

# The Silver Spring International Middle School



## *Guide to the Middle Years Programme*

*"Great Expectations, Great Successes"*

## Mission Statement

The Silver Spring International Middle School creates a safe, positive and nurturing climate in order to provide a quality academic program through collaboration. We ...

**create a safe, positive and nurturing climate that:**

- *Communicates high expectations*
- *Enables students to take intellectual risks*
- *Cultivates pride in the school*
- *Values culture, ethnicity and uniqueness*
- *Recognizes achievements*
- *Shows students that teachers believe in them*
- *Develops student responsibility and ownership*

**in order to provide a quality academic program that:**

- *Teaches students to be life long learners*
- *Exposes students to new/ challenging ideas and experiences*
- *Provides a technologically rich environment*
- *Challenges all students with learning that is rigorous and connected to their world*
- *Develops skills needed to be productive members of society*
- *Builds critical thinking skills.*



**through collaboration that:**

- *Encourages a sense of community*
- *Fosters professional development*
- *Supports parents*
- *Affirms all parents, teachers and students*
- *Cultivates an environment where parents, teachers and students feel invested, welcomed and part of an effectively functioning team.*



## Fundamental Concepts

We are an authorized world school permitted by the **International Baccalaureate Organization** to offer students the **Middle Years Programme** as our signature program. At

***The Silver Spring International Middle School*** our focus is on the fusion of the program's three fundamental concepts with the high academic standards embraced by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS):

**Connections  
Culture  
Communication**

***Connections—Holistic Learning***



To reinforce the relationships between school subjects and authentic problem solving, emphasis is placed on the accentuation of the interrelationship of the eight subject areas of the program through the combination of relevant knowledge, experience, and critical thinking skills.

***Culture—Intercultural Awareness***

This aspect of the program targets the development of student attitudes, knowledge, and skills by encouraging the consideration of multiple perspectives to increase tolerance, respect, and empathy as they learn about their own culture and others.



***Communication***



Fundamental to learning, effective communication encourages students to explore multiple forms of expression beyond the ability to generate appropriate oral and written language. It supports inquiry, understanding, and self-reflection through the development of listening skills that are at-tuned to the intention, variations, and nuance of what is said.

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## Areas of Interaction

The five Areas of Interaction act as the primary vehicle for interdisciplinary connections in the Middle Years Programme. They are used in the planning and delivery of units based on authentic applications of classroom concepts. They provide students a lens through which they can view lessons and connect them to real world issues. The **Areas of Interaction** are:

***Approaches to Learning***  
***Environment***  
***Homo Faber (Man the Maker)***  
***Health and Social Education***  
***Community and Service***

***Approaches to Learning*** asks students to reflect on how they learn best, how they know they have acquired knowledge or a skill, and how they can most effectively communicate their understanding of a concept or skill.



For example, in a **Grade 6 Instrumental Music Class**, ***Approaches to Learning*** might ask students to determine what constitutes a “good” tone, how to produce one, and how a poor tone quality affects the sound of an instrument or the overall sound of an ensemble

***Environment*** encourages students to speculate about where they live, sustainable options, and, as residents, the extent of their responsibilities.

In a **Grade 7 World Studies (Humanities) Class**, students would use the concept of ***Environment*** to understand how the diverse geography of Africa influenced the patterns of human settlement



## Assessment

The ***Middle Years Programme*** at The Silver Spring International Middle School is dedicated to providing a rigorous course of study in all eight required disciplines. Assessment is a key component in the establishment and maintenance of rigorous standards. In accordance with the MCPS policy on Grading and Reporting, students are individually evaluated using a variety of scoring tools and rubrics, including written assessments, projects, and oral presentations to determine their degree of mastery of skills and objectives.

Should you need additional information, please call the main office at The Silver Spring International Middle School. Ms. Parcan, Principal, Ms. Caison, MYP Coordinator, and staff members are available to assist. Our telephone numbers are (301) 650-6544 and (301) 562-5244 (fax).

We are located at 313 Wayne Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910.



[www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/ssims](http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/ssims)

The ***International Baccalaureate*** web site is an additional source of information on at

[www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)

Below is a sampling of typical schedules for grades 7 and 8. Please note that some students may be required to take a dedicated reading class. By the end of Grade 7, students need to select an art elective major if they opt to complete the 3-year program in Grade 8. It will be one of the eight subjects in which they will need to demonstrate mastery in their final performance assessments. Seventh grade students may opt to extend their semester class to an entire year with teacher permission if there is room in the second semester class.

and subsequent active-ties across the continent.

<b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Scheduling</b>	
<b>Math</b> <b>Language A (English)</b> <b>Science</b> <b>Humanities (World Studies)</b> <b>Physical Education/Health</b>	
<b>Reading</b>  Arts Elective(s): <b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade</b> = 2 Semesters <b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b> = Full year of one the following options... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Visual Art</li> <li>○ Print/Web Publications</li> <li>○ FACS</li> <li>○ Media/Theatre</li> <li>○ Dance</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <b>Music (Full Year):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Band</li> <li>○ Orchestra</li> </ul>	<b>Language B:</b> Full year of French or Spanish at the introductory, accelerated, or immersion level  Arts Elective(s): <b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade</b> = 2 Semesters <b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b> = Full year of one the following options... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Visual Art</li> <li>○ Print/Web Publications</li> <li>○ FACS</li> <li>○ Media/Theatre</li> <li>○ Dance</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <b>Music (Full Year):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Band</li> <li>○ Orchestra</li> </ul>

Students enrolled in either French or Spanish Immersion classes receive their world studies instruction in the target language.

**Homo Faber** stimulates students to explore why and how humans create, the consequences of human creation, and the contributions of human creativity to world culture. In a **Grade 8 Math Class**, students use **Homo Faber** to explain the use of geometric shapes and principles to create a stronger structure or more protective packaging.



**Health and Social Education** encourages students to be aware of how they think and act, how they are changing as they grow through adolescence, and how they can effectively look after their own needs and those of others.

In a **Grade 7 FACS (Family and Consumer Science Class)** students use the lens of **Health and Social Education** to determine how the individual and society both benefit when people make informed nutritional food choices.



**Community and Service** helps student focus on how we live in relation to each other, how we can help each other, and how we each can contribute for the benefit of the community. In a **Grade 6 Reading Class**, students use **Community and Service** as the premise for exploring how effective management of information increases their ability to understand and communicate ideas.



### Scheduling

Many factors influence the finalization of the Master Schedule of classes, including student enrollment, staffing allocations, and the need to balance student preferences with the

required course of studies. Seven of the programme's eight disciplines—math, science, language A (English), language B (foreign language), humanities (world studies), the arts, physical education/health—are taught independently. To meet the programme's fifty hour minimum, the eighth subject, technology, is infused in the form of ten class-room hours of design (problem-solving) or computer-based projects in each of the other disciplines.



Below is an example of a typical student schedule for Grade 6. Note that a dedicated reading class is an MCPS requirement in this grade.

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade Scheduling</b>	
<b>Math</b> <b>Language A (English)</b> <b>Science</b> <b>Humanities (World Studies)</b> <b>Physical Education/Health</b>	
<b>Reading</b>  Arts Elective(s): <b>Rotation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1 quarter of Language B: Awareness of Language</li> <li>○ 1 quarter of 3 electives (Theatre, FACS and Art)</li> </ul> <b>OR</b> <b>Music (Full Year with 50 hours of Awareness of Language infused):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Band</li> <li>○ Orchestra</li> </ul>	<b>Language B:</b> French or Spanish Immersion ( <i>includes Reading in the target language</i> )  Arts Elective(s): <b>Rotation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1 quarter of Language B: Awareness of Language</li> <li>○ 1 quarter of 3 electives (Theatre, FACS and Art)</li> </ul> <b>OR</b> <b>Music (Full Year):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Band</li> <li>○ Orchestra</li> </ul>