

# EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Nursery | Pre-K | Kindergarten



## OUR MISSION

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**WE WILL GRADUATE STUDENTS** WHO ARE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE ACADEMIC SKILLS ONE WOULD EXPECT; AT EASE BEYOND THEIR BORDERS; TRULY FLUENT IN A SECOND LANGUAGE; GOOD WRITERS AND SPEAKERS ONE AND ALL; CONFIDENT BECAUSE THEY EXCEL IN A PARTICULAR PASSION; ARTISTS NO MATTER THEIR FIELD; PRACTICAL IN THE WAYS OF THE WORLD; EMOTIONALLY UNAFRAID AND PHYSICALLY FIT; HUMBLE ABOUT THEIR GIFTS AND GENEROUS OF SPIRIT; TRUSTWORTHY; AWARE THAT THEIR BEHAVIOR MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN OUR ECOSYSTEM; GREAT LEADERS WHEN THEY CAN BE, GOOD FOLLOWERS WHEN THEY SHOULD BE; ON THEIR WAY TO WELL-CHOSEN HIGHER EDUCATION; AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, ARCHITECTS OF LIVES THAT TRANSCEND THE ORDINARY.

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**WE WILL SHARE OUR PROSPERITY** WITH THOSE WHO NEED IT, INITIALLY THROUGH TRADITIONAL FINANCIAL AID AND, AS WE GROW, IN MORE INNOVATIVE AND BROADER-SCALE WAYS THAT LEAP THE WALLS OF OUR CAMPUSES.

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**WE WILL PROVIDE OUR FACULTY** AND STAFF MEMBERS A SPECIAL PLACE TO PURSUE THE SCIENCE AND ART OF TEACHING. WE WANT TO ALIGN THE REWARDS OF TEACHING MORE CLOSELY WITH THE VALUE IT BRINGS TO SOCIETY, PROVIDE TEACHERS OPPORTUNITIES TO DEEPEN THEIR SKILLS AND BE A PLACE WHERE CAREERS, IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM, CAN FLOURISH.

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**WE WILL ADVANCE EDUCATION** BY SETTING AN EXAMPLE AS AN EFFECTIVE, DIVERSE AND ACCOUNTABLE SCHOOL; BY CONTINUOUSLY INVESTING IN WAYS TO BECOME BETTER AT WHAT WE DO; AND BY MAKING AVAILABLE OUR DISCOVERIES, LARGE AND SMALL, TO COLLEAGUES IN THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION.

**T**he early childhood years are some of the most important in the life of a family and the most influential for children as they start on the road to learning. Children of this age—between three and six years old—are naturally curious and interested in the world around them. During this magical time of extraordinary cognitive, emotional and physical growth, an excellent early childhood program sets the foundation for a child’s later learning and social relationships.

Starting school for the first time is a big leap for both parents and children. In order for a child to become independent and confident in their ability to manage the world outside of their home, trust must be established between teachers and parents. At Avenues, we welcome both children and parents into a community and a partnership with teachers. We want children to feel valued and listened to; we also want them to learn that what they say and do has an effect on others.

#### **A SEPARATE SPACE**

The Avenues Early Learning Center, located at 540 West 26 Street in a state-of-the-art early childhood facility, houses nursery (ages three to four), pre-kindergarten (four to five) and kindergarten (five to six). In addition to classrooms, the facility houses a playground, dance center, library, art studios, indoor play space and areas for science and cooking.

Students in the Early Learning Center come from all over New York City. Some walk with parents or caregivers down the High Line to the school’s unique custom-designed facility. Others arrive at Avenues by private and public transportation from a diverse array of neighborhoods.

#### **FOCUS ON THE CHILD**

The educational philosophy of the Avenues Early Learning Center is based on an underlying respect for the individual child. With this in mind, we provide an environment rich in opportunities for each child to grow in their understanding of language and how to work and play with others. Teachers set age-appropriate objectives for each student, taking into account typical models of child development as well as individual differences in growth patterns, personality, learning style and family background. The Early Learning Center program facilitates the social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth of students while promoting a strong sense of community within the classroom and as part of a larger school.

## MASTERING DEVELOPMENTAL SKILLS

The Early Learning Center curriculum is designed to promote competency and the mastery of developmental skills. Concepts are taught through a variety of multi-sensory experiences and activities, using open-ended materials that ignite children's imaginations. Young children learn by doing, and play is the medium through which children explore the world and learn about themselves and others. Thematic units from the Avenues World Course expose children to new concepts and expand their knowledge of their community and the wider world.

Most of the goals of the Early Learning Center program represent processes rather than isolated skills. For that reason, mastery is measured along a continuum of growth. This allows children to experience success and satisfaction at every stage of their development. Students develop literacy and gain an understanding of basic concepts in math and science; they learn to express themselves through language, art, music and movement. Social and emotional learning is paramount. For young children, successful separation from parents leads to self-reliance and the confidence to manage the world outside their home. Learning to be part of a group fosters an expanded view of self and helps children become aware of the impact that their words and actions have on others. The school day is organized to allow for a balance of active and quiet times so that children have the focus and energy to participate fully. The structure and routine of the program make children feel safe and secure as they learn to anticipate the sequence of the day and understand the expectations of school.

## LANGUAGE IMMERSION

Since we expect all students to become proficient in a second language, Early Learning Center students spend half of their time in immersion classrooms speaking either Chinese or Spanish. Content is taught in the target language and teachers work in teams to develop consistent routines and expectations in both their English and immersion classrooms. In addition to second language comprehension and acquisition, intercultural competency is built through a diverse range of cultural activities.







## BUILDING HEALTHY HABITS

In the Early Learning Center, students learn healthy habits of behavior that will allow them to live active and productive lives. It is crucial to begin this education in the early years when so many habits of diet, physical activity and sleep are formed. Physical play—both as a healthy stimulus for growth and as a means of learning to work with others—is an important part of the day, utilizing an outdoor playground designed expressly with the needs of young children in mind.

We encourage our teachers to build strong, nurturing relationships with the children in their care. Teachers guide students as they grasp the important early lessons of problem solving, resilience and respect for others that become the building blocks of later learning. Understanding that partnerships between families and school are essential for students to thrive at this age, our teachers seek to build strong and successful relationships with parents. Parents are often invited to participate in Early Learning Center activities and to be involved in the life of their children in school.

SCIENCE CLASSES, TAUGHT BY A SPECIALIST, CREATE A SENSE OF CONNECTEDNESS TO NATURE AND HELP STUDENTS BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THAT ELEMENTS OF NATURE—INCLUDING US—ARE INTERDEPENDENT. ALL STUDENTS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE REAL SCIENCE OBJECTS AND USE SCIENCE TOOLS TO EXPLORE THE NATURAL WORLD.





**Avenues**  
THE WORLD SCHOOL

Avenues New York  
259 Tenth Avenue  
New York, NY 10001-7020  
646.664.0800  
[admissionsnyc@avenues.org](mailto:admissionsnyc@avenues.org)  
[www.avenuesnyc.org](http://www.avenuesnyc.org)