School Party Memorial Park 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Friday, Aug 28	Pre-School Back to School Breakfast Pre-School Classroom 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM Kindergarten Open House for Students and Families Kindergarten Rooms 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM Grades 3, 4 & 5 Back to School Parties Warm Springs Campus 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM
Friday, Aug 28	All Faculty Back to School Party 5:00 PM
Monday, Aug 31	First Day of School Parents' Association Welcome Coffee Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	
Thursday, Sept 3	Grades 3, 4 & 5 Raft Trip
Friday, Sept 4	Grades K, 1, & 2 Raft Trip
Monday, Sept 7	NO SCHOOL Labor Day
Tuesday, Sept 8	Pre-School & Kindergarten Parent Coffee Gym Foyer 8:30 AM Elementary School Back to School Night Gym Foyer 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Wednesday, Sept 9	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Wednesday – Friday, Sept 9 - 11	Middle and High School Fall Trips
Tuesday, Sept 15	Middle School Back to School Night Gym Foyer 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Monday, Sept 21	Grade 1 Parent Coffee Gym Foyer 8:30 AM
Tuesday, Sept 22	Elementary & Middle School Picture Day Pre-School – Grade 9 Grade 2 Parent Coffee Gym Foyer 8:30 AM High School Back to School Night Grades 10–12 Broadway Campus 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

## Calendar for 2009-2010 School Year Continued

*Please see [www.riverstoneschool.org](http://www.riverstoneschool.org) for most current information*

Wednesday, Sept 23	Grade 3 Parent Coffee Gym Foyer 8:30 AM
Thursday, Sept 24	Grade 4 Parent Coffee Gym Foyer 8:30 AM
Friday, Sept 25	Grade 5 Parent Coffee Gym Foyer 8:30 AM RIS Fall Carnival Warm Springs Campus 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Tuesday, Sept 29	Middle School Parent Coffee Morning Gym Foyer 8:30 AM
Wednesday, Sept 30	PA Lecture Series Gym Foyer 8:30 AM
<b>OCTOBER</b>	
Thursday & Friday, Oct 1 & 2	NO SCHOOL Faculty In-service
Wednesday, Oct 7	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Friday, Oct 16	End of Quarter
Thursday & Friday, Oct 22 & 23	NO SCHOOL Parent Teacher Conferences
Wednesday, Oct 28	PA Lecture Series Gym Foyer 6:30 PM
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	
Wednesday, Nov 4	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Wednesday, Nov 11	PA Lecture Series Gym Foyer 8:30 AM
Wednesday, Nov 18	Elementary School Musical Kennedy Gymnasium 2:30 PM
Thursday & Friday, Nov 26 & 27	NO SCHOOL Thanksgiving Recess
<b>DECEMBER</b>	
Wednesday, Dec 2	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Wednesday, Dec 9	PA Lecture Series Gym Foyer 8:30 AM
Monday – Friday, Dec 14 - 18	Grades 6-12 Finals Week
Friday, Dec 18	Last Day of Fall Semester
Saturday, Dec 19 – Sunday, Jan 3, 2010	Winter Break

## Calendar for 2009-2010 School Year Continued

*Please see [www.riverstoneschool.org](http://www.riverstoneschool.org) for most current information*

<b>JANUARY</b>	
Monday, Jan 4	Classes Resume <i>** See notice at end</i>
Wednesday, Jan 6	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Tuesday, Jan 12	Elementary School Open House (Pre-School through Grade 5) Elementary School Building 6:30 PM
Tuesday - Thursday, Jan 12 - 14	Grade 8 Winter Trip
Monday, Jan 18	NO SCHOOL Martin Luther King Day
Wednesday - Friday, Jan. 20 - 22	Grade 9 Winter Trip
Tuesday, Jan 26	Pre-School Evaluation & Coffee for 2010-2011 Candidates Elementary Building 9:30 AM
Friday, Jan 29	Kindergarten Admission Deadline for 2010-2011
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	
Tuesday, Feb 2	Middle and High School Open House Gym Foyer 6:30 PM
Wednesday, Feb 3	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Saturday, Feb 6	2010-2011 Kindergarten Applicant Visit Day
Friday, Feb 12	Enrollment contracts for 2010-2011 to be mailed
Monday, Feb 15	NO SCHOOL President's Day
Friday, Feb 27	2010-2011 Re-enrollment contracts due Business Office or Admissions Office by 3:30 PM
<b>MARCH</b>	
Wednesday, Mar 3	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Friday, Mar 12	End of Quarter Annual Auction BSU Stueckle Center
Thursday & Friday, Mar 18 & 19	NO SCHOOL K - 12 Parent-Teacher Conferences
Saturday, Mar 20	Spring Break Begins
<b>APRIL</b>	
Monday, April 5	Classes Resume
Wednesday, April 7	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Thursday, April 22	Earth Day

## Calendar for 2009-2010 School Year Continued

*Please see [www.riverstoneschool.org](http://www.riverstoneschool.org) for most current information*

<b>MAY</b>	
Wednesday, May 5	Parents' Association Meeting Gym Foyer 8:00 AM
Friday, May 28	Commencement Shakespeare Festival Amphitheatre 1:30 PM
Monday, May 25	NO SCHOOL Memorial Day
<b>JUNE</b>	
Wednesday - Friday, June 2 - 4	Grades 6 - 11 Finals
Friday, June 4	Last Day of School

### **\*\*Important Notice**

If the new school building remains on schedule, we should be able to move both the Elementary School and the Middle School in to their facilities over the winter break. If this is the case, we will probably need to delay the return to normal classes for a few days on January.

We will, however, be asking for volunteers for a 'moving classes' task force to make sure we get all of the classes moved in a short period of time.

## Riverstone and the MYP

### The Philosophy of the MYP

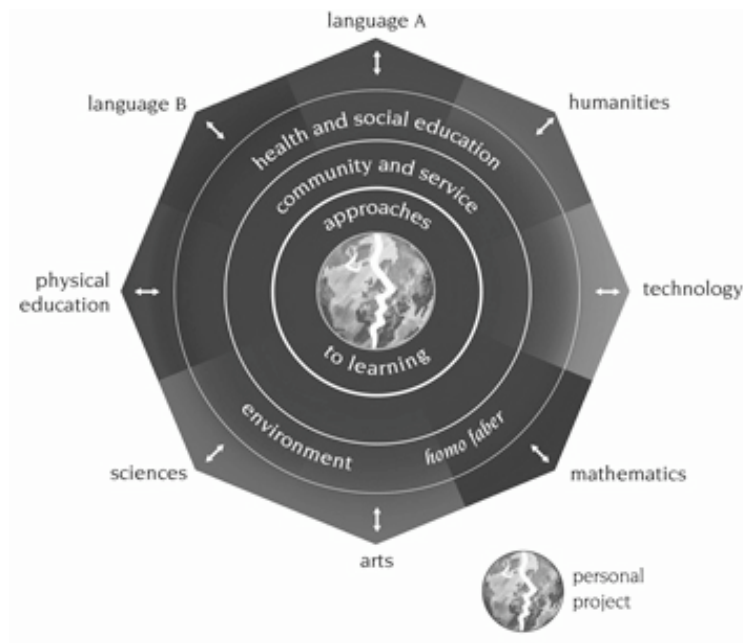
The Middle Years Programme (MYP) offers an approach to teaching and learning that embraces the focus on traditional school subjects, but also stresses their interrelation, advancing a *holistic* view of learning. Students are asked to consider issues and problems in their widest scope and to realize that good solutions often draw upon insights one has acquired from the different subject areas. This approach helps students to recognize relationships between school subjects and the outside world, and asks them to combine relevant knowledge, experience, and critical thinking to solve authentic problems.

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) believes that education can foster understanding among young people around the world, enabling future generations to live more peacefully and productively than we do today. *Intercultural awareness* is concerned with developing students' attitudes, knowledge and skills as they learn about their own and others' social and national cultures. By encouraging students to consider multiple perspectives, intercultural awareness not only fosters tolerance and respect, but may also lead to empathy.

Along with a holistic approach to learning and the emphasis of intercultural awareness, the MYP considers *communication* fundamental to learning, as it supports inquiry and understanding, and allows student reflection and expression. Good command of one's own language enables clear expression of ideas, attitudes and feelings. The learning of other languages extends that competence and teaches appreciation of different cultures and ways of thinking. But more than simply generating appropriate language, good communication is also about listening to what others have to say and being attuned to intentions, variations and nuance. The MYP also encourages students to explore multiple forms of expression.

## The Curriculum Model

The Middle Years Programme at Riverstone offers a comprehensive approach to learning where the student is at the center of the curriculum model. The curriculum consists of eight subject groups that students study through five common themes, referred to as the Areas of Interaction (AOI). The Areas of Interaction connect the development of the student with the educational experience in all subject groups. These interactive areas are common to all disciplines, demonstrating the interdisciplinary potential of the Middle Years Programme.



## The Areas of Interaction

The Areas of Interaction are common interactive themes embedded in the subject groups and developed naturally through them. They are embedded in special activities and projects, but they are not subjects in their own right. The areas of interaction are designed so that the student will become increasingly aware of the connections between subject content and the real world, rather than considering subjects as isolated areas unrelated to each other and to the world. The MYP at Riverstone presents knowledge as an integrated whole, and emphasizes the acquisition of skills, self-awareness, and the development of personal values. Below is a brief summary of the five Areas of Interaction.

*Approaches to Learning* is concerned with developing the intellectual discipline, attitudes, strategies and skills that will result in critical, coherent and independent thought and the capacity for problem solving and decision-making. “Approaches to Learning” focuses on teaching students how to learn.

*Community and Service* starts in the classroom and extends beyond it, requiring students to participate in the communities in which they live. The emphasis is on developing community awareness and concern, a sense of responsibility, and the skills and attitudes needed to make an effective contribution to society

*Human Ingenuity* allows students to focus on the evolution, processes and products of human creativity. It considers their impact on society and on the mind. Students learn to appreciate the human capacity to influence, transform, enjoy and improve the quality of life. This area of interaction encourages students to explore the relationships between science, aesthetics, technology and ethics.

*Environments* aims to make students aware of their interdependence with the environment so that they become aware of their responsibility, and may take positive, responsible action for maintaining an environment fit for the future.

*Health and Social Education* prepares students for a physically and mentally healthy life, aware of potential hazards and able to make informed choices. Students develop a sense of responsibility for their own well-being and for the physical and social environment.

## **The MYP Subject Areas**

The following is a brief summary of the eight core subject areas studied in Riverstone's MYP. For specific details regarding the content of each subject in Grades 6-10, please refer to the Curriculum Description section of this handbook.

### **Language A**

Language A is defined as the student's best language. It is typically but not necessarily the language of instruction in the school, and is fundamental to the curriculum as it crosses the boundaries of the traditional disciplines. Language is the basic tool of communication in the sense of enabling students to understand and be understood, and to establish their own identity. Language is also the avenue by which one gains access to literature and thereby to the cultural treasury of civilization.

Language A courses include the study of:

- The instrumental function of a language where listening, viewing, speaking, reading and writing skills are emphasized
- Literature, which encompasses a variety of periods and genres

### **Humanities**

Humanities has the potential to consist of a broad range of traditionally separate subjects, such as:

- Geography
- History
- Economics
- Politics
- Civics
- Sociology
- Anthropology
- Psychology

## **Mathematics**

Mathematics in the Middle Years Programme aims to provide students with an appreciation of the usefulness, power, and beauty of the subject.

One aspect of this is the awareness that mathematics is a universal language with diverse applications. The Middle Years Programme promotes an understanding of how cultural, societal and historical influences from a variety of cultures have shaped mathematical thought.

Schools are required to develop schemes of work according to a framework that includes five branches of mathematics:

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry and trigonometry
- Statistics and probability
- Discrete mathematics

Aims and objectives include:

- Understanding mathematical reasoning and processes
- The ability to apply mathematics and to evaluate the significance of results
- The ability to develop strategies for problems in which solutions are not obvious
- The acquisition of mathematical intuition

## **Sciences**

This subject group may be considered as consisting of:

- Either the traditional subjects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, or
- An integrated sciences course

Also included are topics, concepts and issues from other branches of science, such as Earth and Health sciences. The study of science aims to provide students with both a body of knowledge and an understanding of the scientific approach to problem solving. The ability to formulate hypotheses, design and carry out experiments to test them, and evaluate results constitutes the framework within which specific content is presented.

Among other skills, students are expected to:

- Use basic laboratory equipment safely and efficiently
- Make sensible estimates and take accurate measurements
- Make scientifically supported arguments

Students are also encouraged to relate the content of the classroom and laboratory to the realities of life as they develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

An awareness of the increasingly international context of scientific activity, its impact and limitations as well as the constant evolution of scientific knowledge and understanding is also promoted. Students are encouraged to consider science as a constantly evolving cooperative venture between individuals and among members

of the international community, influenced by social, economic, technological, political, ethical and cultural surroundings.

## **Language B**

The primary aim of Language B is to encourage students to gain competence in a modern language other than their mother tongue, with the long-term goal of balanced bilingualism.

In addition, the study of Language B aims to:

- Encourage in the student a respect for and understanding of other languages and cultures
- Provide a skills base to facilitate further language learning

Proficiency in a second language gives students:

- Access to a broader range of input, experiences and perspectives
- The enjoyment of being able to communicate in a language other than their mother tongue

It is also acknowledged that learning another language greatly contributes to the holistic development of students and is believed to raise achievement in other subject areas.

## **The Arts**

The Arts subject group of the curriculum encompasses:

- Visual arts
- Musical arts
- Performing arts

From the earliest times, artistic expression has been common to all cultures as human beings make statements through a variety of non-verbal forms and create objects which are aesthetically pleasing. Beyond barriers of language, the discovery of the cultural values of civilizations through their artistic production is one of the best ways to promote international understanding.

Students are brought into contact with the art forms and aesthetic values of other cultures as well as their own, and are helped to develop perceptions between ideas and art. They are also encouraged to identify particular creative abilities and to master techniques appropriate to that form of expression.

In addition, the course:

- Organizes learning around the creative cycle - a dynamic, ongoing process of sensing, planning, creating and evaluating art, in which all the senses are involved
- Encourages creative energy, communication, interaction, and reflection
- Aims to help the student become a developing artist - one who is able to assess the level of skill and target the areas that need development
- Seeks to acquaint young people with the creations of men and women whose works have proven to be of enduring worth.

## **Physical Education**

The aim of physical education in the Middle Years Programme is to facilitate physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development as well as to cultivate a healthy and active lifestyle for students. It therefore advocates activities that are not only enjoyable but also contribute to healthy living. Students are helped to develop the motor skills necessary to enable them to participate successfully in a variety of physical activities, and to learn about the nature of physical fitness.

This subject area also serves to promote intercultural awareness, since physical education is a reflection of elements of history, culture and values. Students establish links between different areas of experience and experience opportunities for different forms of self-reflection, communication, and teamwork.

## **Technology**

This course is essentially concerned with solving problems in an effort to stimulate students' ingenuity and to encourage them to combine intellectual talents and practical skills. Each Technology course provides a balance between three key areas:

- Systems
- Information
- Materials

In particular, students are encouraged to display ingenuity and creativity in devising practical solutions to given tasks. Students use the design cycle to:

- Investigate
- Design
- Plan
- Create
- Evaluate

This subject area is valuable for reinforcing and integrating skills learned in other disciplines, especially in the presentation and handling of data and the processes involved in the design and manufacture of a product. At the same time, it fosters awareness of the social and ethical implications of technological development.

## **Personal project**

In the final year of the program, each student completes a personal project, a significant piece of work that is the product of the student's own initiative and creativity. Each project must reflect a personal understanding of the areas of interaction. Students apply the skills acquired through one of these areas as well as approaches to learning.

Students are expected to choose their project, which can take many forms, and take the process through to completion under the supervision of a teacher in the school. This involves:

- Planning
- Research
- A high degree of personal reflection

The personal project is assessed by teachers against a set of IB assessment criteria.

## Assessment at Riverstone

At Riverstone, teachers organize continuous assessment over the course of the program according to specified assessment criteria that correspond to the objectives of each subject group. Regular school assessment and reporting play a major role:

- In the students' and parents' understanding of the objectives and assessment criteria
- In the students' preparation for final assessment
- In the development of the curriculum according to the objectives of the program

In each subject teachers structure varied and valid assessment tasks (including tests and examinations) that allow students to demonstrate achievement according to the objectives for each subject group. These include:

- Open-ended, problem-solving activities
- Investigations
- Organized discussions and debates
- Hands-on experimentation
- Analysis and reflection

In keeping with the ethos of *Approaches to Learning*, Riverstone also make use of quantitative and qualitative assessment strategies and tools that provide opportunities for peer- and self-assessment. The recording and reporting of individual levels of achievement are organized in ways that provide students with detailed feedback on their progress as it relates to the assessment criteria for each subject group.

### Formative and Summative Assessment

Assessment in Riverstone's MYP is an integral part of teaching and learning. Throughout the school year, students will engage in both formative and summative assessment tasks.

**Formative assessment** is designed to give both the student and the teacher the opportunity to gauge the student's development and their understanding of the materials and concepts being covered in the subject area. The use of formative assessment is to judge the effectiveness of both teaching and learning processes, and is essential in allowing teachers and students to identify strengths and weaknesses. While formative assessment tasks are often assessed against a rubric that outlines a specific set of criteria, scores on formative assessment tasks are not recorded as part of the students overall grade in the class.

**Summative assessment** is designed to measure the level of achievement reached by the student at the end of each unit of study. Summative assessment tasks reflect the goals and objectives of each particular unit of study and are carefully chosen to measure the level of achievement expected for the relevant age group. Scores from summative assessment tasks are recorded and reflect the students' overall standing in each subject

area. When organizing a final (summative) assessment, teachers use the MYP assessment criteria for their subject to assess student work. The criteria for each subject, as well as the objectives of each criterion, are explained in Course Description Section of this guide. Students are assessed a minimum of two times in each Assessment Criterion in each subject area. Sample rubrics are available upon request.

### **Grade Reports and Conferences**

At the Middle School, *final written grades are reported at the end of each semester*, in December and June. At this time, students receive a report card indicating their grade for the course, as well as a personalized narrative explaining in detail the students' accomplishments, goals for improvement, and overall progress in each subject area.

*Conferences at the Middle School are held at the end of the first and third quarters*, in October and March. Conferences are unique and are led by the student, with both parents and teachers in attendance. The student-led conference is an opportune time for personal reflection by the student as well as the reporting of progress and goals for improvement. During the spring conference, students present their MYP Portfolio of Achievement. Student portfolios consist of samples of student work and personal reflection and goals for improvement in each subject area.

### **MYP Portfolio**

Samples of student work, highlighting their accomplishments and development in each subject area, are organized in the Student Portfolio of Achievement. Student portfolios are developed by the student throughout the school year and are overseen by the student's Homeroom leader. All portfolios are designed according to a specific set of criteria that require a minimum number of entries per semester. All work samples found in the student portfolio are annotated with student reflection; indicating what the work shows, the reason for inclusion in the portfolio, and the date it was completed. The Student Portfolio of Achievement is presented to parents and teachers during spring conferences in March.

## Student Welfare

### Expectations for Student Behavior

As an international independent school, Riverstone seeks to foster an atmosphere of trust, respect and tolerance among all members of its community. As ambassadors for the school, Riverstone students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that is conducive to this ideal at all times. Indeed, the school reserves the right to hold students accountable for behavior that did not occur on school property or behavior that occurred in other schools. Since prevention is better than cure, the school creates an atmosphere conducive to positive behavior by explaining expectations and rules for appropriate conduct. In addition, the school has developed a social welfare system that seeks to foster the social development of the individual student and of the Middle School community as a whole. The Middle School's social welfare system consists of the advisory and homeroom programs.

### Social Welfare System

The fundamental goal of the Middle School Social Welfare Program is to encourage positive interaction between students and to encourage lasting relationships between teachers and students. In addition, the school's welfare structure is designed to ensure that each student's individual welfare is promoted. Every student needs to have a relationship with at least one adult that is characterized by warmth, concern, understanding and openness. To achieve this goal, the Middle School offers a two tiered approach in addressing the social, emotional, and academic needs of the student; the homeroom system and the advisory program.

### Homeroom Program

The Homeroom program is designed to address grade level issues and to develop the academic, social, and emotional well-being of students at the grade level. Homerooms in the Middle School provide a forum for students to meet as a group in their respective grade levels. The Homeroom class meets daily for ten minutes at the end of each day and weekly for one hour. This time is used to develop organizational skills, design the student portfolio, address grade level student issues, and make announcements. The Homeroom teacher serves as the grade level leader and is the first port of call for all parents regarding grade level events or any social welfare issues. A close relationship between school and home is also essential for student success. Parents are urged to contact the grade level homeroom leader about any matter affecting the welfare of their child.

### Advisory Program

The Advisory Program is designed to provide a setting where students can develop positive relationships with other students from a diverse range of grade levels. Each advisory group consists of one faculty member advisor and approximately ten student advisees. Student advisees are assigned to the same advisory group and keep the same advisor throughout their Middle School career, enabling students to develop strong and lasting relationships with their advisory group. The faculty advisor's role is to serve as

an advocate for the student and to provide guidance and support in order to help them through their Middle School years. Advisory groups meet every week to discuss academic, social, and emotional issues and to participate in assigned group activities. In addition, the advisory group works together to carry out their annual service learning projects, enabling students to take on leadership roles within their group.

## Middle School Useful Information

### School Day

The Middle School day begins at 8:20 AM and ends at 3:30 PM every day, Monday through Friday. We ask that students arrive at school ten minutes prior to the beginning of first period so that they are ready to start the day on time.

During the school day, students are given a ten minute snack break in the mid-morning and a thirty-five minute lunch period. Passing periods between classes are five minutes long.

### Lunch

Riverstone does not have a lunch facility; however the Parent Association administers an optional lunch program for which students on the Warm Springs campus may sign up, in advance, to receive a prepared lunch provided by Life's Kitchen and pizza from Idaho Pizza Company. Sign-ups for the lunch program take place on a quarterly basis. Forms are distributed via email and are also available at the front desk in the main administration building.

To help ensure a productive and stimulating learning environment, please make every effort to send a healthy lunch to school with your child(ren). Please avoid candy bars, soft drinks, energy drinks, and other sugary items, which can lead to energy spikes and crashes. Microwaves are available for student use, but microwaveable lunches should be kept to a minimum. Refrigerators are not available for student use.

### Peanut and other food allergies

Riverstone takes the safety of students very seriously. Special dietary needs will be accommodated if parents notify the school. Specific plans will be implemented according to the needs of the individual. Please contact the school as soon as possible regarding your child's needs.

### Cubbies and Lockers

Each student in the Middle School is assigned either a cubby or a locker at the beginning of the year. In Grade Six, students are assigned a cubby, which is located in their homeroom. In Grades Seven through Nine, students are assigned lockers.

### iPods, MP3, Individual Music or Video Players

Riverstone promotes the importance of communication and social interaction among students, parent and faculty. As such, use of iPods, other individual music or video players are not permitted during school hours.

### Cell Phones

Riverstone promotes the importance of communication and social interaction among students, parent and faculty. As such, use of cell phones is not permitted during school hours.

## **Attendance and Absence**

Regular, punctual attendance is important to ensure that children make the best progress in school. Riverstone offers an educational program that sets high standards for student academic performance. The program requires that students be committed and participatory members of the school community to derive the most positive benefits.

Attendance is critical to student success; therefore, students are expected to be in school from 8:30 AM until 3:30 PM, attending all classes and programs. Please try to make dentist and medical appointments outside of school hours.

*If your child is ill, please call the school at 208-424-5000 on the morning of their absence to let us know.* This will alleviate a call later in the day from the office. Absences are recorded at the end of each quarter and reported to parents on report cards.

For school records, there are two types of absences:

*Authorized Absences:* These are typically for medical reasons and are absences that have been both officially authorized by the school and that have been excused by the parents in writing or over the phone.

*Unauthorized Absences:* These are absences that are neither authorized by the school nor excused by the parents.

*\*Please note that Unauthorized Absences include vacations taken during school time as well as prolonged school vacations.*

## **Repeated Absences**

Regular attendance at school is vital for students to make good progress. If a student is repeatedly absent, the school will work closely with the student and his or her parents in two phases to help rectify the problem.

*Phase 1:* If a student is absent six (6) times in a class in a semester, whether excused, or unexcused the teacher will notify the parents. The parents will be expected to help the student be more diligent in attending class.

*Phase 2:* If a student is absent eight (8) times in a semester, the Division Director will call a conference with the student and his or her parents with the intent of producing an agreed plan for improvement in the form of a contract signed by all parties. While this will primarily involve positive reinforcement it may also include sanctions, such as keeping the student at home for a period of time, and will result in reduced or zero grades for some assignments.

## **Tardies**

All students should arrive at all classes punctually and with all of the necessary equipment to avoid missing any vital work and disrupting the class. If a student is repeatedly late for class, the school will work closely with the student and his or her parents in two phases to help rectify the problem.

*Phase 1:* If a student is tardy in a single class without a written excuse four (4) times in a class during a quarter, the teacher will notify the parents. The parents will be expected to help the student to be more diligent in arriving to class on time.

*Phase 2:* If a student is tardy six (6) times in a quarter, the Division Director will call a conference with the student and his or her parents with the intent of producing an agreed plan for improvement in the form of a contract signed by all parties. While this will primarily involve positive reinforcement it may also include sanctions, such as not allowing the student to enter the class, or keeping the student at home for a period of time, and will result in reduced or zero grades for some assignments.

## **Closed Campus**

In the interest of safety and security, the school operates a Closed Campus policy. *Students are not permitted to leave the campus during the day for non-school related activities or without faculty supervision.* Students are expected to be on the campus during the entire school day.

## **Sign Out/Sign In**

Occasionally, appointments or other events require a student to leave school during the school day. Students who leave the campus must sign out in the main administration building and sign in again upon their return. They must have parental permission in writing before they are allowed to leave the campus.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips take place throughout the year to reinforce curricular goals and to provide hands-on and experiential learning opportunities for students. Individual classes or groups of students may, from time to time, leave the campus for learning experiences away from the school. In the past, field trips have been to places such as the Boise Public Library, the World Center for Birds of Prey, the *Idaho Statesman* offices, and the Shakespeare Festival outdoor theater. Most field trips are addressed in the school's Field Trip Permission Slip, but others might require that parents sign an additional permission slip. The cost of most field trips is covered in the annual activity fee; for others, a payment may be requested to cover a ticket or entrance fee.

## **International Links and Excursions**

In an effort to promote international links at the Middle School level, Riverstone is currently developing several international trips that will be offered as extra-curricular learning opportunities. The following opportunities will be made to the Grade Eight, Nine, and Ten students during the 2009-2010 school year:

### ***Grade 8: Bogota, Colombia***

During the spring semester, Riverstone Grade Eight students will work collaboratively on an integrated MYP Unit of study with the Grade Eight class from Colegio CIEDI of Bogota, Colombia, an accredited IB World School. Students will explore the interdependence between humans and the environment in both Boise and Bogota. The culminating assessment for this project will use the latest technology to simulate real business world projects. Groups of four students, two from Riverstone and two from Colegio CIEDI, will collaborate using web technology to create a joint presentation.

Upon completion of this unit, students from Colegio CIEDI will spend two weeks in Boise, and will take part in both Grade Eight classes and the Grade Eight Spring trip. Students of the Riverstone's Grade Eight class will also be given the opportunity to travel to Bogota, Colombia, where they will attend classes and partake in extra-curricular excursions with the students of the CIEDI school. Home stays will be provided for Riverstone students choosing to take part in this international exchange opportunity.

### ***Grade 8: Auckland, New Zealand***

In conjunction with Kristin School in Auckland, New Zealand, and several other international schools, Riverstone Grade 8 students will take part in a Math project titled, "Measure the Earth." Students will use a method developed by Eratosthenes to collect data that will assist them to measure the circumference of the Earth. Students will use video conferencing and e-mail to share the data they have collected and to work collaboratively with other schools to complete the project.

### ***Grade 9 and 10: Europe***

During the spring semester, Grade Nine and Ten students will examine the interdependency of humanity and borders as it relates to the 20<sup>th</sup> century development of Europe. The effect borders have had on humans and how humans have shaped geographical borders will be examined through English, French, Spanish, History, Art and Music. This unit will culminate in an optional 19-day trip to Europe in May or June. Students will visit Paris, the Ann Frank Haus in Amsterdam, the battlefields of the Somme on D-Day, a concentration camp, the United Nations headquarters, Geneva, and Lausanne. The trip will culminate with an outdoor trip in the Alps, in which students will hike from hut to hut around Chamonix with a mountain guide. Students participating on this trip will be required to participate in journal writing, reflection, and the development of a personal portfolio capturing their learning experiences. *The all-inclusive cost of this trip will be approximately \$2500 - \$3000.*

### ***Grades 10 to 12: Challenge 20/20 with Bogota, Colombia***

Grades 10, 11, and 12 will have the opportunity to take part in this collaborative project with Colegio CIEDI, Colombia. Challenge 20/20 is organized by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and brings together schools from around the world to identify local solutions to global problems.

## **Homework**

Homework at Riverstone is considered to be an individual and personal matter. The needs of each student are stressed and the quality of work is emphasized. Homework is not given as “busy work,” but rather requires students to do what is useful at various stages of learning. Overall, homework is seen as a way to reinforce concepts and to reflect upon learning experiences that have taken place during the school day.

In the Middle School, homework is a regular activity involving reading, written assignments, test preparation and projects. The nature and duration of any particular homework assignment will vary from student to student. In general, research supports that up to ten minutes of homework per grade level is a developmentally appropriate amount of work for students.

The nature and duration of homework assignments will vary from student to student. The following are guidelines for each grade level:

*Grade Six:* 1 hour

*Grade Seven:* 1.25 hours

*Grade Eight:* 1.5 hours

*Grade Nine:* 1.75 hours

If you have questions regarding a particular homework assignment or homework in general, please contact the classroom teacher. If students are unable to finish the assigned homework, then parents can send in a note to this effect. If parents would like additional homework for their child, they can contact the subject teacher or homeroom leader.

In the case of a child’s absence due to illness, classroom teachers should be contacted for specifics regarding missed assignments. However, homework should not be requested until the second day of a child’s absence. In the case of foreseen extended absences, it is important that arrangements are made with the classroom teacher prior to the child’s departure. Nonetheless, classroom teachers should not be asked to plan work for time out of school when it goes beyond school vacation dates. When family vacations extend beyond those designated by the school, parents are responsible for helping a child make up the work upon his or her return to school.

## **Discipline Procedures**

In the case that disciplinary action is required to be taken against a student or group of students, the actual course of any disciplinary action will depend on the particular incident but will always be dealt with in an appropriate, fair and timely manner. The school adopts a hierarchical structure for dealing with inappropriate behavior.

Most *minor incidents* will be dealt with by the staff member immediately involved.

*More serious incidents or repeat incidents* will be reported to the appropriate homeroom leader or Division Director who will decide on the appropriate course of action. At this point the Division Director may decide to call the parents in to discuss the incident.

For *very serious incidents* or continued inappropriate behavior, the student will be referred to the Head of School. At this time, parents will always be informed and requested to come in to school.

If the behavior of the student persists or if the student is referred again for similar problems, a conference will be set up to include the student, parent/guardian, teacher, homeroom leader, and division head to develop a course of action and potential create a behavioral contract for the student. This contract binds the student to certain actions and behaviors and if the student breaks the contract, the Division Director will contact the parent/guardian, homeroom leader, teacher, Head of School and the student for a conference that may result in a suspension.

Continued referrals for similar or other reasons may result in further suspension or expulsion.

*The purpose of this approach is to give the student opportunities to learn from his or her mistakes and to correct his or her behavior. There are, however, certain infractions that may warrant immediate suspension or expulsion. The school reserves the right to take immediate action when necessary.*

## **Standardized Testing**

While Riverstone is not required to administer standardized tests, the school believes that some tests can provide insights into how Riverstone students compare to various national and state achievement levels. As part of the college admissions process, the PSAT is given every fall to students in Grades 8 - 11. Students are encouraged to take the SAT and SAT II in the spring of their Grade 11 year and in the fall of their Grade 12 year.

## **Communication**

Riverstone International School promotes regular, constructive communication between and among all members of the school community. In the interests of efficiency, parents should use the following guidelines when communicating with the school with issues regarding their child(ren).

With specific issues about their children, parents should contact school employees in the following order:

1. Classroom teacher or Homeroom Leader (Grades K-12)
2. Division Director (Grades K-12)
3. Head of School

The ongoing connection between parents and teachers is both critical to the mission of the school and critical to both the students' and the school's success. During the year, each teacher will be in close communication with the parents of the students in his or her classes. Parents may request a meeting with an individual teacher via email or by contacting the Administrative Assistant at the appropriate campus.

### *Between Parents and Division Directors*

With issues generally related to the school, parents should communicate with the appropriate Division Director. The best way to contact Division Directors is via email or through the Administrative Assistants.

### *Between Parents and Head of School*

Parents may request and schedule a meeting with the Head of School by contacting the Administrative Assistant or the Head of School directly. Parents may request a meeting to discuss school issues; however, if the issue concerns a teacher, or Division Director, the parent must have discussed the issue with the teacher and Division Director prior to bringing it to the Head of School. The Head of School's decision concerning the issue is the final decision.

## **Service Learning**

Through leadership, compassion and acts of service, Riverstone students foster extraordinary change. Riverstone International School has a strong commitment to service in the community, and service learning is part of the school's mission. Service learning begins at the kindergarten level and applies to every grade level of the school.

The service learning program is run by the advisory groups in the Middle School. Some service learning activities involve the entire school community, while the majority of activities are run through individual groups. Activities will vary, but the intent in each case is the same; to teach students the value of giving back to the community through service while learning valuable information and skills. The school's service learning program receives support from the Riverstone One Stone Foundation, Inc.

One Stone Foundation is a student-run, 501(c)(3) not for-profit organization that combines service and charitable giving with academic and experiential learning.

Students at Riverstone develop and operate the foundation; and coordinate individual, class, and school-wide service learning projects. Students serve as directors, officers, and committee members of One Stone Foundation. One Stone Foundation combines service and charitable giving with academic experiential learning to fulfill community needs in a way that transforms both the recipient and the provider of the service. One Stone gives students opportunities to learn valuable skills and develop important values while empowering them to create positive change in their school, communities, and individual lives.

### **Assembly Program**

Assemblies at Riverstone's Middle School division serve several purposes. First, assemblies provide students with the opportunity to share and reflect upon learning experiences that have taken place during the school year with the school community. During assemblies, students perform skits, present speeches, share artwork and participate in other such activities in an effort to share their learning. Second, assemblies provide students with extra curricular learning experiences by inviting speakers from the greater Boise community to share their knowledge and perspective with the students. Various speakers are invited to Middle School assemblies in order to discuss topics related to local environmental and political issues, character education, outdoor education, and much more. Finally, assemblies serve as a platform in which announcements and general information regarding upcoming events and activities are made.

### **Outdoor Education Program**

The Outdoor Program is an essential component of the Riverstone International School curriculum and is intended to give all students the opportunity to develop self-confidence, leadership and teamwork skills as well as an environmental awareness. While not every student that participates in the outdoor program at Riverstone will become an elite adventure athlete or go on to guide professionally, exposure to a wide range of environments and challenging activities encourages the development of well-rounded young adults. Outdoor program experiences provide opportunities for students to learn outside of their comfort zone; some students will confront physical limits and learn that they can carry a pack farther than they thought possible, while others will confront emotional challenges and learn that they are capable and confident leaders. Ultimately, the camaraderie and trust that develops between students and teachers as they work together in the field transfers into classrooms and hallways and helps students see their classmates and teachers alike as peers in a process of discovery. Finally, outdoor program experiences encourage an underlying appreciation for wilderness and solitude that cannot be taught in a classroom.

## **Admissions Process**

The admissions process at Riverstone International School takes place throughout the year. Parents may call the school at any time to express interest, receive a packet of information, or to schedule a visit to the school. New students may be admitted at any time during the school year, depending on space availability and other considerations.

Applications for the following school year are processed throughout the year, during which time students are tested, formal visits to the school take place, and the Admissions Committee meets to decide on individual applications. Families are notified by mail of the school's decisions.

## **Open Houses**

Open Houses are offered to the public and to the school community each year in an effort to educate members of the Treasure Valley about the school and its programs.

*The Open House for the Middle School and High School will take place on Tuesday, February 2, 2010.*



## Grade Seven Curriculum

### Grade Seven Humanities

#### Overview

Humanities in Grade 7 teaches the student the fundamentals of geography, but also allows the student to also explore history, anthropology and other social sciences. In keeping with the goals of the International Baccalaureate program the curriculum aims to create holistic learning experiences. To this end, the Humanities curriculum is very closely tied to learning experiences in English. While students are reading Anne Frank's diary, Couteau's apartheid era *bildungsroman* or Staples' novel of a young girl's life in 2001 Afghanistan in English, they are studying Hitler's Third Reich, imperialism in Africa and the effects of contemporary wars on children in Geography.

Knowledge, concepts and skills are developed in small, collaborative classes where the students are challenged to discuss and learn through a variety of individual, partner and small group activities. Projects include participation in National History Day and other similar experiences during which students have to conduct, synthesize and present research. Students leave the classroom having built a solid foundation upon which to continue their studies through their Middle Years and Diploma Program experience.

#### Objectives

At the completion of the course, students are able to:

- Complete written papers and projects demonstrating an understanding of each of the distinct cultures, regions, histories and global problems we study
- Participate in class discussions, group activities and debates to enhance understanding of the regions we study and to understand multiple perspectives
- Organize their work, notes and assignments
- Utilize a variety of methods to demonstrate understanding and awareness of geographic concepts and themes, such as drawing maps, visual chronologies and using technology such as PowerPoint.

#### Assessment

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

##### Criterion A Knowledge

Knowledge is fundamental to studying humanities, and forms the base from which to explore concepts and develop skills. Knowledge and understanding can be assessed through a wide variety of tasks that involve factual recall or description, and explanation. Tasks may include tests, examinations, written assignments, oral interviews and presentations, extended writing, projects and exhibits.

Criterion B Concepts

Concepts are powerful ideas that have relevance within and across the Middle Years Programme, and students must explore and re-explore these in order to develop understanding. Learners develop their understanding of a concept to increasing levels of sophistication by applying acquired knowledge and skills.

Criterion C Skills

The development of skills in humanities is critical in enabling the student to undertake research and demonstrate an understanding of knowledge and concepts. Developments in the student's technical, analytical, decision-making and investigative skills will be invaluable in transferring these skills to other subject groups in the MYP, and for lifelong learning.

Criterion D Organization and Presentation

Students need to develop the ability to organize and present information and ideas in order to be able to demonstrate their grasp of humanities knowledge, concepts and skills.

## Grade Seven Language A: English

### Overview

Communication skills in Grade 7 are critical to the student's success in all areas of the curriculum. The English curriculum in Grade 7 is closely tied to learning experiences in Humanities and is critical to skill development in the other areas of the school's curricula. The curriculum is designed to expand the student's ability to think and read critically, use language for a variety of purposes, and to present ideas clearly and coherently.

The curriculum is centered on literature and focuses on building skills that enable the students to begin composing relevant and informed personal responses orally and in writing. In her response the student uses language and conventions to describe, explain, narrate, and persuade. Additionally, collaboration is an important part of the learning experience. Examples of collaborative work abound. The student will edit and revise a partner's writing, discuss literature in a small group, develop and perform original plays. The overall aim is to develop students who are not only skilled in the use of language, but are also collaborative problem solvers. The fundamentals of writing, critical thinking skills, and collaborative work form the core of the English curriculum at Riverstone International School.

### Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students are able to:

- Identify key elements of literature in readings assigned
- Use technology and a variety of alternative methods to show understanding of key concepts
- Keep an organized, timely and complete journal including examples of writing, analysis and grammar assignments
- Independently write a variety of essays, a research paper and their own poetry book
- Read, analyze and respond to a variety of forms of literature including novels, short stories and poetry.
- Participate in class presentations, debates and group dialogues

### Assessment

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

#### Criterion A Content

This criterion refers to the student's ability to demonstrate an awareness of the function of language A through critical and creative writing; an understanding of the works studied; and an effective response to literature.

Criterion B Organization

This criterion covers the student's ability to: express ideas with clarity and coherence; structure arguments in a sustained and logical fashion; and support these arguments with relevant examples.

Criterion C Style and Language Use

This criterion refers to the student's ability to use language for a variety of purposes, including description, analysis and persuasion. Appropriate register and language should be chosen, according to intention and audience.

## Grade Seven International MYP Mathematics Level 2

### Overview

This course is the second in the five-year MYP mathematics sequence.

Mathematics plays an essential role both within the school and in society, promoting a powerful universal language, analytical reasoning, and problem-solving skills that contribute to the development of logical, abstract, and critical thinking. Moreover, understanding and being able to use mathematics with confidence is not only an advantage in school but also a skill for problem solving and decision-making in everyday life. Therefore, mathematics should be accessible to and be studied by all students.

MYP mathematics provides a framework of concepts and skills organized into the following five branches of mathematics: number theory, algebra, geometry and trigonometry, statistics and probability, and discrete mathematics. All five branches are addressed throughout the five years of the MYP in an upwardly spiraling manner. More specifically, each branch will be explored at increasing levels of depth and difficulty each successive year.

Additionally, students will complete and present a number of projects each year that are designed to get them out of the classroom and to develop problem-solving skills. Many of these projects will be cross-curricular in nature to give students the chance to become aware of the connections between mathematics and other subjects, and to appreciate the relevance of mathematics in the real world.

MYP mathematics aims to equip all students with the knowledge, understanding, and intellectual capabilities to address further courses in mathematics, as well as to prepare those students to use mathematics in their workplace and life in general.

As with all MYP subjects, mathematics is taught through strands that tie all MYP subjects together at all age ranges, the Areas of Interaction (AOI). The AOI introduce an enhanced dimension to mathematical inquiry and allow for a richer and more in depth exploration of math concepts and topics.

### Objectives

Through completion of International MYP Mathematics Level 2, students will increase their knowledge of and ability to solve problems involving the following topics:

- Number theory, including whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percentages
- Algebra, including pattern recognition, construction of expressions, expansion and factorization, solving equations, and algebraic fractions
- Geometry and trigonometry, including angles, length, area, volume, ratios, polygons, circles, and graphing of lines
- Statistics and probability, including chance events, data collection, mean, median, and mode

- Discrete mathematics, including set theory and Venn diagrams

## **Assessment**

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request. In MYP mathematics, the four main objectives support the IB learner profile, promoting the development of students who are knowledgeable, inquirers, communicators, and effective learners.

### *Criterion A Knowledge and Understanding*

Knowledge and understanding promotes learning mathematics with understanding, allowing students to interpret results, make conjectures, and use mathematical reasoning when solving problems in school and in real-life situations.

### *Criterion B Application and Reasoning*

Investigating patterns supports inquiry-based learning. Through the use of investigations, students will experience mathematical discovery, recognize patterns and structures, describe these as relationships or general rules, and explain their reasoning using mathematical justifications and proofs.

### *Criterion C Communication*

Communication in mathematics encourages students to use the language of mathematics and its different forms of representation to communicate their findings and reasoning effectively, both orally and in writing.

### *Criterion D Reflection and Evaluation*

Reflection in mathematics provides an opportunity for students to reflect upon their processes and evaluate the significance of their findings in connection to real-life contexts. Reflection allows students to become aware of their strengths and the challenges they face as learners.

Overall, MYP mathematics expects all students to appreciate the beauty and usefulness of mathematics as a remarkable cultural and intellectual legacy of humankind, and as a valuable instrument for social and economic change in society.

## Grade Seven Language B: Spanish

### Overview

This course is designed to develop and refine students' proficiency in the four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Each thematic unit will introduce new vocabulary and grammar and will cover different cultural aspects of the Spanish-speaking world. To encourage students to communicate in the Spanish language, all class activities and exercises are based on active student participation. The work for this course will include daily assignments, projects, presentations and several short readings.

### Objectives

Following completion of the course, students are able to:

- Develop effective communications skills to fit a variety of different contexts
- Develop confidence and accuracy in the four basic language skills; reading, writing, listening, and speaking
- Appreciate the many cultures of the Spanish-speaking world
- Understand the ways in which those cultures affect regional linguistic differences

### Assessment

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

#### Criterion A Speaking and listening; message and interaction

To what extent does the student show the ability to communicate ideas, interact and maintain the flow of the conversation?

- Request and/or provide information as appropriate to the task
- Understand and respond to questions and statements
- Present his or her ideas, giving details where appropriate
- Demonstrate the ability to maintain a coherent and flowing conversation

#### Criterion B Speaking-Language

To what extent does the student show the ability to use the language effectively and accurately?

- Use clear pronunciation and/or intonation
- Correctly use a range of vocabulary
- Correctly use a range of grammatical structures

#### Criterion C Writing – Message and Organization

To what extent does the student show the ability to communicate, organize and support relevant ideas?

- Provide information and ideas

- Develop ideas
- Use a format and structure

Criterion D Writing: Language

To what extent does the student show the ability to use the language effectively and accurately?

- Correctly use a range of vocabulary
- Correctly use a range of grammatical structures
- Show accuracy in spelling or writing of characters

## Grade Seven Language B: French

### Overview

The purpose of this course is to help students develop an active command of the four basic communication skills in French: comprehension, speaking, reading and writing. Additionally an awareness of the following concepts will be acquired:

- How language and culture are so intimately intertwined
- How Francophone cultures differ from the American culture
- How other Francophone cultures relate to and differ from that of France

### Objectives

Following completion of the course, students are able to:

- Understand spoken French and respond in a communicative manner.
- Study, practice, and use the expressions, vocabulary, and grammatical structures, and skills presented in class to enable them to more fully express themselves in French.
- Read, research, and report in oral and/or written form on a variety of subjects.
- Develop strategies to become successful language learners

### Assessment

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

#### Criterion A Speaking and listening; message and interaction

To what extent does the student show the ability to communicate ideas, interact and maintain the flow of the conversation?

- Request and/or provide information as appropriate to the task
- Understand and respond to questions and statements
- Present his or her ideas, giving details where appropriate
- Demonstrate the ability to maintain a coherent and flowing conversation

#### Criterion B Speaking-Language

To what extent does the student show the ability to use the language effectively and accurately?

- Use clear pronunciation and/or intonation
- Correctly use a range of vocabulary
- Correctly use a range of grammatical structures

#### Criterion C Writing – Message and Organization

To what extent does the student show the ability to communicate, organize and support relevant ideas?

- Provide information and ideas

- Develop ideas
- Use a format and structure

Criterion D Writing: Language

To what extent does the student show the ability to use the language effectively and accurately?

- Correctly use a range of vocabulary
- Correctly use a range of grammatical structures
- Show accuracy in spelling or writing of characters

## Grade Seven Arts: Visual Art

### Overview

Grade 7 Art is the second level art class for the Middle School Art Program. The seventh grade students will have studied the foundation course the previous year. The seventh grade course begins to explore all core material in greater depth. The theme of the exploratory curriculum will be developed within a discipline-based art education program. The program will include art history, art criticism, and art aesthetics with a thorough knowledge base of the elements and principles of design. In the seventh grade program, each of these disciplines will be taken to a higher level of understanding, skill, and ability. Art class meets every day for one semester.

### Objectives

Throughout the course, students:

- Develop their artistic skills using a variety of art media and techniques
- Gain a thorough understanding of the elements and principles of design
- Make historical connections to artwork within the cultural context of artists and their works
- Develop an art vocabulary with a deeper understanding of how to use the language of art when discussing and creating art
- Understand how to research and develop an idea from the sketchbook to the final studio project

### Assessment

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

#### Criterion A Knowledge and Understanding

Students are expected to have a knowledge and understanding of the art form(s) studied.

- Using subject-specific terminology to show aesthetic and critical awareness when discussing their work or the work of others
- Knowing and understanding the theoretical basis of the art form(s) studied developing an understanding of themes and issues studied through the arts
- Understanding how historical developments and cultural perspectives have shaped the arts
- Understanding how theorists, practitioners and artists have contributed to the arts

#### Criterion B Application

Students are expected to apply knowledge, understanding, skills and strategies to develop and elaborate ideas, themes or compositions.

- Planning and organizing effectively to define and set goals, negotiate and make decisions

- Experimenting through both spontaneous and structured activities
- Choosing appropriate forms for the expression of ideas, thoughts and feelings in a creative manner
- Demonstrating a range of techniques and skills
- Finding original and inventive solutions
- Developing and elaborating ideas, themes and compositions to a point of realization
- Presenting work through formal or informal exhibitions and performances

*Criterion C Reflection and Evaluation*

Students are expected to reflect on the themes and issues encountered during the course, and to evaluate creative development and processes.

- Using a developmental workbook throughout the creative cycle
- Reflecting upon, evaluating, assessing and appraising work to support and promote creative development
- Using feedback and discussion on artwork to support creative development

*Criterion D Artistic Awareness and Personal Engagement*

Students are expected to develop an aesthetic, cultural and critical awareness, and to engage with arts.

- Showing sensitivity to one's own and different cultures
- Inviting and accepting views from others
- Showing self-motivation, initiative and a willingness to take artistic risks
- Supporting and encouraging peers towards a positive working environment

## Grade Seven Arts: Music

### Overview

Grade 7 Music is a course that gives students a comprehensive program to develop their understanding and skills in all areas of music. In line with the Grade 7 Humanities curriculum, in this class we investigate musical traditions of different cultures through a broad range of experiences including singing, dancing, making and playing instruments, listening to outside speakers/performers and recorded performances, and analyzing and comparing music. Music class meets every day for one semester.

### Objectives

Throughout the course, students:

- Explore the history of music from the Renaissance to the present day
- Broaden music theory knowledge through experiential learning and worksheets
- Focus on music of one or more African cultures in line with the Humanities curriculum.
- Rehearse and perform vocal pieces and pieces on recorders, tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments. There will also be an introduction to guitar.
- Listen to music from many eras and geographical areas on a daily basis, and use knowledge of theory and history to analyze and identify that music

### Assessment

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

#### Criterion A Knowledge and Understanding

Students are expected to have a knowledge and understanding of the art form(s) studied

- Using subject-specific terminology to show aesthetic and critical awareness when discussing their work or the work of others
- Knowing and understanding the theoretical basis of the art form(s) studied developing an understanding of themes and issues studied through the arts
- Understanding how historical developments and cultural perspectives have shaped the arts
- Understanding how theorists, practitioners and artists have contributed to the arts

### Criterion B Application

Students are expected to apply knowledge, understanding, skills and strategies to develop and elaborate ideas, themes or compositions

- Planning and organizing effectively to define and set goals, negotiate and make decisions
- Experimenting through both spontaneous and structured activities
- Choosing appropriate forms for the expression of ideas, thoughts and feelings in a creative manner
- Demonstrating a range of techniques and skills
- Finding original and inventive solutions
- Developing and elaborating ideas, themes and compositions to a point of realization
- Presenting work through formal or informal exhibitions and performances

### Criterion C Reflection and Evaluation

Students are expected to reflect on the themes and issues encountered during the course, and to evaluate creative development and processes

- Using a developmental workbook throughout the creative cycle
- Reflecting upon, evaluating, assessing and appraising work to support and promote creative development
- Using feedback and discussion on artwork to support creative development

### Criterion D Artistic Awareness and Personal Engagement

Students are expected to develop an aesthetic, cultural and critical awareness, and to engage with arts

- Showing sensitivity to one's own and different cultures
- Inviting and accepting views from others
- Showing self-motivation, initiative and a willingness to take artistic risks
- Supporting and encouraging peers towards a positive working environment

## Grade Seven Physical Education

### Overview

The goal of the Physical Education program at Riverstone is to teach our students the value and importance of being healthy and physically fit for a lifetime. Physical Education improves health-related quality of life by enhancing physical and mental well-being. The program is designed to be developmentally appropriate and emphasizes fun and enjoyable physical activity and will “help students develop the knowledge, attitudes, motor skills, behavioral skills, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physically active lifestyles” (National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 1997, pg. 205). The Physical Education curriculum has a scope and sequence that is based on goals and objectives that enhance the cognitive, motor, affective, and physical fitness development of each child, regardless of their athletic ability, while improving social skills and self-esteem.

The foundation of the P.E. program is based on a three-part theme. The first of these is body-awareness. The students will learn nutrition, body parts and structure, muscles, bones, etc. and how they work. The second is social behavior. Students will learn how to interact, share, how to rebound from failure, how to win with humility, how to lead and how to follow when playing games and sports. The greatest emphasis will be on development of mature motor skills. This will include locomotor (walk, jump, skip, etc.), non-locomotor (bend, twist, swing, etc.), and manipulative skills (throwing, kicking, striking, etc.). Demonstrate increasing competence in more advanced specialized skills.

### Objectives

Throughout the course, students will:

- Appreciate and understand the value of physical education and its relationship to a health, active, lifestyle
- Work to their optimal level of physical fitness
- Become aware of movement as a creative medium connected to communication, expression and aesthetic appreciation
- Develop the motor skills necessary to participate successfully in a variety of physical activities
- Experience enjoyment and satisfaction through physical activity
- Develop social skills that demonstrate the importance of teamwork and cooperation in group activities
- Show knowledge and understanding in a variety of physical activities and evaluate their own and others' performance
- Demonstrate the ability to critically reflect upon physical activity in both a local and intercultural context
- Demonstrate the ability and enthusiasm to pass on to others in the community the knowledge, skills, and techniques that have been learned

## **Assessment**

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

### *Criterion A Use of Knowledge*

Students are expected to have a knowledge and understanding of the physical activities or topics studied. They are also expected to be able to use this knowledge and understanding critically, and apply it to analyze situations and solve problems.

### *Criterion B Movement Composition*

Students are expected to be able to compose sequences of aesthetic movement, through exploring movement possibilities and variations in accordance with the principles and concepts of a particular aesthetic activity and using this as inspiration.

### *Criterion C Performance*

Students are expected to be able to perform in a range of activities, and show skills and techniques ranging from basic to complex. They should be able to apply tactics, strategies and rules in both individual and group situations.

### *Criterion D Social Skills and Personal Engagement*

Students are expected to be able to communicate with others in a manner that enhances the working environment. This includes showing respect, support and encouragement, as well as demonstrating positive attitudes and strategies to improve relationships. As part of taking responsibility for and enhancing their own learning, students are expected to be able to evaluate their own performance and achievement, including incorporating feedback from others, and use this to set appropriate and achievable goals for the future.

## Grade Seven Science

### Overview

In the MYP, the sciences are learned through a curriculum that integrates the three major branches of science including Physical Science, Earth Science, and Life Science. During each year, students in the sciences spend equal time conducting experiments and investigations, collecting and analyzing data, and acquiring knowledge in the three major branches of science.

The sciences and their methods of investigation offer a way of learning through inquiry that can contribute to the development of an analytical and critical way of thinking. MYP Science emphasizes the role of inquiry and encourages the development of not only scientific inquiry skills but also transferable thinking skills. MYP sciences aims to be inclusive of all students and challenges all students by providing opportunities for different needs and learning styles. MYP Science nurtures all students to become confident and curious learners.

The MYP sciences course is relevant to the interests of students, providing them with opportunities to explore the role of science in historical and contemporary contexts. MYP Science helps students appreciate the links between science and everyday life as well as the dynamic interactions between science and society. MYP Science, in conjunction with the other subject groups and the areas of interaction, contributes to helping students broaden their understanding of themselves as individuals and as collective members of society and the natural environment.

Teaching and learning MYP sciences is underpinned by the fundamental concepts of the MYP: Holistic learning, Intercultural awareness, and Communication.

Holistic learning emphasizes the links between the disciplines, providing a global view of situations and issues. The MYP sciences course seeks to acknowledge that real-world science is a universal and cooperative venture between individuals from different disciplines within the international community. Students will become aware of how science and scientists work in the real world and how important the contribution of different disciplines is to the development of scientific ideas and knowledge. Students will also appreciate the relevance of other MYP subjects in developing their own learning in science.

Intercultural awareness is the development of students' attitudes, knowledge and skills as they learn about their own and others' social and national cultures. The MYP sciences course contributes to the development of intercultural awareness by providing opportunities for students to explore scientific issues locally and globally. Addressing the global dimension of science implies dealing with global issues such as sustainability, interdependence, diversity, equity and so on, with the aim of developing attitudes of global citizenship. Dealing with the global dimension of science provides students with

the opportunity to develop their understanding of how science and society are interrelated and how social, economic, political, environmental, cultural and ethical factors are interdependent. Encouraging students to explore issues critically from a global and multicultural perspective can foster the development of attitudes and values such as tolerance, respect and empathy. Moreover, students will have the opportunity to reflect upon their roles and responsibilities in their community and in the wider world.

Communication is fundamental to learning as it supports inquiry and understanding. Learning the language of science can be seen as learning a new language. MYP Science focuses on the importance of developing the skills to understand and communicate scientific ideas effectively. In order to develop communication skills, students will be given opportunities to read, write and talk about science. Students will be encouraged to select and use a range of modes of communication. This may include oral and written language, visual representation (images, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, models), and mathematical symbols and multimedia.

## **Assessment**

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

### *Criterion A One World*

Students should understand the interdependence of science and society. Students are expected to discuss how science is applied and used to solve specific problems in life and society. Students should be given the opportunity to explore local and global scientific issues and evaluate the interaction between science and scientific developments with social, economic, political, environmental, cultural and ethical factors.

### *Criterion B Communication in Science*

Students should be able to demonstrate understanding when communicating scientific information. Students should use appropriate scientific language, a range of communication modes and the most appropriate communication format.

### *Criterion C Knowledge and Understanding of Science*

Students should show their understanding of the main scientific ideas and concepts of science, by applying these to solve problems in familiar and unfamiliar situations. Students should develop critical-thinking skills to analyze and evaluate scientific information.

### *Criterion D Scientific Inquiry*

Students are expected to design and carry out scientific investigations independently.

Students should be able to (i) state a problem that can be tested by an investigation; (ii) formulate a suitable hypothesis; (iii) identify and manipulate variables; (iv) plan an appropriate investigation including the method and materials; (v) evaluate the method

Criterion E Processing Data

Processing data refers to enabling students to organize and process data. Students should be able to organize and transform data by numerical calculations into diagrammatic form (tables, graphs and charts) and draw and explain appropriate conclusions

Criterion F Attitudes in Science

This criterion refers to encouraging students' attitudes of safety, respect and collaboration. Students are expected to:

- Carry out scientific investigations using materials and techniques skillfully and safely and showing respect for the living and non-living environment
- Work effectively as a member of a team, collaborating, acknowledging and respecting the views of others as well as ensuring a safe working environment

## Grade Seven Technology

### Overview

MYP technology at Riverstone International School aims to provide the means and the context to help students become skillful problem solvers, who can appreciate the role of technology in everyday life and society and who can respond critically and resourcefully to real-life challenges. MYP technology intends to challenge all students to apply practical and creative-thinking skills to solve problems in technology, encourage students to explore the role of technology in both historical and contemporary contexts, and raise students' awareness of their responsibilities as world citizens when making decisions and taking action on technology issues.

Technology in Riverstone's Middle Years Programme is divided into two sections:

### Information Technology

Information technology at Riverstone is an integrated curriculum that is addressed in the subject areas of at each level of the MYP. All units of study that integrate computer technology use the design cycle to solve problems through the use of a computer system. Computer technology enables students to create computer-generated products/ solutions to perform a task or meet a need. Computer Technology is integrated at each level of the MYP.

### Objectives

Throughout the Grade Seven school year, students will develop their skills in:

- Presentations using PowerPoint
- Graphing with Microsoft Excel
- Internet Research (source validity and appropriate use)

### Design Technology

The Design Technology course is a 'hands-on' technology course that uses the design cycle to solve problems through the use of tools, information, materials and systems. Design technology enables students to use a variety of tools and materials in the creation of products/solutions to perform a task or meet a need. The goal of this course is to develop the students' critical thinking and problem solving skills using the Design Cycle (Investigate, Plan, Create, Evaluate). Skills and expectations for the course will increase as students move through the program. The Design Technology course is a required, one semester class.

### Design Technology Objectives

At the completion of the course, students develop their skills in the use of:

- *Information* - MYP technology enables students to identify, access, evaluate and acknowledge a wide range of information sources. Information-based products and solutions use and/or communicate information to perform a task, achieve a purpose, meet a need or solve a problem.

- *Materials* - In many cases creating a product/solution involves using materials. These may be natural or synthetic, and will differ according to geographical location, culture and available resources. Students will be able to identify, combine, experiment with, shape and handle different types of materials, and safely dispose of, or recycle, waste products. Students will select processing techniques that are appropriate to both the chosen material(s) and the product/solution to be created.
- *Systems* - Students will recognize the parts of a system (input, processing and control, and output) as well as the crucial role each component plays as part of the whole. Students will create systems-based products/ solutions involving a group of interdependent items that interact to perform a task or achieve a purpose. These items may be materials, components or information that have been incorporated into a system in order to provide a solution to a problem.

## **Assessment**

Assessment in each subject of the MYP is criteria based. Throughout the school year, students are assessed a minimum of two times in each criterion. Assessment rubrics are available upon request.

### *Criterion A Investigate*

Students must be able to identify the problem to be solved. At the end of each unit of study, they must be able to demonstrate how they:

- Evaluated the importance of the problem for life, society and the environment
- Outlined the design brief.

Students develop a design brief for each unit of study. In the design brief, students:

- Formulate and discuss appropriate questions that guide the investigation
- Identify and acknowledge a range of appropriate sources of information
- Collect, analyze, select, organize and evaluate information
- Evaluate the sources of information

Students formulate a design specification. At the end of each unit of study, they:

- List the specific requirements that must be met by the product/solution
- Design tests to evaluate the product/solution against the design specification.

### *Criterion B Plan*

Students design the product/solution. During each unit of study, they:

- Generate several feasible designs that meet the design specification
- Evaluate the designs against the design specification
- Select one design and justify its choice

Students plan the product/solution. During each unit of study, they must:

- Construct a plan to create the product/solution that has a series of logical steps
- Construct a plan to create the product/solution that makes effective use of resources and time
- Evaluate the plan and justify any modifications to the design
- Select one design and justify its choice

Students plan the product/solution. During each unit of study, they must:

- Construct a plan to create the product/solution that has a series of logical steps
- Construct a plan to create the product/solution that makes effective use of resources and time
- Evaluate the plan and justify any modifications to the design

### Criterion C Create

Students use appropriate techniques and equipment. During each unit of study, they must:

- Use a range of appropriate techniques and equipment competently
- Ensure a safe working environment for themselves and others.

Students follow the plan. During each unit of study, they must:

- Follow the plan to produce the product/solution
- Evaluate the plan and justify any changes to the plan (when necessary)

Students create the product/solution. During each unit of study, they must:

- Create a product/solution of appropriate quality.

### Criterion D Evaluate

Students evaluate the product/solution. At the end of each unit of study, students will demonstrate their ability to:

- Carry out tests to evaluate the product/solution against the design specification
- Evaluate the success of the product/solution in an objective manner based on testing, their own views and the views of the intended user
- Evaluate the impact of the product/solution on individuals and on society
- Explain how the product/solution could be improved

Students will evaluate their use of the design cycle. At the end of each unit of study, they should be able to:

- Evaluate their performance at each stage of the design cycle
- Suggest ways in which their performance could be improved.

Criterion E Attitudes in technology

This objective goes beyond technology and refers to encouraging attitudes and dispositions that will contribute to students' development as caring and responsible individuals and members of society. This objective is set in the context of the technology class (and it is also present in MYP sciences as "Attitudes in science") but will pervade other subjects and life outside school. It includes notions of safety and responsibility when working in technology as well as respect for and collaboration with others and their shared environment. During the course, students should:

- Carry out units of work in technology using materials and techniques safely and responsibly
- Work effectively as members of a team, collaborating, acknowledging and supporting the views of others
- Provide evidence of personal engagement with the subject (motivation, independence, general positive attitude) when working in technology

## Grade Seven Health and Social Education

### Overview

The Health and Social Education program at Riverstone International School's Middle School is a required course that is offered one semester at each grade level. The program is designed to address the social, emotional, and physical developmental needs of the early adolescent learner. While the curriculum of the program follows a progression of topics, the program is also flexible to meet the individual needs of the students. Work for the course is project-based, however class activities include lectures and note taking, readings and discussions, and weekly research assignments.

### Objectives

The focus of Grade Seven Health and Social Education is Health and Nutrition.

Throughout the course, students will:

- Develop a greater understanding of the qualities and implications of healthy nutrition and a healthy lifestyle
- Develop a series of strategies for staying physically fit
- Develop a series of techniques and strategies for monitoring one's personal health

### Assessment

As an MYP subject area, Health and Social Education will be assessed as an Area of Interaction and will be graded against the appropriate criteria in the subjects of PE, Science, Humanities and Language B.