

Experiencing
the future, today.



Lower School Program Guide

We develop skills and
character for futures rich
with promise.

The one hundred languages of the child

The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.

A hundred always a hundred
ways of listening
of marveling of loving
a hundred joys
for singing and understanding
a hundred worlds
to discover
a hundred worlds
to invent
a hundred worlds
to dream.

The child has
a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)
but they steal ninety-nine.
The school and the culture
separate the head from the body.

They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not to speak
to understand without joy
to love and to marvel
only at Easter and Christmas.

They tell the child:
to discover the world already there
and of the hundred
they steal ninety-nine.

They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy
science and imagination
sky and earth
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.
And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.

The child says:
No way. The hundred is there.

Loris Malaguzzi (translated by Lella
Gandini)

The American International School of Zagreb

The American International School of Zagreb is a mission and vision-driven school. We are a professional learning community where our success is achieved through collaboration and interdependence; we work together as a community to achieve the best results possible for our students. The AISZ Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for our journey to enhanced success, confident in our purpose of nurturing each child's growth and learning.

OUR MISSION

We develop skills and character for futures rich with promise.

We believe in all of our students and that the futures our students have before them are filled with remarkable opportunities. Learning at American International School of Zagreb prepares capable and empathetic students with the skills competency and character to be equipped for an ever-changing and dynamic future where the large majority of employment opportunities have yet to be invented. We believe that the attributes of a successful international citizen are empathy, the making of ethical choices, a service-minded attitude to others, a concern for our environment and resources, a commitment to integrity and the personal resilience to learn from disappointments and failures.

OUR VISION

Experiencing the future, today.

The American International School of Zagreb offers an academically rigorous international curriculum from Early Childhood to Grade 12. Our PreKindergarten and Kindergarten program is inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, Grades 1 to 10 are anchored in the framework of the Common Ground Collaborative, and Grades 11 and 12 consistently achieve above world-average results in the International Baccalaureate Diploma. We offer an accredited, coherent, balanced, and personally engaging learning environment based on current research and best practice. Our learning engagements are future-oriented, focused on acquiring the interdisciplinary skills and character dispositions necessary for a successful future in the age of innovation. We look to what is to come and ground our actions on the belief that learning is for now as well as the future. We also believe that balance and fun should always be present.

OUR LEARNING PRINCIPLES

We subscribe to the Common Ground Collaborative principles:

- We can all learn and have a right to do so.
- Learning is a personal and social, as well as an emotional and cognitive activity.
- Learning environments have a significant impact on our learning.
- Transfer of learning happens best in rich and relevant contexts.
- Common learning cultures need to construct common meaning through a common learning language.

As part of this growing professional network we feel it is necessary to define learning first and as such believe learning is a process that leads to a sustained and demonstrable consolidation or extension of conceptual understanding, competencies, and character. (CGC)



AISZ STUDENT IMPACT INITIATIVES

Attention to the culture of the school is necessary to facilitate the implementation of any strategic technical change. The nature of this culture can be conceptualized as having three significant Strategic Student Impact Goals.

- Every student will become an expert in his or her learning.
- Every student is known, advocated for, and supported.
- Every student personalizes learning and pursues dreams.

Through a continuous commitment to improvement, and the effective use of data, we can monitor the progress of our work and therefore measure our own culture, its effect, and the success of our Strategic Plan.

AISZ KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The Key Strategic Initiatives outline steps to advance our school toward its future-focused, inclusive, student-centered destiny.

- A school community united around our Mission and Vision and more connected to the local and global community.
- Create learning opportunities indicative of a concept school for the future.
- Facilitate each students' growth through personal, self-directed, authentic learning.
- Become a place that provides opportunities for emotional, physical, and psychological balance.

To achieve these initiatives, we realize that our school systems must be optimized and reflect the best of professional practice. We also need to increase the flexible utilization of space, time and technology.

AISZ LEARNING ECOSYSTEM

In the AISZ Learning Ecosystem, each of the three rings around the vision we hold for our students can rotate in either direction allowing the Eight Human Commonalities to be approached through any subject discipline and within any of the three or more cultural domains of **Expertise**, **Extraordinary Care**, and **The Imagined**.



Learning in the Lower School

A Message from the Lower School Principal

Dear AISZ Community,

Welcome to the Lower School where children begin their journey toward becoming joyful, lifelong learners. Since the school's founding in 1966, our community has come together to educate children in an environment that challenges and inspires. We are constantly reflecting upon how we teach and why we teach the way we do with the same spirit and passion that we hope to convey to our students.

Our talented faculty and staff are passionate about creating authentic learning experiences that are child-centered and personalized. Guided by what research tells us are best practices, we prepare Lower School students through a rich, inquiry-based program from PreKindergarten for three- and four-year-olds through Grade 5. Teachers guide student inquiry through dynamic lessons that are experiential and child-centered, and they empower students to problem-solve across subject areas.

The Lower School curriculum is standards-based and delivered using best instructional practices with research-based resources. At the foundation of our program are the core academic areas of literacy (reading, writing, and phonics), mathematics, science, and social studies. We believe that art, counseling, music, and physical education are also vital to educating the whole child. We embrace the well-known benefits of language learning by providing instruction in Croatian and a choice of French or German. In addition, students have access to an extensive library collection and a range of technology devices.

We recognize that academic, social, and emotional growth are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Traction in a subject area takes place when children trust their teachers and classmates and when they feel free to take intellectual and social risks—sharing a poem with the class, asking a fellow learner for help with a math problem, or standing up for someone who is being treated unfairly. Likewise, the greatest social and emotional growth takes place when children feel intellectually capable and engaged by a rich and challenging curriculum.

As an educator and as a parent, I believe in the power of inculcating in our children a sense of responsibility for the world around them and for each other; it is their leadership and stewardship that will shape the future. Now more than ever we have a responsibility to educate and develop the global citizens of tomorrow. With our community's international outlook and rich, cultural diversity, we are well-positioned to prepare our children for this role. I invite you to join us on this journey where learning knows no bounds.

Here we go!



Tamara Black
Lower School Principal

Learning Assets



AS AN INQUIRY-BASED SCHOOL, WE ASPIRE TO DEVELOP LEARNING ASSETS AS DESCRIBED BY KATH MURDOCH

We are researchers. We can formulate questions and locate and use a wide range of sources and techniques to investigate problems, interests and issues. We think critically about the information we gather and we are careful to acknowledge our sources.

We are thinkers. We can think logically, creatively and reflectively. We think about how we use our thinking and have different strategies for making our thinking visible to others. We remain open-minded and know that our thinking changes as we learn.

We are collaborators. We can work with others on shared goals, questions and challenges. We know how to be a constructive part of a team, to use different roles for different tasks and to actively listen to and respect other people's views. We understand how our behavior affects others.

We are self-managers. We can learn independently and can make wise decisions about our learning. We know ourselves as learners and can set and work towards personal goals. We know we can continually improve as learners.

We are communicators. We can communicate ideas confidently in different ways and for different purposes. We listen thoughtfully to what others communicate to us. We can adapt our communication style to different contexts.

Learning Standards

In the Lower School, we use standards frameworks provided by groups such as American Education Reaches Out (AERO), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS), and the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) to guide curriculum development. The learning standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

AERO is a project supported by the U.S. State Department's Office of Overseas Schools and the Overseas Schools Advisory Council to assist schools in developing and implementing standards-based curricula. This effort is in alignment with research-based trends in the development of curriculum worldwide, and particularly with the Common Core initiative in the U.S.

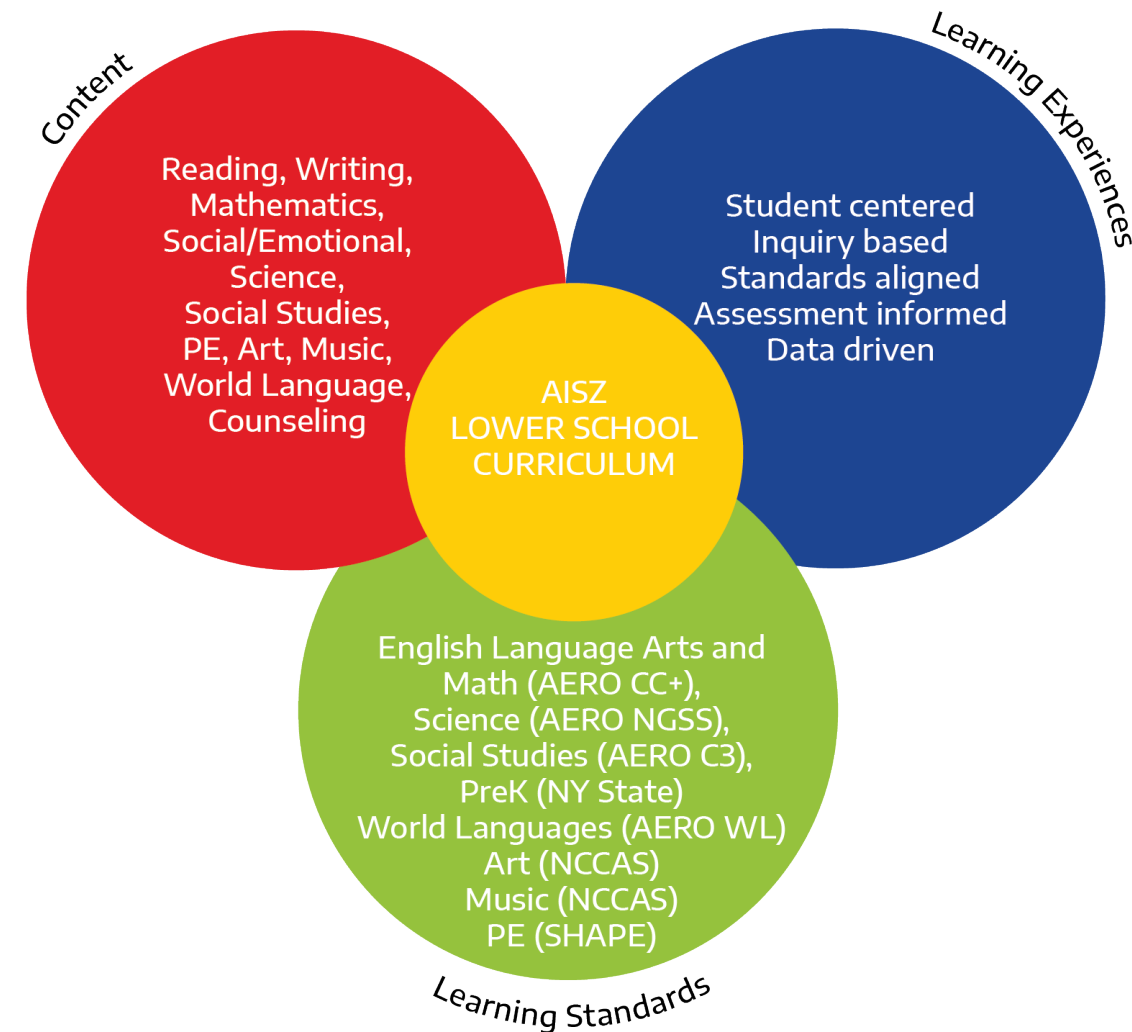
Lower School Curriculum

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

From recognizing and naming letters to selecting reading material based on their own interests, students in the Lower School are immersed in a world of English language early and often. Our students develop an appreciation and respect for literature along with a love for reading. Through a balanced literacy approach that includes word study, guided reading, and book groups, students build reading comprehension skills while exploring a variety of genres. Using the workshop framework, students develop their writing voices as they learn to articulate a point of view and clearly construct arguments to support a specific perspective. The foundation for our literacy approach comes from the *Units of Study* for phonics, reading, and writing that was developed at Teachers College, Columbia University and is guided by the AERO Common Core Plus standards.

MATHEMATICS

In the Lower School, students develop a deeper understanding of math and powerful, life-long habits of mind such as perseverance, creative thinking, and the ability to express and defend their reasoning. Their mathematical thinking and numerical reasoning expands as they engage in activities that build physical knowledge, social (conventional) knowledge, and logico-mathematical knowledge. Students explore multiple ways of approaching challenging problems to build problem-solving skills, computational fluency, application of math skills to real-life problems, and effective communication of mathematical thinking. The core of our mathematics curriculum is based in the *Everyday Math* program that was developed at the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project and is guided by the AERO Common Core Plus standards.



SCIENCE

Hands-on exploration and thinking like scientists engages students' interest in the physical, life, and earth sciences. The Lower School science program is grounded in content and skills using the AERO/Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) framework. The inquiry-based curriculum has at its foundation the scientific method and active investigation. Students use their natural curiosity as a guide to observing, questioning, inferring, predicting, measuring, communicating, and classifying.

In Fall 2021 we will begin implementing the Full Option Science System (FOSS) as the primary resource for science instruction from PreK to Grade 5. FOSS is a research-based science curriculum developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, Berkeley. Many science activities are integrated by classroom teachers into units that involve math, social studies, reading, writing, and home connections. Focused science learning takes place during Exploration and Discovery, which is dedicated time that supports integrated units and project-based learning that crosses subject areas.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Lower School social studies curriculum provides students with opportunities to develop understanding, participate in, and make informed decisions about their world. It is based upon the AERO/C3 standards and it aligns to the AERO/Common Core Plus Standards for English Language Arts. Students develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills through an inquiry-based approach to history, culture, real-world issues, and geography.

Social studies content allows young learners to explain relationships with other people, to institutions, and to the environment, and equips them with knowledge and understanding of the past. It provides them with skills for productive problem solving and decision making as well as for assessing issues and making thoughtful value judgments. Above all, it integrates these skills and understandings into a framework for responsible citizen participation locally, nationally, and globally. While social studies learning happens across the curriculum, an emphasis is placed on the subject during Exploration and Discovery, which is dedicated time that supports integrated units and project-based learning.

CROATIAN LANGUAGE ARTS

In the Lower School, students in Grades 1-5 who speak Croatian fluently participate in Croatian Language Arts classes. The Croatian Language Arts program follows the English Language Arts methodology in reading and writing with adapted AERO/Common Core Plus standards.

The Croatian Language Arts program provides Croatian speaking students with opportunities for personal and intellectual growth in their native language through language activities (speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing and presenting) and authentic learning experiences. Developing literacy in Croatian Language Arts classes also fosters students' transferable skills (learning assets) that are necessary for effective performance in other subjects and life in general.

ART

From a young age, children seek opportunities to express themselves through visual arts. In the Lower School, we encourage this self-expression and see it as a key component of educating the whole child. With the National Core Arts Standards providing the foundation, students experience a variety of media in art class including ceramics, drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and textiles. In addition, students are exposed to art of other cultures, works of famous artists, and basic elements and principles of art and design.

MUSIC

Ask a class of kindergartners who among them are singers, and they will all enthusiastically raise their hands. At AISZ, we believe that music is an integral part of the Lower School program across all ages, and it is an area in which we want to nurture students' appreciation and enjoyment. With an emphasis on the Orff approach to music and the National Core Arts Standards providing the foundation, students learn about and discover music through active music-making that engages the mind and body through playing, singing, and moving as they learn to create, perform, respond, and connect to music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education in the Lower School is based on SHAPE America standards and is designed to develop motor skills, knowledge, and behaviors for active living; physical fitness; sportspersonship; self-efficacy; and emotional intelligence. The overarching goal is to develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.

WORLD LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROGRAM

World languages play an important role in students' lives in the Lower School as both a communication tool and a gateway to understanding another culture's. All students in Grades 1-5 elect to take either **French** or **German** acquisition class. In Grades 3-5, students who do not already speak Croatian fluently take **Croatian** language acquisition classes. Based upon individual student need, world language class time might be reserved for learning support or English as an Additional Language support.

French, German and Croatian language acquisition classes follow a spiral and sequential curriculum with specific language level learning outcomes, and have the AERO World Language Standards and Benchmarks as a foundation for learning.

AISZ is one of the 16 international schools chosen to participate in the AERO Model WL Curriculum Project. The primary objective of the program is to develop the four communication skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The units of study are designed around four themes: Me and My Family, My School, My Community, and The World Around Me. Various learning experiences such as games, songs, using interactive technology sites, and role-playing are incorporated within each unit of study to reinforce and expand communication skills. Units of study may change during the school year to reflect the needs of a specific class. To ensure a smooth transition between divisions, the Lower School and Upper School Language Acquisition curricula are aligned sequentially.

Student Support Services

Caring for the academic, emotional, moral, and physical learning needs of a group of children is complex. For this reason, AISZ is committed to a collaborative and holistic team approach to problem identification and the design of interventions that will enhance student learning. The broad areas of support provided include **English as an additional language** (EAL), **learning support**, and **counseling**. In the Lower School, the counselor leads weekly lessons in homeroom classes that follow the International School Counselor Association (ISCA) standards.

The Student Support Team (SST) successfully serves a managed number of students representing a range of learning differences with mild, moderate, and exceptionally able learning profiles. Service delivery is based on a tiered Response to Intervention (RTI) approach through push-in or pull-out, small group, or individualized support. The SST monitors progress using classroom and standardized data points.

When a current student is newly identified as potentially benefitting from support, an intervention plan is developed. At times, a referral for a full educational evaluation may be made with the goal of helping the student successfully access the AISZ program through structured support services.

AISZ strives to service students' needs to the extent of the resources available. At this time, the school is unable to diagnose students or to provide long-term remediation and therapeutic treatment plans. If a child's needs reach beyond our service capabilities, the school may refer for outside educational evaluations, remediation programs, consultations, and therapeutic services at extra cost to the family, or may recommend a different learning program altogether.

Assessing and Reporting Student Progress

ASSESSMENT

Teachers observe, question, and listen as they gather, analyze, and interpret evidence to make informed decisions to enhance student learning. These informal assessments happen every day in classrooms. More formal assessments also help teachers learn about each student's progress.

In the Lower School, teachers use a combination of both internal and external assessments at specific times of the year to inform how students are learning and whether learning goals are being met. We refer to internal assessments as benchmark assessments, and they take place at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. Some of the benchmark assessments that are administered include:

- Developmental Reading Assessment Second Edition (DRA2) to assess student reading level and to observe, record, and evaluate changes in performance.
- *Units of Study* writing performance assessment with goals tied to learning progressions that are aligned with standards.
- *Units of Study* phonics performance assessment for students in Kindergarten to Grade 2 to determine level of phonological awareness, phonic blending, and spelling.
- *Words Their Way* inventory to determine developmental spelling stage.
- *Everyday Math* benchmark assessments with goals aligned to standards.

In addition, we administer the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth as an external assessment beginning with Grade 2. The MAP Growth measures student knowledge and skills in reading, mathematics, and language usage. We administer it twice each year, once in the fall and again in the spring to measure student academic growth and to personalize learning for each child.

REPORTING

In the AISZ Lower School we use a standards-based grading and reporting system for students from Grades 1 to 5. A standards-based report card lists the most important skills students should learn in each subject at a particular grade level. Instead of letter grades, students receive marks that show how well they have mastered the skills. The subject-area marks do not take into account traits such as effort, attitude, or work habits. Instead, each semester students reflect upon their individual progress with the Learning Assets, and this information is included on the report card.

The Lower School report card represents how well a student is performing at the time of reporting. We believe this information will be meaningful to students and families as they identify and reflect on learning successes and guide improvement.

Students in PreKindergarten and Kindergarten do not receive report cards. Instead, teachers are in frequent communication with parents regarding their child's progress. If a PreK or K student withdraws from AISZ, they will receive a formal leaving letter to take to their next school that documents their progress, skill development, and next steps for learning.

CONFERENCES

We encourage and welcome ongoing communication between school and home to support student learning. Teachers and parents may request a meeting at any time to discuss a child's progress and school experience. We also identify two times a year (fall and spring) for more structured meetings in the form of conferences for all students from PreK to Grade 5 that involve the child, parents, and teacher.

Fall Goal-Setting Conferences: In the fall we host goal-setting conferences. Prior to the meeting, students work with their teachers to create goals that are meaningful, relevant, and developmentally appropriate. Students then share their goals during the conference and discuss with their parents and teacher the support they might need to achieve the goals. These goal-setting conferences promote character learning traits including resilience and reflectiveness, and they encourage students to set high-quality goals for themselves and strive for personal achievement.

Spring Student-Led Conferences: In the spring we host student-led conferences that allow students to be the leaders of their own learning. During the meeting the student shares their work and their reflections upon their work, and they discuss their progress toward their goals with their parents and teacher. The student-led conferences promote a school culture of engagement and growth, and expect students to play an active role in their learning.



Learning Beyond the Classroom

FIELD TRIPS AND UNITY TRIPS

Taking learning beyond the classrooms enhances the instructional program at AISZ. With Bundek Park directly across from our campus, we often have classes exploring the expanse of the park as an outdoor classroom, for physical activities such as running and bicycle riding, or just to enjoy some fresh air. In addition, teachers are encouraged to plan field trips in and around Zagreb that are of particular interest and relevance, and that further develop Croatian cultural awareness.

Students in Grade 4 and 5 participate in a Unity Trip each spring that supports the AISZ goal of developing successful international citizens and connecting students to the natural world. Most recently the students participated in a three day, two night trip to Lake Bohinj in Slovenia. During their time together, students participated in activities that helped them learn about themselves as learners, become more independent and confident, and create memories that they will share for the rest of their lives.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (ASAs)

AISZ offers a wide variety of co-curricular and student-selected after school activities that are integral to our educational philosophy. We encourage students to participate in a range of experiences that are personally interesting and rewarding. Activities are offered by both AISZ faculty and staff and third party providers. Classes offered previously have included activities such as yoga, robotics, arts and crafts, dance, tennis, choir, and equestrian sports.

HOMEWORK

In the Lower School, students actively engage in rich, purposeful learning throughout the school day. After school, we believe children benefit from spending quality time with their families, participating in unstructured play, and exploring their curiosities and passions.

We expect all Lower School students to read at home at least 20 minutes every day. Research has shown that reading can have the single greatest impact on student achievement because it expands vocabulary and broadens knowledge across curricular disciplines.

When classroom learning has natural extensions to home, the teacher may assign homework that is relevant, meaningful, and purposeful. In addition, when it benefits an individual student, the teacher may assign homework as part of a plan to address specific learning needs or to reinforce a concept or skill.

Sample of Daily Class Schedules

KINDERGARTEN	Morning Meeting	8:00 a.m.
	Group Learning	8:15 a.m.
	Recess and Snack	9:00 a.m.
	Group Learning	9:50 a.m.
	Lunch	11:00 a.m.
	Recess	11:30 a.m.
	Physical Education	12:00 p.m.
	Group Learning	12:30 p.m.
	Atelier Art	1:00 p.m.
	Snack	2:00 p.m.
	Group learning	2:20 p.m.
	Closing Circle	3:00 p.m.
GRADE 4	Morning Meeting	8:00 a.m.
	English Language Arts	8:15 a.m.
	Recess and Snack	10:00 a.m.
	Mathematics	10:30 a.m.
	Lunch	11:45 a.m.
	Recess	12:15 p.m.
	Music and Performing Arts	12:45 p.m.
	World Language (French, German, or EAL)	1:30 p.m.
	Exploration and Discovery	2:15 p.m.
	Closing Circle	3:00 p.m.
Dismissal	3:15 p.m.	

*** These schedules are for illustrative purposes only. Your child's class schedule may differ.**

Learning Across the Grades



PREKINDERGARTEN

THE JOY AND WONDER OF LEARNING

Prekindergarteners approach learning as intrepid explorers, filled with joy and unbridled curiosity. They learn with their whole bodies as they touch, taste, smell, listen, watch, and wonder about the world around them. At AISZ, our prekindergarten program offers a safe and nurturing environment that honors this special time in a child's development while inspiring a life-long love of learning.

The AISZ prekindergarten program is inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education that originated in Italy as a result of a movement towards progressive and cooperative early childhood education. It is based upon the belief that children are full of powerful potential, and that creativity and knowledge needs to be brought out using their natural curiosity as opposed to being achieved by filling in the blanks with information.

Fundamental to our prekindergarten program is an emphasis on social and emotional development. Along with developing concepts of themselves and their place in the world, we promote the children's development of self-esteem and confidence both inside and outside of school. In classrooms, individualized attention is given to each child in order to make sure they are on track with their development and growth. Our teachers actively listen, observe, and document students' growth with photos and descriptions of their learning journey.

Our program is built upon an emergent, inquiry-based curriculum that is flexible and emerges from children's ideas, thoughts, questions, and observations. We use carefully curated and developmentally-appropriate resources such as *Everyday Math* and *Handwriting Without Tears*, and the curriculum is aligned with the New York State Prekindergarten Learning Standards. These standards seamlessly integrate with those used from kindergarten through Grade 5.

Our qualified teachers ensure that children are offered broad learning experiences that include:

- Art
- Block Play
- Dramatic Play
- Literacy
- Music
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Sand & Water Exploration
- Science & Nature

Integral to our early childhood approach are specialist classes that offer learning opportunities in art, music & movement, library, and fitness. Children are exposed to technology throughout their prekindergarten experience, which we believe is critical in a future-oriented educational setting. In true Reggio fashion we have an atelier, which is a room dedicated to early childhood art and led by an atelierista (a specialized arts teacher). Our goal is to provide children with many ways to express themselves.

The physical environment is crucial to the AISZ early childhood program, and the Reggio Emilia teaching philosophy refers to the environment as a child's third teacher. Our early learning classrooms share a center piazza and kitchen facilities, and they have direct access to the playground areas with outside-opening doors in each classroom. The classrooms include spaces for large and small group activities. Natural light plays an important role in the environment, as does the use of mirrors, photographs, and the display of children's work accompanied by transcriptions of their discussions.

Most importantly, we want our youngest learners to view school as a place to experiment, create, construct, and connect as they develop a growth mindset about the world around them and their place in it.



KINDERGARTEN

DEVELOPING A PASSION FOR LEARNING

Our child-centered kindergarten means children are active participants in the learning process. Inspired by the principles of the Reggio Emilia approach, the focus is on learning about the world through play and investigation, both indoors and out. Students engage in self-selected and guided inquiry through intentionally-designed learning provocations. Free choice play centers provide opportunities for children to design, create, role play, take risks, and interact with adults and peers.

The standards-aligned curriculum begins with a balanced literacy program to support children’s oral language and emerging literacy skills. Shared reading activities develop concepts of print and a love of reading, while shared drawing and writing develop concepts of storytelling. Students’ beginning mathematics skills and conceptual understanding are developed through hands-on activities using a rich range of resources.

Social, emotional, and physical growth is equally as important as cognitive growth. Children take responsibility for their actions, solve problems, and develop confidence. At AISZ, our goal is to inspire our kindergarteners to naturally build a passion for learning, ultimately creating a lifelong love of learning.



KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM DETAILS

SUBJECT	RESOURCES	UNITS
Literacy (Reading, Writing, Phonics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Units of Study</i> for Reading, Writing, and Phonics (Teachers College, Columbia University) • <i>Handwriting Without Tears</i> • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: We are Readers; Super Powers: Reading with Print Strategies and Sight Word Power; Bigger Books, Bigger Reading Muscles; Becoming Avid Readers • Writing: Launching the Writing Workshop; Writing for Readers; How-to Books: Writing to Teach Others; Persuasive Writing of All Kinds: Using Words to Make a Change • Phonics: Making Friends with Letters, Word Scientists, Word-Part Power, Vowel Power, Playing with Phonics
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everyday Mathematics</i> (University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	Foundational Counting Principles and Skills; Naming and Describing Shapes; Counting; Reading, Writing, and Using Numbers; Making Comparisons; Advanced Counting; Composing/Decomposing Numbers and Shapes; Measurable Attributes; Exploring Teen Numbers; Exploring 3-D Shapes and Measurable Attributes; Representing Addition and Subtraction; Addition and Subtraction Strategies; Expanding Number Sense; Numbers that Add to 10; Early Fact Fluency; Measurement and Spatial Thinking;
Science	• AERO (NGSS) Standards	Forces and Motion; Earth’s Systems: Weather; Animals, Plants, and Their Environment
Social Studies	• AERO (C3) Standards	All About Me; My Classroom, Our Classroom
Art	• NCCAS Visual Arts Standards	Lines; Color/Value, Shapes/Form, Patterns and Introduction to Texture; Space
Music	• Orff instruments • NCCAS Music Standards	Songs, Rhythms, and Motions; Music and Movement Explorations; Story Songs; Rhythmic Ostinatos
Physical Education and Health	• SHAPE America Standards	Spatial and Body Awareness; Target Games; Chasing and Fleeing Games; Ball Skills; Invasion Games; Obstacle Course; Net Games
Counseling	• Responsive Classroom • Second Step • ISCA Standards	Me, Inside & Out; Staying Safe; When Things Get Tough; Friendships and Problem-Solving
Field Trips	• Integrated across the curriculum	Previous trips have included: Bundek Park, Zagreb Botanical Garden

* The units listed are subject to change during the course of the academic year

GRADE 1

A YEAR FILLED WITH FIRSTS AND GREAT EXPECTATIONS

A first grade classroom is a busy, noisy place with a lot of talking, humming, whistling, and bustling about. Students are often in a hurry and rush to be first from finishing work to lining up for recess. They love asking questions and they develop deep understanding of concepts through discovery and hands-on activities.

The Grade 1 curriculum takes an academic leap from kindergarten. Learning becomes more organized and routine-based, with a lot of room for exploration. Students' interests are incorporated and provide a rich backdrop upon which grade level skills are learned. The emphasis on academics becomes more robust, and children's literacy and mathematical skills grow by leaps and bounds as they learn by doing and are encouraged to take risks and make mistakes.

The importance of a child's friends now rivals that of parents and teachers in their social development. Children begin to approach the world more logically and can begin to take others' perspectives as they consider rules more objectively. The Grade 1 year is marked by eagerness, curiosity, imagination, and enthusiasm that results in remarkable growth and development.



GRADE 1 CURRICULUM DETAILS		
SUBJECT	RESOURCES	UNITS
Literacy (Reading, Writing, Phonics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Units of Study</i> for Reading, Writing, and Phonics (Teachers College, Columbia University) • <i>Handwriting Without Tears</i> • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Building Good Reading Habits; Learning About the World: Reading Nonfiction; Readers Have Big Jobs to Do: Fluency, Phonics, and Comprehension; Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons: A Study of Story Elements; Word Detectives: Strategies for Using High-Frequency Words and for Decoding • Writing: Small Moments: Writing with Focus, Detail and Dialogus; Nonfiction Chapter Books; Writing Reviews; From Scenes to Series: Writing Fiction • Phonics: Talking and Thinking About Letters; The Mystery of the Silent e; From Tip to Tail: Reading Across Words; Word Builders: Using Vowel Teams to Build Big Words; Marvelous Bloopers: Learning Through Wise Mistakes
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everyday Mathematics</i> (University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	Counting, Introducing Addition; Number Stories; Length; Addition Facts; Place Value and Comparisons; Addition Fact Strategies; Subtraction Fact Strategies; Attributes of Shapes; Geometry; Two Digit Addition and Subtraction
Science	• AERO (NGSS) Standards	Light and Sound, Patterns in the Sky, Plants and Animals
Social Studies	• AERO (C3) Standards	School Community, Family Community, Neighborhood Community
Croatian Language Arts	• AERO Common Core Plus Standards	Alphabet and Sounds Around Us; Our Fall Adventures; Winter Joy; Spring Discoveries; Stronger Together
World Languages Acquisition (French, German)	• AERO World Languages Standards	French: Bienvenue!; Culture, célébrations et traditions francophones; À l'école; Le monde des animaux; Ma famille German: Willkommen! Wer bist du?; Deutsche Kultur, Traditionen und Feste; In der Schule; Familie und Freunde; Wir spielen
Art	• NCCAS Visual Arts Standards	Line; Shape; Form; Texture; Space; Color and Value
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orff instruments • NCCAS Music Standards 	Sing Me A So-La-Mi, Party Play Songs and Games, Taking Orff with Instruments
Physical Education and Health	• SHAPE America Standards	Track and Field, Space and Body Awareness, Ball Skills, Wall Climbing, Balloon Volleyball, Dance
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive Classroom • Second Step • ISCA Standards 	Me, Inside & Out; Staying Safe; When Things Get Tough; Friendships and Problem-Solving
Field Trips	• Integrated across the curriculum	Previous trips have included: Dumovec Dog Shelter, Technical Museum Planetarium and Observatory

GRADE 2

MAKING SENSE OF THE BIGGER WORLD

Second graders are eager students, ready to learn as much as they can. Their love of order, facts, and safety give them a structure for making sense of the bigger world. Therefore, the second grade curriculum challenges children to take their academic skills and achievement further than ever before. While they have developed skills and stamina that allow them to work more independently, they still look to their teacher for support.

At this age, children’s thinking is primarily based on actual physical objects, and therefore they like to collect, organize, and sort things. They also enjoy reading series chapter books, collecting new stories with each book that’s read. While children are beginning to reason logically and organize their thoughts coherently, they tend to have difficulty with abstract reasoning and view the world in very black-and-white terms. They see things as right or wrong, wonderful or terrible, with very little middle ground.

Grade 2 is an exciting year that has at its foundation meaningful relationships for the children and the people in their lives. Friendships are important and students enjoy collaborating with their classmates. Just as important is developing a trusting relationship with their teachers to whom they look for care and approval.



GRADE 2 CURRICULUM DETAILS		
SUBJECT	RESOURCES	UNITS
Literacy (Reading, Writing, Phonics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Units of Study</i> for Reading, Writing, and Phonics (Teachers College, Columbia University) • <i>Handwriting Without Tears</i> • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Second Grade Reading Growth Spurt; Becoming Experts: Reading Nonfiction; Bigger Books Mean Amping Up Reading Power; Reading Nonfiction Cover to Cover: Nonfiction Book Clubs; Series Book Clubs • Writing: Lessons from the Masters: Improving Narrative Craft; Lap Reports and Science Books; Writing About Reading; Poetry: Big Thoughts in Small Packages • Phonics: Growing Into Second Grade Phonics; Powerful Patterns: Using Rimes and Rhyming to Build Fluency; Big Words Take Big Resolve; Tackling Troublemakers, Once and for All; Word Builders; Word Collectors; Yes They Can: Exploring Parts of Speech
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everyday Mathematics</i> (University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	Establishing Routines; Fact Strategies; More Fact Strategies; Place Value and Measurement; Addition and Subtraction; Whole Number Operations; Number Stories; Whole Number Operations; Measurement and Data; Geometry and Arrays; Equal Shares; Whole Number Operations
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO (NGSS) Standards 	Habitats and Interdependence; Matter and its Properties; Water: An Essential Resource
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO (C3) Standards 	Identity and Friendship in the Classroom; Expressing Ideas and Feelings
Croatian Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	The Magical Words; The Magnificent Nature; The Magic in Fairy Tales; The Effort Pays Off; Water Experts
World Languages Acquisition (French, German)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO World Languages Standards 	French: Vive la rentrée!; Culture, célébrations et traditions francophones; Qu'est-ce que tu sais faire ?; Tu habites où?; Le petit déjeuner est important German: Hallo! Das sind wir!; Deutsche Kultur, Traditionen und Feste; Die Schule beginnt; Meine Traumschule; Wie kommst du zur Schule?
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCCAS Visual Arts Standards 	Mosaic Self-Portraits; Who We Are: Identity and Friendship; Op Art; The Geometry and Balance of Paul Klee; Architecture and Design: Building a House; Still Life with Emphasis and Contrast
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orff instruments • NCCAS Music Standards 	Mallet Madness; Sandscapes; Patterns in Dance; The Story Box
Physical Education and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHAPE America Standards 	Track and Field, Chasing and Fleeing Games; Ball Skills; Pickleball; Striking & Fielding Games; Floor Hockey; Volleyball; Basketball; Dance Unit; Wall Climbing; Invasion Games
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive Classroom • Second Step • ISCA Standards 	Me, Inside & Out; Staying Safe; When Things Get Tough; Friendships and Problem-Solving
Field Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated across the curriculum 	Previous trips have included: Water treatment plant, Natural History Museum, Modern Art Museum

GRADE 3

SHIFTING FROM LEARNING TO READ TO READING TO LEARN

Walking into a Grade 3 classroom, one quickly notices the enthusiasm and eagerness students have for the adventure of learning. By and large, students during this year are easygoing and enjoy being around each other. They love to laugh and make their classmates (and teachers) laugh as they share jokes and funny stories. While third graders are beginning to understand that not everything is black-and-white, they still feel a strong sense of morality and justice, and they highly value fairness in their world.

Third grade is a pivotal year in a child’s academic career. The emphasis on literacy skills shifts from learning to read to reading to learn. Students engage in meaningful discussions about literature, which in turn develops vocabulary and conversational skills and deepens their understanding of the material. Math during this year provides the challenge of mastering computational skills coupled with opportunities to further and more deeply develop conceptual understanding through rich conversations and hands-on activities. While group work plays an important role in third grade, students also work independently as they increasingly become more self-motivated and self-directed learners.



GRADE 3 CURRICULUM DETAILS

SUBJECT	RESOURCES	UNITS
Literacy (Reading, Writing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Units of Study</i> for Reading and Writing (Teachers College, Columbia University) • <i>Words Their Way</i> • <i>Handwriting Without Tears</i> • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Building a Reading Life, Reading to Learn: Grasping Main Ideas and Text Structures, Character Studies, Research Clubs: Elephants, Penguins, and Frogs, Oh My! (To be added in 2021-22: Mystery: Foundational Skills in Disguise) • Writing: Crafting True Stories; The Art of Information Writing; Changing the World: Persuasive Speeches, Petitions, and Editorials; Once Upon a Time: Adapting and Writing Fairy Tales; Writing About Research
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everyday Mathematics</i> (University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	Math Tools; Time; Multiplication; Number Stories; Arrays; Operations; Measurement; Geometry; Fractions (Representing and Equivalent); Multiplication Strategies; More Operations; Fractions (Comparing); Multiplication and Division; Multidigit Operations
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO (NGSS) Standards 	Interdependent Relationships in Organisms; Forces in Motion
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO (C3) Standards 	Rights and Responsibilities; Diversity
Croatian Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	The Power of Imagination; The Adventures of the Brave Ones; The Magic of Collaboration; Lessons Learned from Animals
World Languages Acquisition (Croatian, French, German)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERO World Languages Standards 	Croatian Acquisition: Greetings and Introductions; My Classroom; My Family; The World Around Me French: Et c'est parti!; Culture, célébrations et traditions francophones; Dans notre salle de classe; Ma garde-robe; Chez moi; Allez! C'est l'heure! German: Wir sind wieder zurück!; Deutsche Kultur, Traditionen und Feste; Wir stellen uns vor; Zu Hause; Guten Appetit!
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCCAS Visual Arts Standards 	Symmetry and Balance: Self-Portraits; Colors and Patterns: Circular Weaving; Form: Papier-Mache Props; Design: Comic Strips; Color and Value Still Life; Animals and Their Habitats Landscapes
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orff instruments • NCCAS Music Standards 	Stomp Boom Blast; The Puppeteers; Merry Recorder Melodies; Harmony in the House
Physical Education and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHAPE America Standards 	Track and Field, Handball; Pickleball; Striking & Fielding Games; Floor Hockey; Basketball; Ice Skating; Volleyball; Dance; Tumbling; Invasion Games; Tennis
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive Classroom • Second Step • ISCA Standards 	Who Am I?; Staying Safe; Managing in a Social World; Looking Ahead; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
Field Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated across the curriculum 	Previous trips have included: Croatian Weather Institute, Ivana B. Mazuranic Museum, Bundeck Flower Show

GRADE 4

A PIVOTAL YEAR

Amazing energy and enthusiasm plus tougher academic demands make Grade 4 a pivotal year. Students often experience bursts of enthusiasm that is followed by the need for rest and relaxation. They are becoming increasingly aware of others and the world around them, which can be both exciting and unnerving.

Children in Grade 4 are often ready and eager to learn. Because they are still concrete thinkers, they benefit from learning by doing. There is a greater emphasis on writing and students are expected to organize and craft longer papers using different styles. Math in Grade 4 can be a turning point for students as they use all four operations to explore more complex concepts. They are challenged to solve multi-step real-world problems using multi-digit numbers, and to deepen their understanding of fractions and geometry.

Fourth graders use a lot of emotional energy managing their friendships, and making and keeping friends can be both exciting and exhausting. This increased awareness of the power of friendships can make peer pressure hard to resist.

Students work hard during the school day and are encouraged to become more independent. While schedules and routines are good for students of all ages, this is especially true for fourth graders as they begin developing organizational and time management skills that will be important throughout their lives.



GRADE 4 CURRICULUM DETAILS

SUBJECT	RESOURCES	UNITS
Literacy (Reading, Writing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Units of Study</i> for Reading and Writing (Teachers College, Columbia University) • <i>Words their way</i> • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Interpreting Characters: The Heart of the Story; Reading the Weather, Reading the World; Details and Synthesis; Historical Fiction Clubs • Writing: The Arc of Story: Writing Realistic Fiction; Boxes and Bullets: Personal and Persuasive Essays; The Literary Essay: Writing About Fiction; Bringing the Expert to Life: Informational Writing
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everyday Mathematics</i> (University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	Place Value; Multidigit Addition and Subtraction; Multiplication; Geometry; Fractions and Decimals; Multidigit Multiplication; Fraction and Mixed-Number Computation; Measurement; Division; Angles; Multiplication of a Fraction by a Whole Number; Fraction Operations; Applying Understandings
Science	• AERO (NGSS) Standards	Body Systems; Extreme Weather; Earth Features
Social Studies	• AERO (C3) Standards	My Identity: Mirrors and Windows; Government
Croatian Language Arts	• AERO Common Core Plus Standards	Expressing Ourselves; Moments to Keep; Croatian Tales of Long Ago; Some Different Worlds
World Languages Acquisition (Croatian, French, German)	• AERO World Languages Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Croatian: First Encounters; Friends and Family; At School; Routines • French: En route!; Culture, célébrations et traditions francophones; Mon album de photos; Quelle journée!; À la cantine • German: Der Sommer ist vorbei; Deutsche Kultur, Traditionen und Feste; Mein Fotoalbum!; Mein Traumhaus; So kleide ich mich
Art	• NCCAS Visual Arts Standards	My Identity Portrait; Stop Motion Animation; Camouflage and Environment; Microscopic Organisms; Textile Design; Printmaking; Pop Art
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orff instruments • NCCAS Music Standards 	The Beat Goes On; Adventures in Ukulele; More Mallet Madness; Classical Capers
Physical Education and Health	• SHAPE America Standards	Handball; Track & Field; Pickleball; Bike Unit; Fitness with Jump Rope and Games; Gymnastics; Ice Skating; Badminton; Volleyball; Invasion Games Unit; Tennis
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive Classroom • Second Step • ISCA Standards 	Who Am I?; Staying Safe; Managing in a Social World; Looking Ahead; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
Field Trips	• Integrated across the curriculum	Previous trips have included: Unity Trip (3 days and 2 nights) to Lake Bohinj, Slovenia; Nikola Tesla Technical Museum, Sabor Croatian Parliament

GRADE 5

RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Walk into a Grade 5 classroom and you are likely to encounter a lively debate as students weigh the pros and cons of serving chocolate milk at school. Whether chatting with friends or explaining their thinking, children at this age are quite expressive and like to talk. They've become more adept at thinking abstractly and are developing into problem-solvers.

Academically, Grade 5 is more challenging and complex than what students have encountered previously. The curriculum becomes more rigorous, and having strong, foundational knowledge in the subject areas is vital. With their ability to concentrate longer and hold more information in their memory, fifth grade students can rise to the challenge and meet the high expectations that have been set for them.

Fifth graders' social lives are a priority for them as they try to figure out where and how they fit in with their peer groups. They may experience conflicting feelings as they seek out friendships while also valuing their private, alone time. They can be both collaborative and competitive... and often at the same time. Students will try to push boundaries both at school and at home, yet they also thrive on positive feedback from the adults in their lives.



GRADE 5 CURRICULUM DETAILS

SUBJECT	RESOURCES	UNITS
Literacy (Reading, Writing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Units of Study</i> for Reading, and Writing (Teachers College, Columbia University) • <i>Words their way</i> • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Interpretation Book Clubs: Analyzing Themes; Tackling Complexity: Moving Up Levels of Nonfiction; Argument and Advocacy: Researching Debatable Issues; Fantasy Book Clubs: The Magic of Theme sand Symbols • Writing: Narrative Craft; The Lens of History: Research Reports; Shaping Texts: From Essay and Narrative to Memoir; The Research-Based Argument Essay
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everyday Mathematics</i> (University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) • AERO Common Core Plus Standards 	Area and Volume; Whole Number Place Values and Operations; Fraction Concepts, Addition and Subtraction; Decimal Concepts; Coordinate Grids; Operations with Fractions; Investigations in Measurement; Decimal Multiplication and Division; Multiplication of Mixed Numbers; Geometry; Graphs; Applications of Measurement, Computation and Graphing
Science	• AERO (NGSS) Standards	Organisms, Earth Systems
Social Studies	• AERO (C3) Standards	Beliefs and Values, Persuasive Media, Migration
Croatian Language Arts	• AERO Common Core Plus Standards	The Power of Words; The Happiness in our Lives; Growing Up; A Different One
World Languages Acquisition (Croatian, French, German)	• AERO World Languages Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Croatian: Review: Who am I?; My City, Differences and Similarities, Leisure Time • French: Faisons connaissance : ma famille, mes copains et moi; Culture, célébrations et traditions francophones; Mon temps libre ; Ma ville, mon quartier; Partons en vacances • German: Wo warst du?; Deutsche Kultur, Traditionen und Feste; In der Stadt; Berlin- Die Hauptstadt Deutschlands; Einkaufen
Art	• NCCAS Visual Arts Standards	Inspiration and Planning; Portraiture Exploration; Textile Design; Design: Dysfunctional vs. Functional; Atmospheric Perspective Landscapes; Museums and Curators
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orff instruments • NCCAS Music Standards 	Bucket Drumming, World Drumming, World Sounds
Physical Education and Health	• SHAPE America Standards	Handball, Pickleball, Bike Unit, Track & Field, Basketball, Fitness Unit, Badminton, Volleyball, Invasion Games, Floor Hockey, Tennis
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive Classroom • Second Step • ISCA Standards 	Who Am I?; Staying Safe; Managing in a Social World; Looking Ahead; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
Field Trips	• Integrated across the curriculum	Examples from past years: Unity Trip (3 days and 2 nights) to Lake Bohinj, Slovenia, Zagreb Botanical Gardens, Walking Tour of Downtown Zagreb

* The units listed are subject to change during the course of the academic year

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