BHMS CURRICULUM GUIDE 2019–2020

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MISSION STATEMENT
Guided by the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, Brooklyn Heights Montessori School is a diverse community committed to educational excellence, serving students in preschool through Grade 8. At our center is respect for the individual child’s development and potential. Our carefully designed environment encourages the student’s natural curiosity. We inspire a love of independent learning and foster critical thinking by engaging students in a challenging and meaningful curriculum.

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By encouraging personal responsibility, leadership, and respect for self and others, we teach children to be thoughtful and confident citizens of the School and the world.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT
Grounded in the Montessori philosophy, in particular its peace mission and recognition of fundamental needs, the BHMS community acknowledges the intrinsic dignity of every person and our joyful connection with and responsibility to each other across identifiers, beyond nations and borders, and through time. We are a community that stands for equity and social justice, namely we strive for equitable access to political, economic, and social rights and opportunities. Our commitment to diversity is actively and intentionally undertaken by every community member, to be aware of ourselves and each other, to take care of our community — local and global — and to name and oppose inequality and injustice when it is present.

For these reasons, we recognize and welcome diversity in our community. Among the many identifiers that contribute to our diversity and that affect our experiences are age, ability, ethnicity, family composition, gender identity and expression, learning differences, race, culture, religion, sexuality, and socio-economic status.

BHMS supports community members in their growth and awareness of their own multifaceted identities and the diversity of identity in the world around them. Our community embraces these ongoing efforts, confident that we each have a valuable role to play in making a positive difference in society, both inside and outside the classroom.
Mixed-age Classes
Guided by their teachers, students learn from and teach each other. Students develop collaboration and leadership skills, compassion, and mastery of the material.

Three-year Cycle
Teachers gain an intimate knowledge of each student’s individual learning style and potential. A spiraling curriculum develops a deeper understanding of academic subjects.

Montessori Materials
Self-correcting, hands-on materials are designed to develop a student’s independence, self-confidence, and depth of knowledge through tactile experiences.

Prepared Environment
Students have choice within a carefully designed environment. This creates a structure that develops critical thinking and independent problem-solving skills by allowing students time to explore, discover, concentrate, research, and learn at their own pace.

Teachers closely monitor each student’s progress, helping them make good choices that support learning and exploration of all academic subjects.

Intrinsic Motivation
Intrinsic motivation: Students work toward their own goals, which deepens their interest and satisfaction, rather than for external rewards.

It is widely recognized that individuals are more highly motivated when they have a vested interest in their pursuits and goals.

Grace and Courtesy
Students are encouraged to be thoughtful of the needs of others and engage with others in a respectful manner. Compassion is a characteristic held in high regard within our Montessori community.

Anti-Bias Education for Equity and Social Justice
The Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards are used to inform our ongoing work of anti-bias, multicultural, and social justice education at BHMS. Students are introduced to the Four Core Goals of Anti-Bias Education, which explore Identity, Diversity, Justice, and Action.
TEACHING TOLERANCE ANCHOR STANDARDS AND DOMAINS

IDENTITY

1. Students will develop positive social identities based on their membership in multiple groups in society.
2. Students will develop language and historical and cultural knowledge that affirm and accurately describe their membership in multiple identity groups.
3. Students will recognize that people’s multiple identities interact and create unique and complex individuals.
4. Students will express pride, confidence and healthy self-esteem without denying the value and dignity of other people.
5. Students will recognize traits of the dominant culture, their home culture and other cultures and understand how they negotiate their own identity in multiple spaces.

DIVERSITY

6. Students will express comfort with people who are both similar to and different from them and engage respectfully with all people.
7. Students will develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.
8. Students will respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.
9. Students will respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection.
10. Students will examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified.

JUSTICE

11. Students will recognize stereotypes and relate to people as individuals rather than representatives of groups.
12. Students will recognize unfairness on the individual level (e.g., biased speech) and injustice at the institutional or systemic level (e.g., discrimination).
13. Students will analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today.
14. Students will recognize that power and privilege influence relationships on interpersonal, intergroup and institutional levels and consider how they have been affected by those dynamics.
15. Students will identify figures, groups, events and a variety of strategies and philosophies relevant to the history of social justice around the world.
16. Students will express empathy when people are excluded or mistreated because of their identities and concern when they themselves experience bias.
17. Students will recognize their own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice and injustice.
18. Students will speak up with courage and respect when they or someone else has been hurt or wronged by bias.
19. Students will make principled decisions about when and how to take a stand against bias and injustice in their everyday lives and will do so despite negative peer or group pressure.
20. Students will plan and carry out collective action against bias and injustice in the world and will evaluate what strategies are most effective.
TWOS

Children this age crave independence and are curious and eager to learn. During this significant developmental period, the program at Brooklyn Heights Montessori School (BHMS) offers a gentle introduction to the group experience while responding to the young child's need to explore the world and exercise independence. During the beginning months of school, learning to separate is the big task children work on. Teachers work closely with each family (both parents and child) to ensure that this first school experience is a positive one.

The classroom is tailored to each child's interests and developmental stage, and it is organized to a child's sensibilities, enabling them to take turns, play, and learn how to choose what interests them most. The classroom contains carefully selected materials that respect the child's sense of order and their need to repeat an activity until a new skill has been fully experienced. Curriculum materials are changed periodically throughout the year, maintaining a focus on pre-reading and pre-math materials, as well as nature studies and art activities.

In response to this stage of growth, our teachers encourage the child's need to explore through sensory experience: to touch, taste, move, listen, observe, and make noise. Children want and need to do for themselves, and our program is designed to meet this developmental need. The teachers provide the children ample time to accomplish tasks at their own pace, while encouraging and supporting their developing skills and language. A focus on Grace and Courtesy allows the children to take care of themselves and their classmates and to become aware of themselves within the community.

PRESCHOOL

At BHMS the Preschool program is the first of the mixed-age programs, which is a significant and critical component of the Montessori approach. It creates a unique cycle of learning designed to take advantage of the sensitive period in a child's life between the ages of three and six, when the mind acts as an "absorbent sponge" for information. In the first two years of the cycle, the materials used help children to develop order, coordination, concentration, and independent work habits, which are essential for the more advanced skills and materials they will encounter at ages five and six. The child enjoys three specific roles within the mixed-age group — being the youngest, the middle, and the oldest. Each provides a particular social and academic vantage point in the class.
and aids children in developing empathy and acceptance of different viewpoints. It also gives children a longer period of time to practice developing skills than a traditional classroom allows. It offers the older students the opportunity to consolidate newly learned skills and concepts by teaching what they know to younger classmates, which in turn creates a deeper and more lasting knowledge base.

The Preschool program offers children the opportunity to develop in a Montessori environment that focuses on the independent self within a community. Through the structure of the classroom and guidance from the teachers, children learn to take responsibility for their own learning. Small groups and individual instruction characterize the Preschool. Teachers move throughout the classroom, facilitating children’s work choices and social interactions.

In the mixed-age classrooms, children are given the opportunity to teach themselves, learn from one another, and to assume leadership roles. The classrooms offer a wide range of developmentally appropriate educational materials that are easily accessible and inviting. In addition to traditional Montessori materials, many classroom activities are designed by the teachers; they monitor and adapt activities according to the needs and interests of the children.

The classrooms are divided into several distinct areas designed to engage children’s interest, with each section containing activities offering varying degrees of challenge. Ranging from simple to complex, the graduated activities are designed to increase concentration, focus, fine motor control, and organizational skills.

The Practical Life area is designed to teach care of self and the environment, and lays the foundation for all other areas in the room. Embedded in this area are indirect lessons in the organization of one’s work space, proceeding in a task from left to right, and the cycle of work needed for self-direction: to choose, work on a task until completion, and return it in readiness for the next person. Children choose from a variety of activities such as spooning, pouring, cutting, buttoning, and other related experiences. Grace and courtesy is cultivated — teachers spend time throughout the year on social graces ranging from washing hands before eating or sneezing into a tissue or elbow, to various stages of conflict resolution.

As young children experience the world around them through the constant engagement of their senses, the Sensorial materials were designed to help sharpen these and to categorize the many impressions received through them. The materials isolate one defining quality or attribute at a time, and provide exercises that lead to the gradation of qualities, such as size, shape, color, texture, and sound.

Children learn how to distinguish differences and use quantitative terms — large/small, rough/smooth, loud/soft. Children learn to organize their sensory impressions, distinguish between and categorize them, and then relate new information to what they know about these qualities.

In the Math area, Montessori materials provide concrete, hands-on exploration of the concept of number. Children begin to grasp one-to-one correspondence, further develop quantitative terms (less than/more than), and learn to recognize numerals and match quantities. Children are also introduced to the concepts of addition, subtraction, division, multiplication and geometry through structured math materials and daily classroom practices and activities, providing the stepping-stones for deeper understanding and skill development in the Lower Elementary Program.

In the Language Arts area, both pre-reading and early reading and writing skills are supported through a variety
of phonemic awareness materials sandpaper letters, shapes for tracing, movable alphabet, matching activities associated with different letter sounds, letter blending and sequencing. Children are read to in large and small groups, as well as individually. As they develop, they learn how to retell stories, understand plot, elaborate ideas, generate stories, generate rhymes, and make comparisons. The classrooms have cozy reading centers filled with books and at times listening stations are set up for children to use.

In the Science area, children experience a curriculum that encourages them to explore their place in the world and the Universe. The children engage in simple experiments and observation tasks, including feeding and observing the class pet. Over the course of the three-year cycle, they learn about the seasons, the solar system, and the human body, and study the cycle of life through observing animal and plant life. Every spring, children begin an ecology curriculum, starting with soil planting in the classroom and culminating in gardening on the roof. They also study the life cycle of the butterfly. Geography—separated into physical and cultural—is another element of the curriculum that introduces children to their place in the universe. The year starts with understanding the properties of land, air, and water, and progresses to identifying the continents, before moving on to other elements of physical geography, such as landforms. The curriculum expands as children learn about different aspects of the physical world. Bioforms, such as rainforests and deserts, are explored and students enjoy researching the similarities and differences of these ecosystems across the world.

Our Cultural world is explored through the study of different biomes and cultures each year. Through biome studies, children begin to understand how different climatic conditions affect the way people live and meet their fundamental human needs. Through information shared in the Family Questionnaire, teachers will encourage families to visit the classroom and share traditions, foods, stories and songs specific to their cultural heritage.

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The Art area provides exposure to a variety of media, to brush and writing tool techniques as well as a variety of methods to layer paints and use paper to create two- and three-dimensional structures. Children create self-portraits at the beginning and the end of each year. The proper care of materials is also stressed. Children are free to pursue their own creative instincts in this area — emphasis is placed on "process over product."

In preschool Music, children are introduced to songs, chants, and games both familiar and from around the world. Third year students (5s) also learn to make and follow simple rhythmic patterns, sing rounds, and play instruments in their separate weekly music classes.

In Kindergarten, the Physical Education program emphasizes the development of the ABCS (agility, balance, coordination, and speed). Students are introduced to fundamental locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills. In addition, students develop listening skills. Grace, courtesy, and other cooperative skills are taught and modeled. Students will develop skills independently as well as cooperatively. The focus is on learning through movement, play, and repetition.

In the afternoon following lunch, the full-day fours have a short rest in their classroom while the full-day threes have a rest period in a separate nap room. During the afternoon of the full-day program, children further develop their academic and collaborative skills. The extension of their morning work cycle provides time to explore topics in more depth. The full-day students also meet regularly with their "buddy" class, enabling children to meet new friends and explore another Montessori classroom. Once a week each class visits the school library for story reading and selection of books.

Each year of the three-year cycle has its own unique characteristics. Students in the first year of the cycle are very focused on the practical life and sensorial works — keen to flex their ability to do for themselves and to master tasks that support them in this. Our main goal for them is to develop a strong work cycle. Second, or middle, year students are excited to discover new and stimulating tasks, and are quite concerned with the social aspects of what others are doing and who is their friend — a position that can change from day-to-day as they experience what it means to be a friend.

The final year in the age 3-6 cycle, the Kindergarten year, is one of integration and challenge — previously difficult tasks and concepts begin to fall into place. Children know the routines and social mores of the class and step up in the roles of leader and mentor to
their younger classmates. They can work independently on many activities in the room, and whether showing familiar tasks to others, or working on newly introduced materials, they work for mastery and to consolidate their knowledge. They are excited to work on special projects such as an alphabet dictionary, an art and writing journal, or their autobiography. In addition, students are working on the more advanced Montessori math and language materials. They begin to develop an understanding of number patterns, such as counting by 2s or 10s, and start to recognize nouns, verbs, and adjectives and how they function in sentences.

Kindergarten students truly ‘own’ the classroom and are proud of their senior role. As such, they meet regularly and partner with their teachers to determine which works will provide a new level of challenge for them, and which need continued practice. In discussing their assignments with the teacher, third year students begin to take ownership of and responsibility for their learning. In the latter half of their final year students visit the Lower Elementary classes to prepare for their move to Grade 1. These visits mark a turnkey moment and psychological shift in their school experience, which underscores their growth and readiness for the next step in their Montessori Journey.

LOWER ELEMENTARY

The Lower Elementary program at BHMS consists of the three-year cycle including Grades 1–3.

Global Cultures Curriculum

The global cultures curriculum provides an interdisciplinary framework that connects across subjects. Each year, students explore several countries in depth, making sure to touch on different continents. The students also study the United States each year, and study the United Nations once within the three-year cycle. The Lower Elementary team uses field trips, science connections, music, poetry, folktales, and mythology to tie together the global cultures curriculum. This comparative study of cultures, food, religions, geography, and plant and animal life helps children build their understanding of our common human experience.

Language Arts

In Lower Elementary, children spend three years building on their reading, writing, and language skills. Montessori materials give them a sensorial experience of forming words, understanding parts of speech, and analyzing sentence structure. The Word Tower contains sets of cards that children can manipulate to explore language concepts such as synonyms, antonyms, affixes, and homophones. Literacy skills are supported using a framework called Daily Five. Daily Five guides the curriculum, allowing students to build stamina and independence and engage in meaningful, authentic reading and writing tasks each day. There are five different choices students can make to work on developing their literacy:
1. Read to Self
2. Work on Writing
3. Read to Someone
4. Word Work
5. Listen to Reading

Students begin with acquiring decoding strategies necessary to access increasingly complex texts. Next they are introduced to comprehension strategies that give them practice with inference and analysis. During
In first grade students focus on place value into the thousands along with static and dynamic (regrouping of numbers) addition and subtraction. Second grade students review place value, explore multiplication through the study of multiple, continue their work in addition and subtraction with multi-digit operations, and are introduced to the commutative law (i.e., a+b is the same as b+a). As they move towards abstraction, students continue working with dynamic addition, subtraction, and multiplication problems. By third grade, students have been introduced to long division using the Montessori racks and tubes; and work on solving various operations with fractions. While basic facts about perimeter, area and volume are introduced earlier, these concepts are explored more deeply in the third grade.

Topics covered in math are explored each year with five choices while teachers confer with individuals and target specific skills based on each child’s needs. Students work towards the goal of having times tables mastered by Grade 4 along with addition and subtraction with multi-digit operations. Using ‘doubles’ and ‘make ten’ activities, students continue working with dynamic addition, subtraction, and multiplication problems. By third grade, students continue working with dynamic addition, subtraction, and multiplication problems. By third grade, students have been introduced to long division using the Montessori racks and tubes; and work on solving various operations with fractions. While basic facts about perimeter, area and volume are introduced earlier, these concepts are explored more deeply in the third grade.

In the Lower Elementary program, all students delve into life science, earth science, and physical science through formal lessons, hands-on experiences, independent research, the exploration of objects and materials, and observing and caring for plants and animals. Students are introduced to the Scientific Method and conduct experiments to test their hypotheses. They develop skills in how to observe, record, and summarize their observations and findings. Each spring, their science studies culminate in presentations to classmates of self-selected science experiments.

Spanish

Lower Elementary students are first introduced to Spanish through spontaneous and playful activities, sing-alongs, the use of concrete materials and TPR (Total Physical Response). The TPR method combines listening and physical gestures to help students gain comfort, confidence and skill with a new language. The TPR skills of observing, listening to, interpreting, executing and giving commands increase in difficulty as the students advance.

The students prepare to identify graphemes (letters) and their corresponding phonemes (sounds) in Spanish, as they train their auditory skills for recognition and identification of words. Students are introduced to theme-based vocabulary, grammar, and spelling according to their grade level. The program is based on the Montessori methodology, and uses technology as a supporting tool.

At each grade level, the children also explore the cultures of various Spanish-speaking countries, learning about each country’s geographical location, history, landmarks, and culinary diversity, which they get to experience through a cooking lesson.
UPPER ELEMENTARY

The Upper Elementary program consists of the three-year cycle including Grades 4–6.

Culture and Science

Linked Culture and Science units inspired by Montessori’s Great lessons provide a framework for students to engage in in-depth study and to discover connections among subject areas over the three-year cycle. The Culture and Science curricula build on and further develop the students’ developing skills as readers, writers, researchers, and investigators. Students explore topics in in-depth, four-week units, each including research, project-based work, and creative and nonfiction writing. Guided by teacher support, the students work individually and in small and large groups. Upper Elementary students celebrate and share their studies with the community as they finish each unit. An annual learning expo features students’ investigations of the world around them.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

YEAR A
- The Story of the Coming of Humans
  - Early Humans
- The Story of Numbers
  - Ancient Cultures
- The Story of the Creation of the Universe
  - Astronomy and our Solar System
- The Middle Ages and the Renaissance
- The “New World”: Explorers and the Americas
- The Human Body
- The Story of Life: From the Beginning of Time
  - Zoology
- The Story of the Coming of Life
  - Botany
- Physics and Chemistry
- The Story of the Universe
  - Geologic Eras

YEAR B
- The Middle Ages and the Renaissance
- The “New World”: Explorers and the Americas
- New York City: Then and Now
- The Human Body
- The Earth’s Crust
- Physics and Chemistry
- The Story of the Universe
  - Geologic Eras
  - The Earth’s Crust

YEAR C
- Northeast Indigenous Peoples: Then and Now
- New York City: Then and Now
- The Human Body
- Physics and Chemistry
- The Story of the Universe
  - Geologic Eras
  - The Earth’s Crust

PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE THEME

- Human Rights
- Citizenship
- Immigration

Students complete research and creative writing as a part of each science and culture unit.
Reading and Writing
As in Lower Elementary, reading and writing occur daily and across the curriculum. The goals of the Upper Elementary three-year cycle are to help students to read to learn, to foster a love of reading, to give students tools to appreciate literature and nonfiction, and to help students to build effective writing skills.

Language arts studies link to the three-year cycle of culture, science units and to social justice themes inspired by Maria Montessori’s peace curriculum. During the week, small reading groups meet with teachers to build on students’ comprehension and fluency skills. Upper Elementary students practice their growing skills in retelling a sequence of events, recalling details, making inferences, understanding conflict, perceiving characters’ motivations, recognizing mood, comprehending simple metaphors, and identifying themes of literature. Students write about their reading in response to assigned prompts and topics of their own choice. Poetry reading, appreciation, and writing are important components of the Language Arts program. Reading aloud to the entire class is a beloved BHMS tradition that deepens learning, promotes discussion, provides opportunities to write, and builds community.

The writing curriculum is informed by the Hochman program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The Singapore Math Program common core edition is used in grades 4-6, supplemented with lessons from other texts. Lessons with Montessori materials are presented on a regular basis as students move from the concrete to the abstract in their understanding. Materials are available for individual follow-up work and review.

The math curriculum spirals from the Lower Elementary to the Upper Elementary program, fostering students’ conceptual understanding of mathematical ideas as they move from concrete to more abstract reasoning.

The goals of the math curriculum are to help students develop greater problem-solving skills, strengthen their number sense, and hone their computational skills. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence. The program’s sequence is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics and critical thinking skills, building both understanding and confidence.
Spanish

As in Lower Elementary, Spanish is taught in grade level groups. The overall goals of the curriculum are to develop basic skills in reading, writing, listening comprehension, and speaking. The program also fosters an interest in learning the language and becoming aware of the richness and diversity of the Spanish-speaking world.

During the fourth and fifth grades, students learn through a variety of methods. Songs, stories, and games facilitate learning, and students learn about grammar and pronunciation at age-appropriate levels. As the students advance, textbooks, magazine articles, poetry, and website-based activities are added. Student work involves skits, dialogs, projects, and writing activities. The students and the teacher create classroom materials. Upper Elementary students learn about the cultural aspects of Spanish-speaking countries through the study of art, architecture, food, literature, and music.

In the sixth grade, students meet more frequently to work on foundational skills to prepare for Spanish at the middle school level. Students develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening communication skills. Basic grammatical topics are presented alongside thematic vocabulary to encourage students to use the language with confidence and frequency.

Student work involves writing skits, analyzing poetry, cooking traditional foods, making traditional crafts and learning songs. Students follow a self-directed study of real world Spanish as part of weekly homework. Project-based exploration of cultures include Mexico and Puerto Rico. Students create presentations about the food, music, history, art, and geography of each of these countries.

Health Class

Upper Elementary Health classes meet weekly with the School psychologist. Each grade meets for Health one trimester per year.

Grade 4:

In the first trimester, the School psychologist meets with the fourth graders, working closely with them to help them transition into the Upper Elementary program. The students now have the academic foundations, along with the cognitive development, to take on more rigorous work. Topics covered include organizational skills, how to adjust to the new environment and expectations of the classroom, study skills, relaxation exercises, and friendships. The learning specialist joins the group for the first weeks to help develop students’ organizational skills, and our dance instructor joins the group to work on relaxation exercises.

Grade 5:

Classes include topics such as relaxation and stress reduction, personal safety (at home, on the street and on the internet), human development, gender inclusivity, as well as how to identify and stop unkind behavior among peers.

Grade 6:

Classes include topics such as decision-making skills, human development, gender inclusivity, the changing nature of friendships (crushes, for example), and how to navigate the world of social media. Lastly, focus is also on preparation for the transition into seventh grade.
MIDDLE SCHOOL

The culminating cycle at BHMS is Middle School, a two-year sequence, including Grade 7 and Grade 8, of thematically linked Humanities, Science, and Social Growth units. Students explore historical and scientific themes and their connections to current events and their own lives. As in the Upper Elementary program, the curriculum follows a trimester schedule, and the units are further broken down into six-week cycles. At this plane of development, students are better able to reason abstractly and begin to construct their adult selves. The more complex units of study reflect this change.

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### BHMS MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM YEAR A

#### HUMANITIES

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<th>TRIMESTER 2</th>
<th>TRIMESTER 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your World: Current Events</td>
<td>Colonial America: Jamestown and Salem</td>
<td>American Revolution and Forms of Governments</td>
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#### SOCIAL GROWTH

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<td>Design</td>
<td>Forces and Motion</td>
<td>Religion and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forming a Community</td>
<td>Setting a Course</td>
<td>Christianity and Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nature Trip</td>
<td>In-school Service</td>
<td>Genetics and Technology</td>
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<td>Academic Organization and Independence</td>
<td>Gardening and Cooking</td>
<td>Self Assesment</td>
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#### SCIENCE

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### BHMS MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM YEAR B

#### HUMANITIES

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<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Expansion</td>
<td>Slavery and Industry in 19th Century America</td>
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<td>The Earth</td>
<td>Sun and Moon</td>
<td>Sound and Light</td>
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<tr>
<td>Founding a Community</td>
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<td>Understanding One Another</td>
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<td>Nature Trip</td>
<td>In-school Service</td>
<td>Community and Diversity Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Organization and Independence</td>
<td>Gardening and Cooking</td>
<td>Community and Diversity Work</td>
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#### SCIENCE

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#### SOCIAL GROWTH

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Language Arts
Reading and writing in the middle school become paths to deeper thinking. Students learn to understand increasingly complex texts, make connections among ideas, and communicate their own ideas effectively. Students read and discuss novels, plays, short stories, nonfiction, and poetry. Many of the works are thematically linked to the Humanities curriculum, which allows students to engage in deeper conversations and make more interesting connections. Students learn to participate actively in conversations about literature, developing their own arguments and ideas and supporting those ideas by citing evidence from the texts they have read.

Students learn to express themselves orally and on the page in a clear, persuasive, and informed manner. A highly structured process helps students to build strong skills and to think critically and creatively, preparing them for the writing they will do in their high school classes. Over the two-year cycle, students learn to organize, write and revise a wide variety of essays, including personal essays, literary analysis essays, document-based questions and a lengthy research project. As students gain comfort with standard essay forms, they are encouraged to develop a distinct individual voice and approach. Students apply what they are learning about literature in their own fiction, dramatic vignettes, and poetry. Continuing work on grammar, vocabulary, and the editing process strengthens students’ developing skills. A further aim of the curriculum is to support the ongoing development of students’ organizational skills, both with time and with materials.

Linked with the Middle School Language Arts curriculum is the production of a Shakespeare play each year. This is a collaborative venture involving the art and drama teachers along with the Middle School Language Arts teacher. The students study the play in depth in their Language Arts class and work with the art teachers to develop a set, costumes, and media for the play. The process culminates as the students present the full play for the whole community.

Math
In Middle School, students continue with the Singapore Math Program. Depending on the topics covered, different approaches are adopted when presenting concepts to help students better understand the material and to internalize the processes that they explore. Students begin Grade 7 studying pre-algebra and finish Grade 8 having completed Algebra I.

In Grade 7, students work with concepts surrounding real numbers, algebraic manipulation, rate, ratio and proportion, percentages and data handling, geometry and spatial understanding, and statistics. Grade 8 students dive deeper into algebra with an in-depth study of linear and quadratic equations, and also move into studying geometry through lines and three-dimensional shapes. Data interpretation is also developed as students solve complex problems using graphing techniques and applying the Pythagorean Theorem. The goal of the Grade 8 class is for students to complete Algebra I.

Our curriculum allows students to learn through a combination of teacher-led lessons, individual projects that apply concepts to real-world situations, collaborative group work, and class discussions.

Science Lab Work
Science classes in the Middle School build on skills learned by students during their Upper Elementary and Lower Elementary years. While the content of the coursework involves challenging and exciting branches of science like Physical Science, Engineering, Genetics, Chemistry, Environmental and Life Science, the work done by students continues to be empirical and hands-on, with a greater focus on the Scientific Method. The students learn through teacher and student presentations, laboratory work, printed texts, and online resources. Students are required to submit a written lab report for each lab activity.
Science journals, incorporating notes and reports on scientific articles, and group and individual projects provide additional opportunities for written and oral presentations.

**Spanish**

Seventh and eighth graders work from a high school level Spanish I text with the goal of preparing them for advanced Spanish placement in ninth grade. Students develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening communicative skills. Complex grammatical topics are presented alongside thematic vocabulary to encourage students to use the language with confidence and high frequency. Student work involves writing compositions, filming scenes, analyzing poetry, cooking, traditional crafts, and learning songs. Students follow a self-directed study of real world Spanish as part of weekly homework. Project-based exploration of cultures include: Guatemala, Peru, Spain, the United States, Argentina and Chile. Students create presentations about the food, music, history, art, geography, and politics of each of these countries.

Middle School Spanish students are responsible for creating and executing the schedule of events for the BHMS celebration of World Language Week in March. Students choose their own topic or event to plan for the week that celebrates languages and the many benefits of multilingualism.

**The Expert Project and the Magnum Opus**

Each year includes an in-depth, personal exploration: the Expert Project or the Magnum Opus. The Expert Project is a long-term independent research project on a topic of the student’s choosing. It involves a final written paper as well as a multi-media oral presentation. The Magnum Opus is a creative journey—a chance for each student to explore their artistic and creative talents.

Student work has included original music compositions, studies on black holes and neuroscience, novels, video game designs, photography, and designing and making clothing. The students present their projects to parents and the greater school community at the spring Symposium. Because Middle School is a two-year program, students undertake both an Expert Project and a Magnum Opus during their tenures at BHMS.
Health Class

Grade 7:
The grade meets weekly with the school psychologist and health teacher. During the fall the focus is on identity, ethics, and learning about nicotine, alcohol, and other drugs. The school psychologist continues to work with students on general decision-making skills, as well as teaching about human sexuality. During the spring, the school psychologist, along with the Head of The Middle School, shifts the focus to learning about and getting prepared for the high school application process.

Grade 8:
The fall and winter of the Grade 8 year is devoted to the high school admissions process. The school psychologist and Head of The Middle School work with students as they prepare for the transition to high school. Work is done to support students with organization of the application process, interview skills, and general counsel as the students explore what they and their families want out of high school. The focus is on finding schools that are a strong fit for their strengths and interests. In the spring, eighth graders study human sexuality, they plan a 3-day trip for 7th and 8th graders, and also work on their contributions to the graduation ceremony, including the graduation slideshow.

High School Placement Process

Beginning in the spring of Grade 7, students meet weekly as a group with the school psychologist and Head of The Middle School (the High School Placement Team) to map out the steps involved in applying to high school. Topics include learning about the types of schools (public, private, parochial, boarding), the importance of “fit” when it comes to choosing a high school, and how to research schools. Parents meet for a second time as a group in the late spring of Grade 7 with the High School Placement Team to plan out what to expect in the upcoming admissions process. In addition, parents meet one-on-one with the Team to discuss personal plans and to begin to look at the steps involved in applying to high school for their own child once Grade 8 begins.

Starting in the fall of Grade 8, students meet weekly with the High School Placement Team to focus in on the details of the process. Topics covered include how to handle interviews, what to look for on a tour, stress management, and balancing the school workload with the need to focus on the future. As a group, parents of eighth graders meet every six-eight weeks from September to January with the High School Placement Team to cover all aspects of the high school admissions process. They also meet in September individually with the Team to zero in on what their family is looking for in a high school. At any point during the process, either the parents or the High School Placement Team can request additional meetings to work on any aspect of the process.

For students applying to high schools where auditions are required, the visual and performing arts faculty assist in putting together a portfolio. The students are given a mock audition with members of the High School Placement Team as “judges” to help them get used to the process of auditioning. Lastly, we invite members of the admissions departments of different schools to come meet all of the eighth graders as a group, to enable the students to hear about different schools, but also to help them learn to interact with adults who are part of the admissions process.

Each year our students are accepted to a variety of high schools that match their individual needs. They return to tell us that they love their new schools. When tracking our graduates throughout the college years, we find that they continue to seek and are accepted into schools that are the best fit for them.
Montessori education has a deep commitment to the arts and cultural awareness, and the Visual and Performing Arts program maintains this commitment by providing our students with an arts curriculum that works toward making meaningful connections with their classroom curricular work. The Visual and Performing Arts program (VAPA), includes the first through eighth grade arts classes at BHMS. Montessori education has a deep commitment to the arts and cultural awareness, and the Visual and Performing Arts program maintains this commitment by providing our students with an arts curriculum that works toward making meaningful connections with their classroom curricular work.

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LOWER ELEMENTARY
Building the Foundation

Lower Elementary students participate in Visual Arts, Drama, Dance, and Music once each per week.

Visual Arts

The Lower Elementary Visual Arts program is designed to familiarize students in the fundamental components of art making by introducing them to the elements of art: line, shape, form, space, color, and texture. In addition, they learn the proper usage and care of art materials. Art classes give students the opportunity to explore a wide range of materials ranging from graphite pencils and opaque markers to polymer paint and plaster gauze. An array of instructive projects and self-guided work is employed to foster ingenuity as students learn how to apply imaginative thinking to problem solving and develop a greater understanding of the entire creative process.

Through projects varying from mask making, acetate overlays, mono-prints, mixed-media sculpture, drawing, and painting, students explore fundamental art theory and establish a solid basis for future artistic exploration. They learn the ideas and vocabulary appropriate for each endeavor, such as color theory, historical context, and medium-specific technique, and also develop the language and ability to discuss their work. The joy of creation is celebrated, with the emphasis placed on the process of creating art. Student work is displayed throughout the year and shared with the BHMS community at LE VAPA shares by group throughout the year.

Dance

In Lower Elementary Dance, students are introduced to the components of dance making: Body, Space, Time, Energy, and Relationship. They explore these concepts through activities that engage their bodies, imaginations, and intellect. Often the activities are connected to the Lower Elementary cultural curriculum; these activities can be abstract, narrative, or historical. Our goal is to prepare the dancer to have a sense of body awareness in space, access their strength and flexibility, use a variety of dynamics movements, recall and repeat movements, and respond appropriately to music and verbal cues.
Students create, respond to, and perform their own choreography as well as traditional folk dances and improvisations. Improvisation builds problem-solving skills and strengthens self-expression. Students are introduced to the language of dance and taught how to discuss and reflect on their work thoughtfully. Students build their team- work skills by working collaboratively and develop confidence through working independently. Process and creativity are nurtured in class with an emphasis on self-expression. Second and third grade students share their work by VAPA group with the BHMS community at shares throughout the year.

Drama
The Lower Elementary Drama program introduces students to drama through games that explore observation, listening, teamwork, concentration, imagination, the senses, and relaxation. Students discuss the skills involved with each game. The first graders strengthen these skills by working in small group exercises using pantomimes and charades to explore storytelling and performance. The second and third graders begin in-depth work of pantomimes as well as work on developing skills to work collaboratively. Connections to the LE culture curriculum are made through folk tales, short stories, and plays.

The second and third grade students practice memorizing lines and performance skills by sharing a short play or scene with the BHMS community at LE VAPA shares by group throughout the year.

Music
Students develop a strong musical foundation by engaging in group activities such as playing singing games, writing compositions, and rehearsing and performing instrumental and vocal pieces for our community. Rhythm is central to making music with others successfully so students are given many opportunities to step, clap, sing, and play instruments to a steady beat. Students learn to read quarter, eighth, triplets, sixteenth, whole and half notes.

Ear training and singing in pitch are addressed through regularly singing Solfége on a major scale accompanied by the Montessori bells and by learning a wide variety of songs from many musical traditions. Ear training helps students build a solid foundation for melodic music literacy. In Lower Elementary music, children begin to understand melodic notation through their understanding of pitch and the scale. Students broaden their understanding of musical instruments by learning the names and histories of different instruments. They are introduced to the world of music composition through a weekly “Meet The Composer” where they are exposed to works by Classical, Modern, and Contemporary composers.

The students have opportunities to perform songs at The Celebration of Light, Grandparents and Special Friends Day, and 2nd and 3rd grade students perform at VAPA shares by group through the year. As students develop their musical skills as an ensemble, they have many opportunities to work on being patient, supportive, willing to compromise, and to communicate clearly in order to have successful collaborations.

UPPER ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL
Building Upon a Strong Foundation

The Visual and Performing Arts program has two main components:

Core visual and performing arts classes (Grades 4 and 5)

Core VAPA Classes
Core visual and performing arts classes in Grades 4 and 5 include art, dance, drama, and music, which meet once each week.

Art
Using the skills acquired in Lower Elementary art, Upper Elementary students pursue long term projects. Several of these are inspired by their academic curriculum and require more involvement in planning and development on their part. A wide range of art materials are available to experiment with and explore: to create 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional work. Portraiture, figure drawing (proportions and anatomy), linear perspective, devices to approach the picture plane, negative space, volume and shadows, using graduated shapes and forms, needle arts (basic sewing and embroidery), and calligraphy are some of the media explored in the fourth and fifth grades. The joy of creation through the process of making art is celebrated in the visual art classes at BHMS.

Music
Building on the skills acquired in Lower Elementary Music, students in Grades 4 and 5 further develop their skills in ear training and rhythm reading. The classes focus on singing and learning to read melodic notation by playing and reading music for the recorder and
xylophone. In tandem with their ear training and reading skills, students learn to improvise with the notes and rhythms they learn. Students begin to understand time signature through lessons on conducting. Students have an opportunity to test all the skills they have learned in rhythmic and melodic notation and create their own compositions. They learn music that is related to their cultural studies and popular songs of their choosing.

Students hone their performance skills by sharing their work with their families and the BHMS community in UE shares throughout the year, as well as performances at Celebration of Light and Grandparents and Special Friends Day.

Selective VAPA Classes
Selective classes are offered to students in Grades 6, 7 and 8, and allow students an opportunity to pursue a particular artistic area in depth during an intensive period of time: four times a week for one trimester. The culmination of the selective classes is a presentation to the community of the work the students have done throughout the trimester. The following is a sample of classes we are offering.

**VISUAL ARTS:**

**Ceramics**
Students explore the hand building process of ceramics to create both functional and sculptural works. Some of the techniques include pinch pots, coil-building, slab construction, and using plaster molds. Students also have the opportunity to explore wheel-throwing on one of the potter’s wheels during the trimester. From the wedging of the clay to the final glazing of a piece, this class covers the technical aspects of ceramics with an emphasis on developing ideas, design, and form.

**Drawing**
Students begin the trimester by making quick sketches, gesture drawing, and contour drawings. Students explore a variety of marks and rendering techniques using different drawing media so that students become familiar with their options and start to form ideas about their preferences. Students also learn how to use drawing to study the human form, objects and landscapes by drawing from observation. They learn proportions, and anatomy for artists. They learn how to use linear perspective to draw landscapes as well as analyze and re-create objects using light and shadows. As always, emphasis is placed on the medium as language and on the personal vocabulary each individual can develop.

**Outdoor Mural Painting**
Students in outdoor mural making will work with partners to develop concepts and designs for the panels on the Firehouse roof (the Loft). Executing the murals will fill the first portion of the trimester. Students will get an overview of the history of large-scale painting, especially the Mexican muralists, Diego Rivera, David Siqueiros, José Orozco as well as the varied American styles and activity they influenced: historical WPA murals, mural movements in Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles and New York. They will also learn how to use grids, the overhead projector and plumb/chalk line to scale up and transfer their designs to the wall. Simultaneously students will experiment with painting techniques, tools and materials. The remaining time will be devoted to working indoors on still life watercolors and an acrylic easel painting of work by one of the artists previously mentioned.

**Photography**
Students explore light-based image making through many aspects of photography and time-based media: shooting with digital and film cameras, working in the darkroom, utilizing Adobe Creative Suite (including Photoshop, and InDesign), projection imagery, and video work. As a class, students engage in group discussions on history and current events in photography, utilizing the elements of design as it relates to photography, as well as class critiques of works produced throughout each trimester.

**PERFORMING ARTS:**

**Choreography/Rep:**

**Repertoire of the 20th and 21st Centuries**
Students are exposed to a selected repertoire of pieces that made their trademark on dance in the USA and around the world. Iconic works are chosen from artists/choreographers from the twentieth and twenty-first century in various dance genres and techniques. Students learn work that is demanding and requires the ability to manipulate different mediums on stage. This beginning level course will also introduces students to both the exploration of the choreographic process and basic choreographic devices. Emphasis is placed on the intention of creating meaning through the use of time, space, energy/force, and weight. Students research choreographers of the twentieth and twenty-first century, structured improvisations, choreographic tasks, observation and reflection, class discussions, and a final piece is presented at the end of the term.
Percussion
In Percussion class, students learn to play as an ensemble while being exposed to the history and physical attributes of various instruments. Brazilian, African American, Latin American and other popular music inspire the music created by the ensemble. Students conduct each other and learn to create and shape the music as a team. From time to time, experts in specific instruments visit to lead workshops, including demonstrations and lessons.

Acapella to Ukulele
Students study the history of unaccompanied singing and form their own acapella group. Each class consists of listening to recordings, vocal warm-ups, harmonization and rehearsing as an ensemble. Interested students have the opportunity to conduct and sing solo. In the second half of the trimester, students begin learning ukulele. They learn popular chord progressions, strumming patterns and how to accompany themselves. Throughout the trimester students choose their own acapella and ukulele accompanied repertoire to prepare, practice and present at Selective Night.

Salsa Dance
Students explore the history of Salsa dance. They engage in discussions about Latino, Italian, African-American and Jewish immigrants’ cultural and social assimilations, and its expression through Salsa in NYC and the Bronx in the 50’s-90’s. Students learn and develop technical skills, are introduced to partner dancing as well as line dancing. Students learn a choreography as well as develop their own work.

Swing Dance
Students learn beginner level swing dance, focusing on styles like the Lindy Hop and the Boogie. Students develop movement vocabulary with technical awareness and precision. Students learn individual steps utilized in line dancing or when freestyling, as well as partner work. Students learn to lead and follow when dancing in a partnership. Students develop two separate choreographies. One with individual footwork and the second with partner dancing. Students also learn the history of swing both in the US and the world.

Choral Band
In Choral Band, students select and perform songs from different genres with original arrangements for instrument and voice. Supporting a small group of vocalists, students have the opportunity to play an array of percussion instruments including drum set, conga, surdo, and maraca, or pitched instruments including electric guitar, electric bass guitar, keyboards, xylophone, and recorder. Choral Band is particularly special because students can change roles for different songs and play instruments with which they have had no previous experience. Students support each other to learn parts, give important critiques of rehearsals to make improvements, and perform their songs at the end of the trimester.

Shakespeare Collaboration
Middle School students undertake a yearlong study exploring the magical world of one of Shakespeare’s masterpieces and then bring it to life in a full theatrical production in the spring. The work begins in September as all students read the play and examine the text historically in their Language Arts classes. All students meet with the Theater teacher once a week to work on the technical aspects of the play and develop the theatrical language necessary to negotiate the text. In Trimester I, students will each learn a monologue and create a visual set design that include audio and digital visual elements.

Midway through the year, MS students are assigned to the set design team, media team, or the acting ensemble. Students on the media and set design teams switch to meeting with the art and media teachers once a week to learn about stage design and technique, using sound and video, and eventually develop and produce the set and design for the play. The acting students audition and are assigned parts. The actors investigate the text by developing and embodying their characters, unpacking the language, and working as an ensemble to tell the story of the play through scenic work.

In Trimester III, Middle School shifts into full production mode as students prepare for their two performances in May. Students who are on the set design team will work more intensely on the set four days a week using a variety of processes and techniques that include drawing, painting, collage, and sculpture. Students on the media team will also meet four days a week to create audio and visual elements (still and moving images) for the production, create the program and poster, as well as document rehearsals and performances for the BHMS yearbook. In past years Middle School students have performed. The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Comedy of Errors, The Winter’s Tale, Henry V, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Much Ado about Nothing, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, and The Tempest.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION & ATHLETICS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION
Physical Education is an integral component of the Brooklyn Heights Montessori School “whole-child” development process. The goal is for each student to develop a healthy lifestyle through engaging in physical activity and making healthy choices. Research has shown that students who participate in regular physical education will enjoy enhanced memory and learning, better concentration, increased problem-solving abilities and improved executive function skills. Regular physical activity also encourages a positive attitude towards self and others, which is an important factor in creating a healthy learning environment.

Lower School Physical Education
Physical Education in the preschool program supports the development of OCCI: order, concentration, coordination, and independence. While young students are often on the move, this area of physical education focuses on overcoming obstacles rather than the speed in which a challenge is completed. Success in pushing through challenges is the very foundation for confidence and development of positive self-worth. Students are given opportunities to move their entire bodies to develop a keen sense of spatial awareness. Community, responsibility and a sense of order are the building blocks that students attain by assisting in the daily set up and clean up of the classroom, leading group activities and assisting peers with challenges. Preschool students use a variety of equipment and games to develop and grow their balance.

In Lower Elementary, as students strengthen their fine and gross motor skills, a level of complexity is added to the activities. Students are challenged to apply the skills they have recently mastered. Teamwork is introduced at the Lower Elementary level and becomes a new social component for students to learn. This sets a strong foundation for games and collaborative play in a group setting. Mastering these concepts fosters a sense of independence in our students, which in turn drives their love for fitness, movement and a healthy lifestyle. Lower School physical education classes meet once a week.

Physical Education in The Middle School
In Upper Elementary, students work to refine their fundamental skills. With heightened confidence and a sense of independence, students are better prepared to apply all of the skills they’ve learned to game situations. They are introduced to strategy games and have to collaborate in larger groups at a faster pace with more distractions. Lead-up games such as mission impossible, capture the flag, and kickball provide fun challenges, which is appropriately engaging for students early in the middle school years. At this stage of development, children often have to find ways to compromise and collaborate for success. We coach students to be confident in these moments even if the result is positive disagreement. Students learn to be humble leaders, determined workers and gracious finishers...win or lose!
As students in middle school master more specific skills and become efficient movers, they are introduced to fitness in two ways: as a means of competition and as a lifestyle. Students are exposed to a variety of sports and cooperative games with greater emphasis placed on strength, speed, endurance, and overall competition. Students study nutrition and learn about the body as an entity that needs care, protection and preventative measures in order to stay healthy. Because many of our middle school students participate in at least one season of Mustang athletics, we teach mental toughness as it relates to challenges on and off the court or field. Our goal is for students in the middle school to leave BHMS confident in their physical wellness and knowledge of fundamental sports skills. We strive for our students to develop a love for physical activity, sustain a healthy lifestyle, and head off to high school with the skills, determination, and mental fortitude to compete at the next level.

In The Middle School, students have two Physical Education classes each week.

**Mustangs Interscholastic Athletics Program**

The Athletics Program is committed to providing each student with a strong and positive foundation in the experience of team sports, physical activity, and competition. Mustangs athletics emphasizes community, teamwork, skill development and fair play competition. Students have the opportunity to participate in team sports as members of one of our Mustangs athletics teams starting in the 5th grade.

Students receive group and individualized attention during the sports season to build upon and refine skills learned through physical education. Students sign up to participate on a team that will practice and play three times a week. The BHMS Mustangs participate in regularly scheduled games against the larger community of independent schools. Our Varsity teams are members of MSAL (Middle School Athletic League) and our Junior Varsity teams participate in CONSAT (Confederation of New York Schools and Teachers).

At the start of each season, we recognize players and invite the community out to support in our Mustang pep rallies. At the end of the year, we honor all Mustangs and their families at our special athletics banquet, Mustangs Night.

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**Varsity & Junior Varsity Athletics Teams**

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**Varsity & Junior Varsity Athletics Teams**
COMMUNITY SERVICE, TECHNOLOGY & LIBRARY

Community Service

BHMS is committed to helping children develop a respect for community, the environment and their own important role within the community, whether in the classroom, the school, or the greater community outside of school.

Students in the Preschool are involved in activities that foster personal independence as well as learning how to take care of their classroom environment, from pushing in chairs, returning work to the shelves, to storing items in their cubbies. They take pride in their growing independence and gain confidence as they learn to care for themselves and the classroom. Students take turns preparing and serving snacks for their classmates, perform simple classroom tasks, and older students assist younger students if help is needed.

In Lower Elementary, the concept of community starts to expand. Students in Grade 3 are buddies to students in Grade 1 at the start of the school year, helping the younger students settle into the classroom routine. Lower Elementary students periodically visit Preschool classrooms to read to the younger students. There is a long-standing and much anticipated December tradition in which Lower Elementary students sing for the residents of a neighborhood nursing home.

In Upper Elementary, the role of community service develops into taking care of the greater school and community. Once a week students assist other teachers and classes in the school in their respective areas and classrooms. Students may be assigned to work in The Lower School classrooms or help out in areas such as the art room, gym, or with an administrator. Students also assist with the recycling of paper and plastic throughout the building, organize and run the annual City Harvest Food Drive, and participate in the Project Cicero book drive. Students learn to take care of the natural environment, from planting and tending the garden on the Upper Elementary terrace to learning about caring for the environment on the annual springtime overnight trips to nature centers on Shelter Island (Grades 4 and 5) and Cape May (Grade 6).

Students in Grades 7 and 8 provide assistance to the school community and the neighborhood in a variety of ways. As students gain greater skills and independence, they are encouraged to take on meaningful real-world responsibilities. Each student applies for a daily job within the Middle School, and also serves the wider school community. Seventh and eighth graders work with students in the Preschool, team up with Lower Elementary reading buddies, and assist in school offices. They also run several in-school businesses to raise money for their own trips, including a weekly school-wide Tuesday bagel delivery and Thursday pizza lunch. During the admissions season each year, several students act as student ambassadors, fielding questions and speaking to prospective parents about the school.

As a capstone project in Service and Social Justice, each middle school advisory group researches, designs, and carries out a service learning project, then reflects on what they have learned and achieved. By demonstrating ownership in this way, students gain real-world experience and also feel a more powerful emotional connection to the impact of their work. This project allows students to connect their studies in the classroom to the more challenging task of tackling real problems in the world.
Technology

With the evolution of technology ever-altering the educational landscape, our school aims to embrace technology as a tool to foster student’s growth and development through access to enriched learning. With this in mind, technology is at its best serving as a support to learning, not a replacement. Our curriculum teaches students to be responsible users of technology tools, with flexible skills for collecting, organizing and analyzing information.

A formal introduction to computers begins in Grade 3. The Technology Integrator works with students to learn the basics about computers and their potential uses, including web apps and creating and organizing files. Students will also begin to use Typing Pal Online, our keyboarding program, to learn proper posture and finger placement and begin typing exercises that will be developed further in Upper Elementary classrooms.

Technology use is integrated directly into Upper Elementary and Middle School core classes and curriculum. Use of computers, software, and technology is always directly related to the subjects being studied. With a broad mix of educational/creativity software, office/productivity suites, and web-based applications, students in Grades 4-8 are guided in building a strong foundation of technology skills. Web-based applications are utilized whenever possible to ensure that students have access to their work on a variety of networks and devices.

Library

Our school library serves all students, their families, and our faculty. The library provides a welcoming, open, central space where classes gather, and students engage in independent research, quiet reading, and small group work.

Beginning in Preschool, full-day students visit the library weekly for stories and browsing. Weekly visits continue throughout Lower Elementary, where students have the opportunity to borrow books. In Upper Elementary, students’ scheduled visits are less frequent; instead, students are invited to visit the library whenever it fits into their work plan. Additionally, Upper Elementary students study Media Literacy with the librarian in the library, to become familiar with school-use of technology, to become responsible digital citizens, and to practice developing research skills. The librarian works with the Middle School both in the library and in the Middle School classrooms, integrating the school’s books and electronic resources with the classwork, and encouraging students to explore literature for pleasure and personal enrichment.

The library’s collection supports each program’s specific curricular needs and provides students with recreational reading. Databases supplement the library’s physical collection. These electronic resources provide students with the most up-to-date information. The password-protected databases are accessible both in school and at home by speaking with the librarian.

In addition to the central collection, teachers maintain extensive classroom collections, which complement the curriculum of The Lower School and The Middle School. The school also has a selection of professional titles, regarding education and child development, for faculty and families.

When the librarian is in the library, before and after school, parents and caregivers are invited to visit the library, with their children. Every member of the school community, every student and parent, is welcome to borrow books from the collection—up to two books at a time, for a borrowing period of two weeks.

Selected Reading List

Families often ask us for books that can help them better understand Montessori education. Here are some of our favorite titles:

- Together with Montessori 2nd ed. by Cam Gordon
- Montessori: Play and Learn by Lesley Britton
- Montessori Today by Paula Polk Lillard
- Montessori from the Start by Paula Polk Lillard
- Montessori: A Modern Approach by Paula Polk Lillard
- Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius by Angeline Stoll Lillard
- Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work by E.M. Standing (et al)
- Understanding Montessori: A Guide For Parents by Maren Schmidt
- Maria Montessori’s own writing:
  - The Secret of Childhood
  - Discovery of the Child
  - The Absorbent Mind
**Beyond BHMS**

**Independent**
- Avenues: The World School
- Bay Ridge Prep
- The Berkeley Carroll School
- Brooklyn Friends School
- The Calhoun School
- The Chapin School
- The Collegiate School
- Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School
- Cornerstone of the Sacred Heart
- The Dwight School
- Elisabeth Irwin High School
- Ethical Culture Fieldston School
- Friends Seminary
- Fowndation Hall
- Grace Church School
- The Hewitt School
- Lenox Hill Preparatory School
- Loyola School
- Mary McDonnell High School
- Marymount School
- The Nightingale-Bamford School
- Packer Collegiate Institute
- Poly Prep Country Day School
- Pius X High School
- St. Ann’s School
- The Spence School
- St. Andrew’s Cathedral School (Sydney, Australia)
- Trevor Day School
- The Trinity School
- United Nations International School
- Welfare Preparatory School

**Public**
- Benjamin N. Cardozo High School
- Bard College High School
- Beacon High School
- Beekman Hill School for International Studies
- Bronx High School of Science
- Brooklyn College Academy
- Brooklyn Latin School
- Brooklyn Preparatory School
- Brooklyn Technical High School
- The Collegiate School
- Edward R. Murrow High School
- Eleanor Roosevelt High School
- Essex Street Academy
- Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School
- Frank Sinatra School of the Performing Arts
- Harvest Collegiate High School
- John Dewey High School
- Khalil Gibran International Academy
- Leon M. Goldstein High School
- Lord School
- Millennium High School
- Millennium Brooklyn High School
- Murray Bergtraum High School for Business Careers
- New City College
- New York Harbor School
- NYC School
- New York City University School
- NEST+m
- Stuyvesant High School
- Talent Unlimited High School
- Townsend Harris High School
- Williamsburg High School for Architecture and Design

**Boarding**
- Buxton School (MA)
- The Cambridge School of Weston (MA)
- Chaminade College Preparatory School (CT)
- The Darrow School (NY)
- Emma Willard School (NY)
- The Ethel Walker School (CT)
- George School (PA)
- The Gunnery (CT)
- The Hun School of Princeton (NJ)
- The MacNeck School (CT)
- The Masters School (NY)
- Millbrook School (NY)
- Miss Porter’s School (CT)
- The Proctor Academy (NH)
- The Putney School (VT)
- Vermont Academy (VT)
- Weston School (CT)

**Parochial**
- Bishop Ford High School
- Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School
- Bishop Kearney High School
- Cathedral High School
- Catherine McAuley High School
- Dominican Academy
- La Salle Preparatory School
- Monsignor McClancy High School
- Notre Dame Academy
- Saint Edmund’s Prep
- Saint Francis Prep
- Saint Francis High School
- Xavier College Preparatory School (VT)
- Xavier High School (NY)
- Xavierian High School of Brooklyn
From High School to College/University: BHMS graduates have matriculated at the following Colleges and Universities:

Alfred University
American University
Bard College
Barnard College
Bowdoin College
Brandeis University
Brown University
Brooklyn College
Bryant University
Bryn Mawr College
Bucknell University
Carleton College
Centenary College
Champlain College
Clark University
College of the Atlantic
College of Charleston
Colorado College
Connecticut College
Cooper Union
Cornell University
Dartmouth University
DePaul University
Earlham College
Eastman School of Music
Emory University
Georgetown University
George Washington University
Gettysburg College
Goucher College
Hamilton College
Hartwick College
Hunter College
Iona College
Johnson and Wales University
Macaulay Honors College (CUNY)
Manhattanville College
Marist College
Marlboro College
Marymount Manhattan College
Middlebury College
Mitchell College
Mt. Saint Mary College Muhlenberg College
The New School
New York Institute of Technology
New York University
Northeastern University
Nova Scotia College of Art & Design
Oberlin College
Penn State University
Pitzer College
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute School of Visual Arts
St. Joseph’s University (PA)
Sarah Lawrence College
Savannah College of Art and Design
Shenandoah University
Smith College
Stephens College
SUNY Binghamton
SUNY New Paltz
SUNY Stony Brook
Susquehanna University
Trinity College
Tufts University
University of Arizona
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Rochester
University of Tennessee
University of Wisconsin
Union College
Vassar College
Wake Forest University
Wesleyan University (CT)

ACCREDITATION
BHMS is an independent school that is fully accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSASIS) and the American Montessori Society (AMS). BHMS is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), Independent Schools Admissions Association of Greater New York (ISAAGNY), Early Steps, A Better Chance, and Prep For Prep. The School is licensed by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). BHMS is also a Charter member of the Green School Alliance.