



Lexington Middle School

An International Baccalaureate Candidate Program

INSPIRE PREPARE EMPOWER

Dear Eighth Grade Wildcat Parents and Students,

We are very excited about the 2016-2017 school year as we prepare our eighth graders for high school and beyond! We are in our last year of IB candidacy and anticipate to be fully authorized as an IB Middle Years Programme school by the end of this school year. Our students have been immersed in the IB and have learned about the IB Learner Traits, participated in leadership lessons, and developed IB Approaches to Learning skills. Units of study at LMS have been designed to capitalize on student curiosity, develop the learner profile, and create meaningful connections across different subjects and the real world.

It is the mission of our school and the IB to empower students to create a better world. Learning is enriched when students apply what they learn and witness the impact they can have in the real world. As part of the 8th grade experience at LMS, we will ask all students to complete a community project. Basically, we want them to find an interest, learn more about that interest, and take action to use this learning in a positive way for their community, either locally or globally. If they get hooked on community service, that's a bonus for everyone!

The experience the eighth graders received in their seventh grade ELA classes last year through their IB units of study and work on the "Lesson of the Year" Reflective Essay set the stage for them to begin looking at how they connect with their world. Then through their Summer Reading assignment, they have been able to take that a step further to research and read articles and develop an infographic that depicts behaviors and traits a person should have in order to positively impact others and their world. These experiences will help our eighth graders frame their community project work.

Many of our LMS kids are already doing amazing work in the community. We don't want to add one more thing to their plates, but we do want to provide an opportunity for exploration of an interest or prompt a new experience. The project may be built around something the student is already working on, like scouts or a church youth group project. We want parents involved, but we don't want the project to force parents to spend money, drive students around town, or do the project themselves. The project outline students will receive will explain that students need to discuss their interests and plans with parents and come to an agreement about the direction for the work.

The choice of the goal or topic for the project is also made in consultation with a teacher who has the responsibility for supervising the development of the project. The project will not be graded, but feedback will be given to the students. Some time will be provided for students to work on projects at school, but some of the project should be completed outside of the normal school day. All completers of the 8th grade project will be invited to an off-campus celebration and special IB Middle Years Programme graduation.

Students will attend a short assembly during the second week of school to learn more about the project. In the meantime, we hope you will help them start thinking of ideas and types of projects they might want to complete. See the reverse side of this letter for a few ideas. Also, please help spread the word in our community. We hope to partner with businesses, youth groups, scout troops, neighborhood associations, local, national, or international - anyone who has opportunities for our kids to serve and learn can help us out!

We are so excited about this opportunity for our students. I can't wait to see what they accomplish. If you have any questions or want to connect a community leader or organization to the 8th grade project, please email LMS IB Coordinator Lauren Lavenia, Llavenia@lexington1.net. We are ready to inspire, prepare and empower our Wildcats!

Gloria Nester
Principal, Lexington Middle School

The Community Project focuses on community and service, encouraging students to explore their right and responsibility to take action by serving in the community. Have you ever been inspired to affect change in your community or the environment (group, class, school, city, ecosystems, state, country, and world)? Here's your opportunity. Welcome to the Community Project!

The learning objectives of MYP projects are to encourage and enable students to:

- participate in a sustained, self-directed inquiry within a global context;
- generate creative new insights and develop deeper understandings through in-depth investigation;
- demonstrate the skills, attitudes and knowledge required to complete a project over an extended period of time;
- communicate effectively in a variety of situations;
- demonstrate responsible action through, or as a result of, learning; and,
- appreciate the process of learning and take pride in their accomplishments.

What Type of Community Project Can We Do? Examples?

IDENTITIES & RELATIONSHIPS GLOBAL CONTEXT

- Laughter therapy campaign in children's hospital or retirement community
- Tutoring classes providing additional or special instruction to elementary school students
- Researching the effects of soft drinks on digestion and developing a campaign to promote healthy choices

ORIENTATION IN SPACE AND TIME GLOBAL CONTEXT

- Helping a museum or historical society to contribute to maintaining and recovering local history
- Making a plan for wheelchair accessibility
- Inspired by lack of facilities in the local community, seeking to improve the facilities for young people by producing an article for the school magazine summarizing the problem and possible solutions

PERSONAL AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION GLOBAL CONTEXT

- Improving the environment in a hospital by designing/creating a series of pictures to hang in the corridors
- Performing a theatre play to raise awareness on bullying
- Promoting intercultural understanding through a graffiti contest

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INNOVATION GLOBAL CONTEXT

- Helping a local community make an efficient, low-cost use of energy-powered devices
- Campaigning to reduce paper use and to promote recycling
- Campaigning to reduce water, electricity or fuel waste

GLOBALIZATION AND SUSTAINABILITY GLOBAL CONTEXT

- Campaigning to raise awareness and reduce plastic straw waste use
- Passing a plan to local authorities for tree planting in an area in need of re-greening
- Planning a school or community garden

FAIRNESS AND DEVELOPMENT GLOBAL CONTEXT

- Campaigning for human trafficking awareness
- Contributing to educational opportunities, for example, supporting a local non-profit organization that works on literacy in our town
- Addressing the concerns of immigrants and migrant populations