

Homework

We are especially sensitive to the kindergarten child's need to engage in creative and non-structured play once they arrive home and therefore we do not have daily assignments. Throughout the year there will be purposeful family projects sent home to work on together with your child. We encourage lots of shared reading and creative family games at home.

Approaches to Learning

Respect, responsibility and community are our core Lower School values. Teachers, counselors and administrators work throughout the year to teach, model and reinforce values. Our goal is to guide our students to develop positive social interactions and approaches to learning that will continue to grow throughout our their school careers. Each quarter, students receive a formal report card detailing their learning progress on specific skills being taught that quarter. As well, we report on the following areas we call 'Approaches to Learning:'

- Demonstrates self confidence
- Shows interest and curiosity as a learner
- Solves problems in a positive manner
- Interacts appropriately with peers
- Respects the rights and property of others
- Takes responsibility for actions
- Follows directions
- Adjusts smoothly to transitions
- Uses time constructively
- Stays on task until completed
- Organizes work neatly and carefully
- Listens attentively
- Participates in classroom activities
- Works independently
- Works cooperatively

This year, the Lower School will continue to embrace an approach that we began two years ago called 'Tribes.' Tribes emphasizes living in community, understanding others and personal responsibility. The five TRIBES agreements are: Mutual Respect, Attentive Listening, Appreciation, No Put Downs, and Participation.

Parent Involvement

You are our valued partners in educating your child. We welcome your involvement in our school and classrooms. Please watch for opportunities for volunteering at school and supporting your child's learning at home.

Welcome to our Lower School!

We are a dynamic and caring learning community committed to effective and innovative teaching methods, a meaningful and well rounded curriculum, and supportive relationships between teachers, students and parents.

Our educational program is advanced by a highly qualified and dedicated professional staff comprised of homeroom, 'Specials', and Portuguese teachers, as well as learning specialists, counselors and ESL teachers.

We are delighted that you are a part of our community. We look forward to a wonderful year ahead and thank you in advance for all that you will do to support your child's learning experience with us.

Warm regards,
Julie Hunt
Lower School Principal
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WELCOME
TO BARRA
KINDERGARTEN
ESCOLA AMERICANA
2008-2009



This pamphlet briefly highlights the essential skills, knowledge, concepts and thematic units that will be taught to students in Kindergarten this year. We hope it will help you anticipate, support and celebrate your child's learning experience this year.

English Language Learning

Kindergarten is an exciting year for our students! They are immersed in a nurturing, holistic and literacy rich learning environment where they are engaged in a variety of exploratory and guided reading, writing, speaking and listening experiences.

By the end of Kindergarten students will:

- Know and match all upper and lower case letters of the alphabet
- Know and apply the sounds of beginning and ending consonants
- Demonstrate 3-fingered pencil grasp
- Read and write simple sentences
- Identify main ideas of stories through retelling, showing and illustrating
- Tell a story in sequence with a beginning, middle and ending
- Build a sight vocabulary of frequently used words
- Begin to understand use of period, capital letters and question marks
- Participate in sustained silent reading and teacher read alouds.
- Practice proper letter size and slant of D'Nealian (manuscript) letter formation
- Begin to use narrative writing in journals`
- Follow a three step direction without repetition
- Identify and produce rhyme
- Communicate needs and ideas clearly

Portuguese

Since last year, we have been incorporating a Portuguese language program three times a week in Kindergarten. Both students for whom Portuguese is a second and first language profit from this primarily oral program in which we build fluency, vocabulary and pre reading skills through songs, dramatizations, puppets, movement, rhymes and games.

Math

Our Everyday Math program is hands-on and interactive. Children develop a strong background by learning concepts and skills in the following six content areas:

Number and Numeration – Counting every day in different ways and from different numbers; reading and writing numerals; comparing numbers through daily routines and exploring different ways to represent numbers using manipulative, words, drawings and operation

Operation and Computation – Exploring addition and subtraction through concrete activities, games and number stories

Data and Chance – Collecting, organizing, displaying, and analyzing classroom data through games, activities and daily routines

Measurement and Reference Frames – Making direct measurement comparisons followed by using non-standard units of measurement learning coins and their values; developing an understanding of time and temperature measures

Geometry – Exploring 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes with manipulatives and games, and exploring line symmetry

Patterns, Functions and Algebra – Identifying, creating, and extending sounds, movement, and visual patterns; using rules to sort objects and make patterns

Science and Social Studies

By the end of Lower School, both our Science and Social Studies programs endeavor to generate students who are curious, capable, critical and proactive thinkers. Units explore specific themes through activity based learning and integrate with our Language Arts curriculum.

Some of the key Thematic Units in Kindergarten include the following:

- **AROUND THE SCHOOL:** people we meet and places we go around our community
- **GOING PLACES:** means of transportation, continents and different countries represented in each Kindergarten classroom are explored.

2nd semester Science units are pending curriculum revision.

'SPECIALS' in Kindergarten

Music

Kindergarten students learn many songs that incorporate actions, rhymes, chants and movement throughout the year. They learn to read and write quarter notes, rests and eighth notes. They also learn to play beat and 'bordun' techniques on the Orff Instruments. Parents and students alike love our biannual music presentations.

Visual Arts

Teachers integrate the arts into thematic units. As well, our students love their weekly art class where they are exposed to the world of art and artists, techniques and materials. Geometric and organic shapes, primary colors, collage, sculpture and painting are amongst many other mediums explored.

Physical Education

We explore movement, adventure learning, body awareness, rhythmic activities and motor skills throughout the year.

Library

Students are exposed to quality children's literature from Fairy and Folktales to contemporary authors and illustrators from around the world through a variety of media. Picture books, DVDs, puppet shows, and storytellers inspire a love of literature and reading.

Technology

Technology is used as a tool for enhancing learning and teaching. Classroom computers are used to support teaching of specific skills, concepts and thematic units.