The Dwight School

Curriculum Handbook

Kindergarten

THE DWIGHT SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The Dwight School, an internationally recognized college preparatory school with a rich tradition of academic excellence, trains its students to be leaders with a strong sense of community responsibility.

Every student has a spark of genius, and our goal is to nurture that potential. Kindling their interests, we strive to develop inquisitive, informed, and ethical citizens who, with a sense of global kinship, will take action to build a better world.

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE MISSION STATEMENT

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the IB works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

INTRODUCTION TO CURRICULUM HANDBOOK KINDERGARTEN

This handbook is designed for parents of Kindergarten children. It contains important information about the knowledge, skills and understanding your child will cover during the year. The handbook is intended to be a reference resource for you, so that you feel better informed about the work your child is doing in class, and so that you are able to discuss it more knowledgeably with him/her and the teacher.

Research shows that parent support is one of the most important factors influencing your child's levels of attainment in school. Good communication between home and school is of great importance to us. If you have any questions about your child's attainment levels, his/her home or class work, or would like to discuss any aspect of the curriculum, please contact your child's teacher or the Dean.

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1. SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY: THE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAM

The Primary Years Program (PYP), for students aged 5 to 12, focuses on the development of the whole child, in the classroom but also in the world outside, through other environments where children learn. It offers a framework that meets children's several needs: academic, social, physical, emotional and cultural.

The PYP is a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning, with an international curriculum model that provides guidelines for what students should learn, a teaching methodology and assessment strategies.

At the center of the PYP curriculum are five essential elements: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action. Six organizing themes (see curriculum model below) help teachers and children explore these elements in the broadest sense of the word. Teachers and students use key questions that are concept based to structure the Units of Inquiry. They acquire and apply transdisciplinary skills while developing an understanding of these important concepts. The development of explicit attitudes and the expectation of socially responsible behavior are also essential elements of the program.

2. LANGUAGE ARTS

Word Level Work

Phonological Awareness, Phonics and Spelling
The students will:
1. be able to rhyme by
   - recognizing, exploring and working with rhyming patterns
   - generating new and invented words in speech and spelling
   - discriminating onsets from rhymes
   - identifying alliteration
2. know grapheme and phoneme correspondences by
   - sounding and naming identifying initial sounds in words
   - reading letters that represent the sounds *a-z, ch, sh, th*
   - writing initial sounds in words that correspond to the *sounds a-z, ch, sh, th*
   - identifying and writing initial and dominant phonemes represented in a word
   - identifying and writing initial and final phonemes in cvc words
3. know the alphabet by
   - each letter of the alphabet
   - writing letters for letter names
   - knowing alphabetic order

Word Recognition, Graphic Knowledge and Spelling
The students will:
1. read 45 sight words from the Dolch High Frequency word list
2. read and write own name
3. recognize critical features of words: shape, height, spelling patterns

Vocabulary Extension
The students will learn new words from their reading and Units of Inquiry

Handwriting
The students will:
1. use a comfortable and efficient pencil grip
2. write on a line
3. write letters using the correct sequence of movements

Sentence Level Work

Grammatical Awareness
The students will:
1. expect grammatical text to be correct and change if it is not
2. use awareness of grammatical conventions to predict a word during shared reading and when re-reading familiar stories
3. use a capital letter for the start of their own name and at the beginning of a sentence
4. use periods

Text Level Work

Reading
The students will:
1. understand and use correctly terms about books and print: book, beginning, end, back, cover, page, line, word, letter, title, author
2. track text in the right order, page by page, left to right, top to bottom
3. point when reading/telling a story, and making one-to-one correspondences between written and spoken words

Reading Comprehension
The students will:
1. use a variety of cues to read words in a story: knowledge of what makes grammatical sense, context
2. know the difference between a re-told story and what the exact words are in the book
3. re-read frequently a variety of forms of text: lists, big books, captions, own and other children's writing
4. re-enact or retell stories, recounting the main points in order
5. be aware of story structure: actions/reactions, consequences, build up and conclusion
6. re-read and repeat stories with predictable patterns and experiment with rhyming patterns

Writing
The students will:
1. Through shared writing
   - learn that writing can be used for many purposes: sending messages, recording ideas, informing, telling a story
   - learn that a word is always written the same way and says the same thing
   - understand that writing is formed in the same direction a word at a time
   - understand how letters are formed to make words
   - help the teacher to scribe and re-read what the class has written

2. Through guided and independent writing
   - write their own name
   - write labels and captions for pictures and drawings
   - write sentences to match pictures or sequences of pictures in a story
   - see how their own version of words matches or differs from conventional spelling (on their own and with the help of a teacher)
   - think about and discuss what they want to write ahead of time
   - use stories and poems as a basis for independent writing
   - use writing to tell stories, write lists, send messages, recount their own experiences, write signs, greeting cards, record information and share information

3. MATHEMATICS

The goal of our math curriculum is to produce mathematically powerful thinkers and problem-solvers who are confident and feel comfortable using mathematics in their daily lives. Therefore students not only learn basic computation skills, but they also are involved in more than the "how-tos" of basic arithmetic skills; they are involved in multiple day projects and explorations that link ideas and concepts from several strands of mathematics into an integrated whole that makes sense. We focus not just on answers but on the ways students think, and we are more interested in their reasons and explanations for solutions and discoveries, not whether or not everyone gets the same solution in the same way. Mental math is practiced every day to imprint mathematical information on the brain. When given the opportunity to investigate computation problems, students construct deep understanding and many flexible ways of handling numbers. With this approach, students develop autonomy and a more complete understanding of mathematics, i.e. a strong foundation for our technology-based society.

Concept

Number Sense

The students will:

1. use appropriate math vocabulary
2. develop multiple approaches to working with numbers
3. recognize the use of different types of numbers in the real world
4. use a variety of concrete materials to demonstrate number relations
5. record the counting of various occurrences
6. count, recognize, write, order and compare whole numbers and fractions
7. demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of addition and subtraction, using multiple strategies
8. model and discuss the concrete representations of less than, greater than, and equal to
9. construct situations for understanding even and odd numbers
10. use ordinal numbers
11. develop mental math skills
12. estimate small quantities of objects by using a referent
13. demonstrate a variety of methods for finding solutions from known facts
14. explore, discuss, and solve addition and subtraction problems, using manipulatives, patterns and numbers
15. recognize situations in which addition applies, and use it to construct and solve problems with whole numbers
16. use manipulatives, coins, and numbers in number sense form
17. name the whole number before and after a given whole number
18. understand the language of numbers (between, after)
19. write the numbers 0 to 20

Algebraic Thinking
The students will:
1. identify, extend and create patterns in many forms
2. sort, classify, and make comparisons and search for patterns while working with manipulatives, data and numbers
3. link and understand written symbols to objects, numbers and words
4. skip count by 2's, 5's and 10's
5. recognize observable regular events and shapes, and work with generalizable patterns to express relationships
6. use and make predictions about repeating patterns
7. describe the relationship between addition and subtraction
8. use manipulatives to model balancing in number sentences
9. use positional words and relationships

Geometry and Measurement
The students will:
1. identify coins and know their values
2. identify, describe and discuss likeness/differences between objects and collections of objects that can be manipulated or visualized
1. recognize shapes in different orientations
2. name the days of the week and months of the year
3. recognize, draw and name geometric shapes in mathematics and in the environment
4. identify patterns in geometrical objects, such as symmetry
5. make and construct 2-dimensional shapes and models
6. estimate and use non standard and standard units to compare and order objects by size, length, width and height
7. use real objects as examples of quantity, space and shapes
8. identify and recognize fractional parts (1/2) of shapes
9. introduction to time-telling: hour hand, minute, second

Data Analysis: Statistics and Probability
The students will:
1. construct graphs, then analyze and discuss results
2. collect, display, sort and interpret data
3. use pictures and symbols to characterize and group objects, and to solve problems
4. make predictions about an event happening

4. UNITS OF INQUIRY

Transdisciplinary Theme: ***Who We Are***

Title: Our School Community
Subject focus: Social Studies

Central Idea: School communities are organized to help us learn and live together.

An inquiry into:
1. how we make and keep friends
2. how we can create a peaceful classroom community
3. strategies for resolving conflicts among friends

Transdisciplinary Theme: ***Where We Are In Time And Place***

Title: How We Learn about the Past: Dinosaurs
Subject focus: Science

Central Idea: We can use clues to help us learn about the past.

An inquiry into:
1. how people have learned about a time before humans existed
2. how paleontologists gather and analyze information about dinosaurs and their disappearance
3. why there are still unanswered questions about dinosaurs and their disappearance

Transdisciplinary Theme: ***How We Express Ourselves***

Title: Let's Do Art
Subject focus: Social Studies, Art

Central Idea: Art is a means of creative expression.

An inquiry into:
1. why people create art
2. the process of art, rather than the product
3. the lives and works of famous artists: case studies
4. different artistic techniques

Transdisciplinary Theme: ***How the World Works***

Title: Weather
Subject focus: Science

Central Idea: Weather all around the world influences living things.

An inquiry into:
1. observing, recording and predicting weather
2. seasons and weather patterns around the world
3. how changes in weather affect living things

Transdisciplinary Theme: ***How We Organize Ourselves***

Title: From Farm to Table
Subject focus: Social Studies, Science

Central Idea: Many foods need to be transported and/or processed before they reach our tables.
An inquiry into:
1. where our food comes from
2. how it may be processed
3. who is involved in getting our food to us

Transdisciplinary Theme: ***Sharing The Planet***

Title: Life in the Rain Forest
Subject focus: Science

Central Idea: The rain forest is a unique habitat or ecosystem. It is valuable to our society and needs to be protected.

An inquiry into:
1. the unique characteristics of the rainforest
2. why the rainforest is valuable to us
3. what forms of life thrive in the rainforest
4. how the rainforest is being destroyed
5. how to protect and support the rainforest

5. SPANISH

The Spanish program is structured around units based on child-related themes and the Units of Inquiry with the learning activities geared to the students' cognitive level and the interest. Spanish will be taught through various media such as games, songs, arts and crafts and role-play, responding to all learning styles. The activities incorporate opportunities for movement, physical activity, and concrete manipulation. Evaluation takes place frequently and regularly in a manner consistent with the objectives of the class.

The students will:

1. learn greetings
2. sing traditional songs
3. learn the numbers 1-20, the colors, the days of the week, the months, the body parts, the weather, clothing and animals in the environment
4. read simple words and produce simple phrases using the vocabulary learned

6. CHINESE LANGUAGE & CULTURE

Nin Hau. The objective of the Chinese program is to open the doors into a different way of thinking and communicating. The program is structured around a framework consisting of three major components: language skills, how China impacts our lives today and exposure to the Chinese culture.

Chinese is taught in an interactive manner and an activity is weaved into each lesson such as writing, painting, calligraphy, Tai Chi, role play, team work, cooking rice and noodles to reinforce and apply what is learned, and to understand the symbolism behind each character, each phrase, each gesture and each custom/tradition practiced during the holiday. Each student adopts a Chinese name and chooses one of the Feng Shui elements for incorporation into the creation of their name. The year culminates in a narrative that each student writes in Chinese, which ranges from thirty-one to thirty-nine characters in length, about their immediate family and themselves. The narrative continues to grow and expand to include additional information learned each year.

The students will learn:

1) Language skills:
    a. 100 – 130 Chinese characters.
    b. Over 50 phrases/expressions/sentences.
    c. Tell and write a simple personal history.
    d. Count and write 1-10.
    e. Identified nine (9) colors.
    f. Write characters with pencil, ink and brush.
2) China: explore the geography of China and how it impacts our lives today.
3) Culture: prepare and celebrate Chinese holidays; cook rice and noodles; learn to use the chopsticks and the brush to do calligraphy; make and serve tea, understand

the concept of Ying and Yang and the symbolism in landscape paintings, understand the concept of Qi and experience it through Qi Gong exercises and the Tai Chi Quan form, etc.

4) Participate in two (2) PYP performances
5) Go on 2-3 field trips to Chinatown and to the museum.

As the students progress each year, we will introduce additional characters, phrases, expressions and sentences as well as build upon what was learned in the prior year(s). Whenever possible and as appropriate, we will mirror the Unit of Inquiry that is taught in the regular curriculum so that the students can also express it in Chinese.

7. MUSIC

Through exposure to diverse materials, students develop an awareness of how people from many cultures create and participate in music. Students will learn the basics of note reading and music notation in order to develop the skills necessary for sight-reading and the application of performance. Rhythm, movement and singing are an integral part of the music program. Through exposure to performance, students gain self-confidence, memorization skills, and public speaking. Students will develop listening skills and will gain knowledge of historical composers and their music.

Listening
The students will:
1. listen to a wide musical repertoire, with a focus on multicultural music from around the world
2. discuss many classical composers and the similarities and differences in their music
3. explore the different sounds of the orchestral instruments
4. recognize musical patterns, dynamics, rhythmic patterns, and melodic direction

Performing
The students will:
1. perform numerous songs together as a group
2. understand the principles of rehearsing music for a production by beginning and ending together, memorizing music, taking direction from the teacher, and working as a group
3. explore differences between speaking and singing voices
4. sing with appropriate tone, posture and breathing

Movement
The students will:
1. create rhythmic patterns and perform with others
2. perform movement that directly correlates to the music
3. understand how storytelling and movement through music is an important element, e.g. “Carnival of the Animals” and “Peter and the Wolf”

Music Fundamentals and History
The students will:
1. explore the music of the Jazz Age beginning in the late 19th Century and ending in the present time
2. focus on the importance of melodic and rhythmic patterns in musical compositions

8. ART

The Art Program explores many forms and styles of art and uses many different media. Through their years in Timothy House, the students acquire varied skills. They are exposed to different tools and materials that are age-appropriate. An environment is created where the children's visual perceptions are allowed to mature. As their ability to handle tools becomes more skillful, their ability to discuss, critique and compare becomes more sophisticated. The students are exposed to art and artists in various cultures. They have the opportunity to apply their knowledge creatively in classroom projects and studies.

The students will:
1. complete art projects that are closely connected to the Units of Inquiry
2. develop motor coordination
3. enhance their awareness of the basic art elements in their surrounding, such as color, shape, line and texture
4. explore materials and techniques for a greater understanding of the creative process
5. study shapes by completing projects, influenced by Henri Matisse and Alexander Calder

9. PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The physical education program is a task-oriented, year-round system in which mind, body and spirit are developed; in addition to developing strong, healthy, flexible, fast and adaptive bodies, values, morals, and attitudes are emphasized. The students will also do exercises in the classroom as they take breaks during the day.

The students will:
1. perform basic skills in traveling, being still, finding space and using it safely, both on the floor and using apparatus
2. develop the range and skills of their actions; e.g. balancing, taking off and landing, turning and rolling
3. start to choose and link skills and actions in short movement phrases
4. create and perform short, linked sequences that show a clear beginning, middle and end
5. start to develop and refine basic techniques in running and jumping
6. travel with and receive a ball and other equipment in different ways
7. develop these skills for simple net, striking/fielding and invasion-type games

8. play simple, competitive net, striking/fielding and invasion-type games using simple tactics for attacking and defending
9. use movement imaginatively, responding to stimuli, including music, and performing basic skills; e.g. traveling, being still, making a shape, jumping, turning and gesturing
10. change the rhythm, speed, level and direction of the movements

10. COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

The Timothy House capitalizes on the natural enthusiasm of children for exploring new ideas, taking risks, solving problems and manipulating concrete materials. Therefore the information technology program is a natural conduit for developing these capacities and for helping children to develop an understanding of the role that the computer will play as a lifelong learning tool. Students progressively develop skills and confidence as they use the computer for a wide range of educational activities.

Technological Awareness
The students will:
1. identify parts of the computer
2. use the mouse to point, click and drag
3. open and close folders, files and windows
4. choose from the menu bar at the top
5. print documents

Networking Skills
The students will:
1. log on/off
2. open and use applications on the network
3. save and retrieve projects using their folders

Keyboard Skills
The students will:
1. use informal keyboarding skills to type

Drawing Skills
The students will:
1. create and manipulate images, using pencils and colors

11. HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is a valuable part of the school curriculum. It provides children with the opportunity to consolidate or extend their understanding of the concepts covered during class time. It also encourages them to develop independent study habits. Homework is given every night for all students in the Timothy House. The amount and kind of work that

is given depends on the student's age and the individual abilities of the student. In Kindergarten, students are given homework for 15 to 30 minutes a day. Mostly, it focuses on the child's emergent reading development. Teachers and parents may communicate via e-mail or phone regarding homework concerns.

12. THE PASSPORT PROGRAM

The Passport Program is a palate of exciting after-school activities for all Timothy House students. It encourages students to find a hobby or investigate new interests. Basketball, tennis, soccer and fencing are Dwight's strongest athletic traditions. These programs are offered from the lower grades and continue throughout High School. In Kindergarten and in First and Second Grades, we encourage students and families to try a variety of different activities. In the Third and Fourth Grades, students are asked to analyze what activity they are enjoying the most and to continue this activity. In sports, skills and sportsmanship are emphasized, rather than competition. Many other Passport favorites are Mini-Musical (drama program), Circus Club, Chess Club, Awesome Arts, Water Warriors (swimming program) and much more. The Passport Program is a unique opportunity for students to interact with children of other ages within Timothy House.