CAYMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

CONNECT | INSPIRE | SERVE

2023-2024

MIDDLE SCHOOL

PROGRAM OF LEARNING

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM OF LEARNING

WHAT'S WORTH LEARNING AND HOW DO THE PIECES FIT?

At CIS we have a clear definition of learning that is the foundation of all we do. When it comes to designing curriculum and course offerings to bring this learning to life, we are driven by a simple question: What's worth Learning and how do the pieces fit? First, we strive to make sure units of study are built upon relevant, important issues, framed by compelling questions. Our world is complex and always changing. If we're not getting our students involved in learning deeply about these fascinating, inspiring, and pressing issues, we are failing them and the world. Next, learning transfer is a primary goal and as such we work to ensure that our units of study connect conceptually both in a grade-level and from year to year. We want to create a learning experience that is connected. This includes a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary learning.

This document gives a very brief snapshot of the learning that takes place in each class offered in the CIS Middle School. Our learning (when applicable) is chunked into units of study that are driven by a large compelling question. Each unit has specific learning goals that are used for assessment. The learning goals align with our three types of learning at CIS:

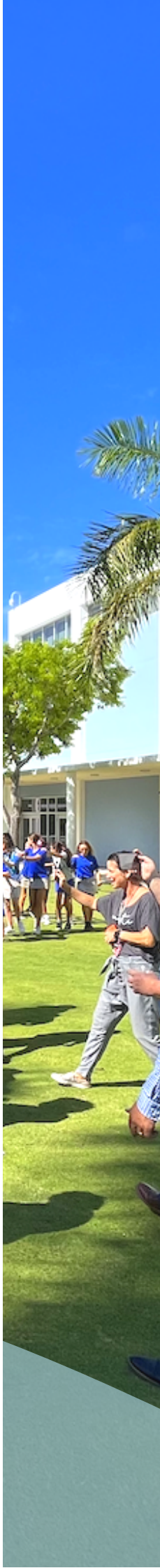
Conceptual Learning
Each course has specific conceptual understanding goals embedded in units of study. Conceptual understanding is deep, transferable understanding that can be applied in multiple contexts. It is learning "that sticks."

Competency Learning
IIn order to demonstrate understanding, we help students become experts in developing competencies. Competencies are skills associated with both specific disciplines (the skills of a scientist, engineer, historian, musician) and more transdisciplinary skills like inquiry, communication, collaboration. Units bundle together competencies that are developed to help students demonstrate what they have learned.

Character Learning
Our goal is also to develop students into principled human beings. Teaching dispositions for learning, as well as making sure our units of study grapple head-on with complex and important real world issues, is an important way we develop character learning.

PROGRAM OF LEARNING

TABLE OF CONTENTS



MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Middle School ELA learning is designed to develop deep conceptual understandings, competencies, and important dispositions that can be transferred in rich, relevant literary contexts all the way to IB Language and Literature. Each unit is designed with an overarching compelling question that drives the inquiry. Content is chosen and framed as an appropriate vehicle to illustrate the concepts of each unit; in this sense, it (content) is largely negotiable (but only when under review). The competencies articulated in each unit are those centered around the conventions of clear, coherent communication and analysis necessary for being highly literate in a number of contexts. The learning is vertically aligned and uses the Common Core State Standards along with CIS conceptual learning goals to articulate the learning program.

GRADE 6 ELA

:English language arts and social studies have long been considered complementary content areas. The crossover is undeniable, and while the two subjects are taught in separate blocks, the learning in each class is coordinated and connected in order to maximize and capitalize on this natural overlap by delivering the content and skills of both subjects in an interconnected fashion. This breaking of the "silos" of the two subjects is a much more realistic approach, allowing students to learn in context and express their learning more authentically. In the ELA classroom specifically, students will hone their reading, writing, and speaking skills throughout the year as they participate in both independent reading and novel studies and a variety of writing exercises. Special attention is paid to developing students' ability to craft a strong paragraph and to use textual evidence to support claims, as these skills are fundamental cornerstones to developing more complex writing pieces in the future.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
Who am I, really? Understanding who I am as a reader, writer, and thinker (launching independent reading and writing personal narratives).	**Who's in charge around here?** Using close reading to develop and support sophisticated ideas about literature (whole class novel: The Giver by Lois Lowry).	**How can stories help us to discover and reflect upon our beliefs about power?** Using shared texts to think about, discuss, and build ideas about the world around us (social issues book clubs)..	**Who fights for the powerless?** Understanding and developing empathy about the lived experiences of marginalized groups through literature. (reading Refugee by Alan Gratz)

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 7 ELA:
Students in grade 7 English explore a wide variety of stories based on real-world contexts and write to explore, explain, and construct. Students further hone their skills to read non-fiction and to conduct research for different purposes, and they also receive practice discussing and presenting ideas developed from both fiction and non-fiction texts. Students will write literary analysis, analytical critiques, and research texts while engaged in authentic, real-world activities that allow them to explore the effects that audience and purpose have on an author's approach to writing. While there is a heavy emphasis on writing, there is also a strong focus on presentation skills. Students will have many opportunities to develop, practice, and polish their speaking skills through class discussion, Socratic Seminar, and formal presentations throughout the year. Students are also encouraged to approach various themes from a personal lens, delving into their own family histories, their own personal belief systems, and finally, their own curiosities and passions.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
How can we make the world a better place? Understanding that change can start with one person (whole class novel: A Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park)	**How does the world shape us?** Understanding how our experiences can change our perspective of how we see the world, ourselves, and others (whole class novel: The Killing Sea by Richard Lewis).	**Why are historical stories important to the future of humankind?** Understanding that our stories impact our past, present, and future (whole class novel: Maus by Art Spiegelman).	**What makes a story captivating?** Understanding that authors use different techniques, elements, and forms to communicate a message to the reader (assorted short stories).

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 8 ELA:
In this course, grade 8 students are challenged to consider the complexity of the world around them through the analysis of various texts in various contexts. The bedrock competencies of reading, writing, speaking, and listening are the primary vehicles for demonstrating understanding. Students learn to navigate literature to find evidence to answer complex questions. Through literary analysis, they learn to deconstruct an author's style and craft while presenting new ideas. Students gain competence researching online while learning about the world around them so that they can articulately expose what's actually happening. They also study author's craft and figurative language so that they can create deeply meaningful messages through poetry. Importantly, students use their learning to create impactful artifacts that positively influence their community. As such, the grade 8 curriculum is centered on real life experiences. Student learning is visible outside of the classroom so students can see the true impact they can have on society. For example, after analyzing author's craft and style, students write a new chapter for The Little Prince (and create an original watercolor painting mimicking the author's style) and host a storytelling art show at a coffee shop in the community. Additionally, once students learn to research and expose issues in society, they write informational exposé articles which are compiled to create a magazine. In the end, the goal is that students come to understand that they have power to change the world through their communication skills.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
What makes a story unforgettable? Understanding how authors use narrative to create meaning (whole class novel: The Little Prince by Antoine de St. Exupery).	**How can we communicate in a way that incites action and change?** Understanding that we have the power to influence the world around us through exposing what is truly happening in an informational and persuasive way (assorted non-fiction articles).	**What does it mean to be a hero? And do heroes even really exist?** Exploring themes of justice within challenging circumstances (whole class novel: The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton).	**How does the form of a story influence its message?** Understanding how different forms of messaging influence meaning

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

SCIENCE

Middle School science learning is designed to develop deep conceptual understandings, competencies, and important dispositions that can be transferred in rich, relevant scientific contexts all the way to IB Physics, Chemistry, Biology, or Environmental Systems. Each unit is grounded in an overarching compelling question that drives the inquiry and is conceptually designed. Content is chosen and framed as an appropriate vehicle to illustrate the concepts of each unit; in this sense, it (content) is largely negotiable (but only when under review). The competencies articulated in each unit are synthesized from the NGSS Engineering and Science Practices and are linked directly to the concepts that are taught.

GRADE 6 SCIENCE:
Grade 6 Science is filled with hands-on, engaging and challenging science activities as we explore a variety of science subjects. This fun and exciting class will build on previous knowledge and understanding of science, while discovering how the sciences are integrated. At the end of this course, students will be able to think scientifically and use scientific knowledge to make decisions about real-world problems. Together we will explore the role science plays, not just in our everyday lives, but also in the universe as a whole. There are three general principles that provide the foundation for learning in this course:
Principle 1. Provide multiple means of representation. Give learners various ways to acquire information and knowledge.
Principle 2. Provide multiple means of action and expression. Offer students alternatives for demonstrating what they know.
Principle 3. Provide multiple means of engagement. Help learners get interested, be challenged, and stay motivated.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
How do scientists think? Understanding that the purpose of science is to answer questions about the universe. By using the scientific method, students are practicing "thinking like a scientist."	**Where are we in the universe?** Astronomy will open students' eyes by giving them a context of our place in the universe and promoting rethinking of scales of time, distance, and size.	**What does it mean to be alive?** Understanding the diversity and complexity of life on earth.	**Do we have a common ancestor with bananas?** Organisms are still changing today and do not look like ancient life forms that no longer exist on Earth.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 7 SCIENCE:
Grade 7 Science is designed to develop conceptual understandings, competencies, and important dispositions that can be transferred in rich, relevant scientific contexts. The year starts with investigations designed to awaken prior knowledge and have some hands-on experiences with why matter changes. The NGSS Engineering and Science practices guide the development of the skills needed to be a successful science student. Units are designed with overarching compelling questions that drive the inquiry. Finally, in conjunction with Sustainability and Systems activities, students will learn more about ecosystems—in particular, the Cayman Islands' ecosystems—and the consequences of changes within a system.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
What is matter and how does it change? Understanding there are different types of matter, and changing the pressure and temperature of matter causes its density to change	**How can twins look different?** Understanding how genetic material is copied and passed to offspring and basic principles of heredity.	**How does an ecosystem maintain balance and what happens if it doesn't?** Understanding ecosystems cycle matter and energy and strive to maintain a state of equilibrium	**How do we know the climate is changing?** Understanding the data that supports why the climate is changing.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 8 SCIENCE:
Grade 8 Science is designed to develop deep conceptual understandings, competencies, and important dispositions that can be transferred in rich, relevant scientific contexts all the way to IB Physics, Chemistry, Biology, or Environmental Systems. The year starts with unpacking the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to be used as a foundation for the first unit and Core Extension. Units are designed with an overarching compelling question that drives the inquiry and is conceptually designed. The competencies articulated in each unit are synthesized from the NGSS Engineering and Science Practices and are linked directly to the concepts that are taught.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
Does our use of resources really matter? Understanding the "tragedy of the commons" and why resource management matters.	**What is motion and how does it change?** Understanding that forces are needed to initiate or change motion and that energy is transformed as motion is changed.	**What is the world made of?** Understanding atomic structure and the organization of the periodic table.	**What are waves and what can they do?** Understanding waves have characteristic properties and their movement can change depending on the medium through which they travel

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

MATHEMATICS

Real math is a science of ideas, patterns and relationships that helps us to make sense of what we see around us. It involves asking questions, making conjectures, and sharing our thinking with others. Middle School math learning at CIS is designed to develop deep conceptual understandings, competencies, and important dispositions that can be transferred in rich, relevant mathematical contexts all the way to IB HL Math.

We assure that our math curriculum is:

Differentiated: Accessible and Challenging
Our number one commitment and priority is to challenge all students as close to their zones of proximal development as possible. In order to achieve this goal, we:

- Design and deliver differentiated instruction and provide leveled assessments to meet all learners where they are. Importantly, we are not satisfied with where they are; the purpose of such an approach is to be able to gain deeper insight into each child's strengths and areas of growth in order to help them continually work towards their maximum capacity. The math curriculum that was adopted in 2018/19 was in large part chosen because of its conceptual and connected approach. When math is conceptual, it allows for multiple levels of depth of student exploration. Many traditional math curriculums are competency based and focus more on procedures necessary to solve various problems. We teach mathematical competencies in the context of transferable concepts that build a very strong mathematical foundation that increases options for future math pathways.

Viable and Comprehensive
The MS course sequence is designed to ensure access to all future math pathways.

- The middle school math sequence is designed with the assurance that when a child completes Math 3 at the end of Grade 8, there will be an appropriate mathematical pathway in high school that best meets their needs. For the highest achieving students with strong mathematical aptitude and a passion for math, this includes a path to our highest level math, IB DP.

Please check the different courses below.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

MATH 1:
This course focuses on developing students' number sense to include an understanding of all integers and how to apply algebraic reasoning within the Rational Number System. The connectedness of ratios, rates, and percents are then explored and developed. In the geometry portion of this course, the area of basic polygons, the surface area of polygonal prisms, and the volume of cubes and rectangular prisms are explored. The course culminates with students developing an understanding of variability and statistical measures whilst displaying, describing, and summarizing data.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
How are parts and wholes related? Understanding fractions and decimals.	**What happens when we expand the number line?** Understanding Integers and Rational Numbers.	**Does the order of operations matter?** Understanding numeric and algebraic expressions.	**What can you do to make the scale balance?** Understanding how the properties of equality apply to equations and inequalities.
Unit 5	**Unit 6**	**Unit 7**	**Unit 8**
What's the better deal? Understanding how ratios and rates are used in the real world.	**Why is estimating important?** Understanding how to find the percent of a number.	**Can you create nets in your mind?** Demonstrating how visualization is used to find Area, Surface Area, and Volume.	**Can you pitch it?** Demonstrating how the use of data and graphs can help launch a new product.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

MATH 2:
This course consolidates students' number sense and understanding of the Rational Number System. The main focus of this course is ratio and proportional reasoning and works towards an initial understanding of functions and linearity. Students also explore more complex equations and inequalities. The coursework for data analysis involves applications from Math 1 in order to determine the probability of simple and compound events occurring. In the geometry portion of Math 2, students apply their understanding of proportional relationships to investigate scale figures and incorporate algebraic reasoning to solve geometric problems related to angle measurements, circles, and three dimensional prisms.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
How can you expand the number line? Understanding rational numbers and the operations that relate them.	**Who ran further?** Exploring Proportional Relationships in real-world contexts	**How can you be a smart shopper?** Using percent to calculate mark-up, discounts, and simple interest	**How do numbers and symbols describe real-world events?** Using the language of Math to write Equivalent Expressions
Unit 5	**Unit 6**	**Unit 7**	**Unit 8**
What does "isolating the variable" mean? Solving problems using equations and inequalities	**How can you make inferences about big populations?** Drawing samples and comparing data sets to make inferences	**How many different ways are there to win?** Understanding theoretical probability of simple and compound events	**Can you design a playground?** Relating scale to polygons and circles

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

MATH 3:
In this course, students expand their number sense to include irrational numbers and develop an understanding of the Real Number System. The main focus of this course is developing a solid foundation of linear functions through the exploration of mathematical models, bivariate data investigations, and solving systems of linear equations. The geometry portion of Math 3 further develops proportional reasoning through the concepts of congruence and similarity, and a study of the surface area and volume of cylinders, cones, and spheres to solve real world problems. The course culminates with an exploration of when and why the Pythagorean Theorem works.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
Why won't this decimal change to a fraction? Completing the Real Number System.	**What does it mean to be equal?** Analyzing and solving equations.	**How do you see this pattern growing?** Using functions to model relationships in multiple ways.	**What is the break-even point?** Analyzing and solving systems of linear equations.
Unit 5	**Unit 6**	**Unit 7**	**Unit 8**
How do people use data to influence others? Investigating associations in numerical and categorical data.	**What does it mean to be the same?** Exploring congruency and similarity	**How much ice cream will fit in this cone?** Investigating essential geometric concepts.	**What's the shortest path?** Discovering Pythagoras

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

SOCIAL STUDIES

Middle School social studies learning is designed to develop deep conceptual understandings, competencies, and important dispositions that can be transferred in rich, relevant social studies contexts all the way to IB. Each course and unit is designed with a large overarching concept and question that drives the inquiry. Content is chosen and framed as an appropriate vehicle to illustrate the concept; in this sense, it (content) is largely negotiable (but only when under review). Each unit is approached from all the social studies disciplinary lenses (history, geography, and economics). As such, the competencies articulated in each unit are those used by the historian, geographer, and economist, and they vertically align. Conceptual understandings and competencies are articulated directly from C3 framework and standards.

GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES:
A Study of Power
English language arts and social studies have long been considered complementary content areas. The crossover is undeniable, and while the two subjects are taught in separate blocks, the learning in each class is coordinated and connected in order to maximize and capitalize on this natural overlap by delivering the content and skills of both subjects in an interconnected fashion. This breaking of the "silos" of the two subjects is a much more realistic approach, allowing students to learn in context and express their learning more authentically. In the social studies classroom specifically, students will develop their non-fiction reading and research skills to conduct inquiry investigations to develop their own ideas about each unit's driving question. Students will be asked to demonstrate their learning in a wide variety of ways, including in writing and visually.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
How am I similar to people who are different from me? Exploring major world religions and belief systems, seeking both similarities and differences.	**Who's in charge around here?** Using research to understand the impacts, influences, and limitations of governmental structures in various societies.	**Is the power unleashed by technology worth it?** Understanding how societies adapt to new technologies and seek to use them ethically.	**Who fights for the powerless?** Understanding how individuals, organizations, and governments affect those who are persecuted by someone or something more powerful.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 7 SOCIAL STUDIES:
Geography - Connections to a Changing World
Every civilization, society and person throughout history has been directly connected to the planet. The systems of the planet allow our species to live, yet also act as a constant threat to our survival. This course investigates some of these systems and how they provide both an opportunity and a hazard to the modern world. After investigating these systems, how they function and their effects on the human world, the class will research and analyze the human effects on the natural world. Students will read, interpret and draw conclusions from real world data, evaluating changes and drawing conclusions. By exploring how both these worlds influence each other, students will have a deeper understanding of the direct connection we have with our planet. The second half of the course will explore questions focused on human systems. Students will analyze evidence to answer some fundamental questions of human development. How does where we live affect how we live? Is our world becoming smaller? Taking a deeper look at the globalized world and urban development, the question becomes one of development and equality: why are some places more developed than others? Why is there poverty in one place while great wealth in another? Students are introduced to data that can be analyzed to help tell a deeper story of a place and help answer these questions. By the end of this course, students will have a better understanding of how the natural and human world around them impacts their lives as well as how their lives and choices have impacts across the globe.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
How are we connected to the planet's systems? Understanding our Earth's physical systems and how these systems shape our world	**How have humans impacted the planet's systems?** Understanding the human impacts on Earth's climate and systems	**Is the world getting smaller?** Understanding our new globalized world and the economic, societal and cultural impacts of increased globalization	**Does where you live affect how you live?** Understanding humanity's trend to a more urban, less rural lifestyle

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 8 SOCIAL STUDIES:
Whose Story? Perspectives and Connections
Grade 8 social studies challenges students to consider very difficult questions and perhaps unsettling answers based on non-traditional perspectives. Importantly, the perspectives that are considered are analyzed as sources; historians use sources to tell stories of the past. Unlike in grade 6, where students look at history on a macro-level, and unlike grade 7, where students analyze interactions between the natural and human world, grade 8 students will dig into the interactions between peoples, staying focused on the human element and various perspectives that can tell radically different stories and be interpreted in radically different ways. The course is unique in that, as well as delving into two historical analyses, each unit includes a contemporary human geographic analysis of the place of interest. The idea is to consider the vital question: Where did we come from and how did we get here? Thus, before exploring the Columbian Exchange, students will do an in-depth demographic and environmental analysis of the Americas today. Likewise, after analyzing the Atlantic slave trade as historians, students will consider challenging perspectives concerning the settlement patterns of people in the present. Additionally, students will take a critical look at the causes and effects of the fall of governments in Europe in the 20th century, the ensuing wars that took place, and how this can relate to the choices we are faced with today. Doing so helps illuminate the link between past and present, while presenting us with deeply intriguing questions.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
What is history? How are our stories told and why do they matter? Understanding that history is our story; it is based on the artifacts and stories passed down and rediscovered and interpreted.	**How do our stories blend or bend?** Understanding that history is perspectival; stories of discovery and dominance can be recounted in many ways by different parties for different purposes.	**How do the stories of others change our own story?** Understanding perspectives and connections from the Columbian Exchange of people: from oppression, to liberation, through struggle, toward justice.	**How do decisions affect our story?** Understanding the decisions and indecisions made in 20th Century Europe, leading to the rise and fall of governments, the World Wars, and the Holocaust.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

ELECTIVES / SPECIALS

Middle School electives and specials are an essential part of our learning experience. The basic idea is to give students experience and exposure to learning contexts that both align with existing interests and passions as well as to inspire students to discover new interests and passions. Risk-taking and working outside our typical comfort zones are key features of our MS Electives/Specials program. These courses all allow students to demonstrate their learning in authentic ways and are one of our school's best vehicles for opening up the space to be creative, collaborative, and reflective.

At each grade level, students take one quarter (8-9 weeks) of Art and of Design/Technology. In grade 7, they are offered a choice of four (4) semester or year-long electives. In grade 8, they are offered five (5) choices that are year-long electives.

VISUAL ARTS

ART (GRADES 6/7/8):
Middle School art aims to help students become familiar with our art-making space and our classroom procedures and expectations, as well as to provide a chance for us to begin to get to know one another. Units throughout this course are designed to meet students at their current skill level. As students follow through the anchor standards of creating, presenting, responding, and connecting, they will be encouraged to build on previous knowledge and challenge themselves to build greater skills and confidence. Some past example units of study include collaborative sculptures using the artist Bruce Gray as inspiration and surrealism, as well as integrated projects with core classes.

ADVANCED ART (ELECTIVE FOR GRADE 8):
This is a choice-based art class for students who want to learn more about art in a personalized way. Students pick a project or theme to focus on and then work closely with the teacher to develop the idea, step-by-step. The class is a great opportunity to figure out how artists think and work through problems and how they present their work to others so that the audience understands their thinking. No previous art experience is required but a passion for art is necessary.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

STEAM/TECHNOLOGY (GRADES 6/7/8):
The prevalence and importance of technology in today's world is undeniable; thus, all of our Middle School students take a general STEAM/Technology class each year. While differing in complexity and sophistication at each grade-level, the basic premise is to introduce students to the design process and to allow them the opportunity to explore various facets of STEAM, design, and technology. Activities are largely hands-on and collaborative in nature, with students receiving frequent coaching and feedback on their iteration processes.

GENIUS HOUR (ELECTIVE FOR GRADES 7 & 8):
Genius hour is a choice elective that allows students to explore their own passions and encourages creativity in the classroom. It provides students a choice in what they learn during the class time set aside for them during school hours. Genius hour projects are a huge step towards the goal of creating lifelong learners. The idea is very simple: allow students to work on something that interests them and productivity will go up. Students use the design process to explore something they are interested in and then to create a product that will be shared with the class, school, or even the world.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

PERFORMING ARTS

The performing arts at CIS are a cornerstone of the well rounded, creative educational experience we strive to provide to all learners. Perhaps no better vehicle exists for students to demonstrate deep learning in authentic ways than the performing arts. In grade 6, all students gain exposure to instrumental, choral, and drama classes. In grade 7 and 8, students choose between either band, choir, or drama. In these courses, students give multiple performances throughout the year, including formal concerts in December (choir & band), and final showcases in June (choir, band & drama).

GRADE 6 PERFORMING ARTS:
All grade 6 students are offered equal time to explore instrumental, vocal and theatrical arts. Students will all be a part of the Beginner Band, learning the basic rudiments of music theory while having the opportunity to try various woodwind, wind, brass, and percussion instruments. They will also receive equal time spent focused on choir and drama skills which will culminate in an informal performance event midway through the year. As the year progresses, students will be able to choose more specific areas of interest in band, choir and/or drama which will prepare them for formal performance opportunities at the end of the year.

GRADE 7-8 DRAMA:
Grade 7 and 8 Drama focuses on extending students' stage competencies and deepening their conceptual understanding of theatre history and styles. Through units of study such as Ancient Greek Theatre, Improvisation, Pantomime, and others, students will have the opportunity to grow their confidence and stage skills while gaining important knowledge about theatre arts. Semester one focuses on skill and knowledge development while semester two centers around preparation for a formal performance opportunity.

GRADE 7-8 CHOIR:
Grade 7 and 8 Choir focuses on creating healthy singing technique, choral ensemble skills, music literacy, performing skills, and music appreciation. Taking choir for the whole year is recommended, but students may also request to join choir for second semester. In each semester, students build skills in reading music, collaborating musically, and performing for each other in small groups. These skills are then applied to a formal concert at the end of the semester. There may also be other performance opportunities throughout the year including school assemblies, art shows, and community events such as NCFA. Students also learn to describe the musical performances of their peers using specific music vocabulary.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 7 BAND (YEAR-LONG ELECTIVE):
All are welcome in grade 7 band, even those with no prior experience, so long as you have a passion for music and want to play.

GRADE 8 BAND (YEAR-LONG ELECTIVE):
To join band in grade 8 is to join the group in year 3 - however, all are welcome, so long as you have a passion for music and want to play. Students without prior musical experience are encouraged to join, so long as they are also willing to commit to meeting with the band director outside of regular class time at least once per week. A prior knowledge of music theory or experience playing a musical instrument is helpful, but again, not required.

HEALTH

Learning to be a healthy, happy person is perhaps the most important learning we can provide our students. Our MS Health program is designed to help in this life-long process by focusing on physical, social, mental and emotional health. In Health, we will provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to be health literate. Health-literate students have the essential skills necessary to adopt, practice and maintain health enhancing behaviors. Units of study will include the health triangle, interpersonal communication, stress management, mental and emotional health, nutrition, accessing valid and reliable information, decision making, alcohol and other drugs, growth and development and healthy relationships.

UNITS OF STUDY		
Grade 6	**Grade 7**	**Grade 8**
Who Am I? Understanding how self awareness and self confidence develop a sense of identity and belonging.	**How Can I Say No?** Understanding the role of interpersonal communication in developing refusal skills	**How Do I Decide?** Understanding how to make a decision that promotes health enhancing behaviors

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

SPANISH

Middle School Spanish is designed to develop students into lifelong second language learners. Becoming a fluent second language learner requires the development of a number of speaking, listening, and communicating competencies; it is supported by deep conceptual understandings about the cultural contexts from which different languages are used; and finally, being a second language learner requires risk-taking and a growth mindset. As such, the MS Spanish course sequence will challenge students to open their minds to new cultures, while building on a new sense of confidence. While learning mainly through immersion, students study various units designed with an overarching theme that drives the inquiry and creates opportunities for real world dialogue.

GRADE 6 SPANISH:
This engaging class emphasizes acquiring four major language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing using basic grammar structures. This course will build upon previous knowledge of Spanish vocabulary and teach students to organize that knowledge into applicable, real world scenarios. Students will be challenged to leave their comfort zones and take risks while learning about the Spanish speaking world.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1 Mi familia y yo	**Unit 2** Bienvenidos a mi casa	**Unit 3** Vamos de compras	**Unit 4** Los alimentos (Part 1)
Who am I? Learning how to begin simple conversations, as well as how to describe and introduce one's self and family members.	**What do I do around the house?** Learning how to describe one's home and explain the actions done around the house.	**What do I like to buy?** Learning about various stores and clothing items, how to express likes and dislikes, and dialogue needed when shopping.	**What do I want to eat?** Learning all about describing food, drinks, and stating food preferences.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 7 SPANISH:
This course builds on the basic structures students have learned and pushes students to think about the broader world around them. While continuing to push students' four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), students will begin using more advanced grammar to express complex ideas. Students will continue to be challenged to leave their comfort zones and take risks while learning about the Spanish speaking world.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1 Los alimentos (Part 2)	**Unit 2** Los pasatiempos y las profesiones	**Unit 3** La vida saludable	**Unit 4** Vamos a viajar
What do I do in the kitchen? Learning about preparing a table setting and ordering food in a restaurant.	**What do I do in my free time, and what will I do in the future?** Learning about sports and hobbies, as well as professions, and making plans for the future.	**What should I do to stay healthy?** Learning about the body, daily hygiene habits, dialogue needed to express illnesses, and how to give advice.	**What do I need to do to prepare for a trip?** Learning about all aspects of travel and the planning of an itinerary.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

GRADE 8 SPANISH:
This course begins a high intensity Spanish learning program that students will continue in high school. Grade 8 Spanish combines grammar, vocabulary, and culture through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Emphasis is placed on conversation and correct usage of the language. This requires a daily emphasis on listening and speaking. The classroom experience will offer a deeper understanding of Spanish language and cultural knowledge using authentic materials.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1 Me presento (review)	**Unit 2** Así es mi día	**Unit 3** ¡Que aproveche!	**Unit 4** ¿Dónde vives?
What do I do in the kitchen? Learning about preparing a table setting and ordering food in a restaurant.	**What do I do in my free time, and what will I do in the future?** Learning about sports and hobbies, as well as professions, and making plans for the future.	**What should I do to stay healthy?** Learning about the body, daily hygiene habits, dialogue needed to express illnesses, and how to give advice.	**What do I need to do to prepare for a trip?** Learning about all aspects of travel and the planning of an itinerary.
Unit 4 ¿Dónde vives?	**Unit 5** Zonas climáticas		
How can I navigate a city? Understanding how places are connected by describing and giving directions in a city.	**How does climate differ in various parts of the world?** Understanding geography, nature, and the effects of climate on one's daily life.		

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

NATIVE SPEAKERS:
This course begins a high intensity Spanish learning program in literature that students will continue in high school. Native Spanish combines grammar, vocabulary, and culture through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This requires a daily emphasis on deeper and critical thinking. The classroom experience will offer a deeper understanding of Spanish language and cultural knowledge using authentic materials.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1 El género narrativo como arte de contar y entretener (cuentos y cortometrajes)	**Unit 2** Género narrativo: la novela	**Unit 3** ¿Qué nos dice el arte?
¿Puedo identificar la estructura externa e interna en la narrativa? Conocer y analizar los elementos literarios de la narrativa. Analizar los elementos de forma (cómo dice) y fondo (lo que dice: ideas, temas, problemas, etc.) de un cuento o cortometraje	**¿Puedo aplicar la narrativa en la escritura de un cuento?** Utilizar las técnicas de la oratoria para expresarse correctamente de manera oralEscribir un cuento con sus diferentes elementos.Utilizar correctamente la ortografía, el lenguaje y las técnicas de redacción dependiendo del propósito comunicativo.Lectura y análisis de diferentes libros.	**¿Puedo utilizar el arte para expresar arte?** Creación de una obra artística sobre la base de una obra literaria.Uso de figuras literarias.Evaluación contextualizada.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

BEGINNER SPANISH:
This engaging class emphasizes acquiring four major language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing using basic grammar structures. This course is designed to introduce students to Spanish vocabulary and teach students to organize that knowledge into applicable, real world scenarios. Students will be challenged to leave their comfort zones and take risks while learning about the Spanish speaking world.

UNITS OF STUDY

Unit 1 Mi familia y yo	**Unit 2** Bienvenidos a mi casa	**Unit 3** Vamos de compras	**Unit 4** Los alimentos (Part 1)
Who am I? Learning how to begin simple conversations, as well as how to describe and introduce one's self and family members.	**What do I do around the house?** Learning how to describe one's home and explain the actions done around the house.	**What do I like to buy?** Learning about various stores and clothing items, how to express likes and dislikes, and dialogue needed when shopping.	**What do I want to eat?** Learning all about describing food, drinks, and stating food preferences.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Each MS Physical Education course follows the same unit sequence and structure, simply going deeper in each subsequent year. Each course will develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthy physical activity. Students will recognize the value of physical activity not only for health, but also enjoyment, challenge, self expression and social interaction. Students will be given the opportunity to participate in a variety of individual, team, personal fitness and outdoor activities over the course of the year. In each unit, students will:

- demonstrate competencies in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns
- develop a conceptual understanding of strategies, principles, and tactics related to movement and performance.
- exhibit responsible personal and social behavior that respects themselves and others.

UNITS OF STUDY			
Unit 1	**Unit 2**	**Unit 3**	**Unit 4**
How does sportsmanship carry over into everyday life? Understanding how to work together in team building and cooperative games.	**How can fitness improve performance?** Understanding how to improve skill related and health related fitness components.	**How do you find the hole on the court?** Understanding how to find open space in volleyball, pickleball, badminton and spikeball.	**How can I compete with an Olympian?** Understanding how to improve individual performance in track and field events.
Unit 5	**Unit 6**	**Unit 7**	**Unit 8**
How do I make my teammates move? Understanding how to find and defend space in invasion games.	**How can you stay in the game?** Understanding how to hit and field a ball in softball and cricket.	**How do I stay in time?** Understanding how to use the elements of dance to create a movement sequence.	**How can I stay active for life?** Understanding how to stay safe and active in aquatic and non-aquatic environments.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

SUSTAINABILITY & SYSTEMS

Because we understand that learning transfer happens best in rich, relevant contexts (Context of Learning Principle), and we place an emphasis on transdisciplinary learning, we have a semester-long class dedicated to a learning experience called Sustainability & Systems where students can tackle complex, real world problems. Because this class is team-taught by the core teachers from each grade-level with support from STEAM, the concepts and skills associated with the various disciplines will also be applied to real-world contexts. Each grade level's learning is driven by a broad theme. That theme is then used to create a series of compelling questions that are Cayman-focused that become the starting points for individual or collaborative projects. These projects provide student voice and choice and offer a truly rich, deep learning opportunity that will extend students in multiple contexts.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS LEARNING?		
Grade 6	**Grade 7**	**Grade 8**
Responsibility Just because we can, should we? Understanding that our individual choices impact more than just ourselves.	**Change** How and why do things change? Understanding the causes and impacts of change.	**Perspective** What is progress? Understanding how engaging different perspectives can change and deepen my own.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

FLEX PROGRAMMING

As part of our commitment to working with students within their individual zones of proximal development in order to maximize learning and growth, we also offer three (3) approximately 30-minute sessions each week of Flex programming. All teachers within a grade-level, in conjunction with our student support team, our MS counselor, and our enrichment teacher, mindfully plan for this time in order to provide each student with the experience best suited to their needs. For example, this time might be used to provide in-depth support in writing for a small group of students; to extend thinking and learning about Spanish culture; or to drill-down on physical skills in a current P.E. unit. Additionally, this time allows us to offer students time during the school day to participate in enriching activities such as Battle of the Books, Math Olympiad, chess, and Arete Labs math program.

MS HOMEROOM & COUNSELING

Who am I? Who do I want to be? How do I get there?
Learning to Become our Best Selves

The most important learning is driven by an inquiry into ourselves as individuals (Me) and the communities (We) we are a part of. The best place to start with this never-ending inquiry is with our greatest strengths; we use an asset-based approach for self-discovery, not a deficit-based one that starts with an "issue to fix." As a school community (We), our "best self" is defined by our Community Principles. As individuals (Me), particularly for teens, we often don't know what our greatest strengths are that can help define our best selves.

Hence, the first thing we do as a Middle School is complete the Via Strengths character assessment. This comprehensive assessment provides a ranking and a detailed description of our greatest strengths and explains what they mean and how they can be manifested. We use this tool throughout the year to notice, name, and nurture our strengths, as well as to notice, name, and neutralize those manifestations that keep us from being our best selves. Monday and Friday homeroom time is broadly dedicated to this learning and reflection. Assemblies that feature guests from community-based organizations from around the island are also a feature of our homeroom program. Additionally, our counseling program is tailor-made to address issues that our students and community face in "real time." Based in part on parent and student survey data, each grade level has approximately ten (10) classes taught by the MS Counselor across the school year, dedicated to the unique needs that arise within our community.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF LEARNING

LEARNING SUPPORT

As a school, we endeavor to support every single student in a way that allows them to achieve, both in and out of the classroom. Our Learning Support program in the Middle School ensures that all of our students are given opportunities for success. We have two dedicated Learning Support teachers who provide support alongside our teachers in the classroom, using a push-in model for our students with documented learning differences. Additionally, we have a separate Foundations class, taught by our Learning Support teachers, that replaces Spanish for our students with documented language-based learning needs to help develop those skills and to further support and scaffold the classroom learning. Finally, each of our grade-level teacher teams meets weekly with our Counselor and Assistant Principal as a Student Support Team (SST), led by our Learning Support teachers. This robust system of Learning Support allows us to care for and cultivate each of our learners in a way that best meets their needs.