

LOWER DIVISION

Grades 1-5



OUR MISSION

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.

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.

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.

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.

Avenues New York is the first campus of our global system of independent schools in major cities around the world. Avenues: The World School opened in 2012 with the mission to educate students to become global citizens of the 21st century. Our campus in New York is centered around a 10-story landmark building in the West Chelsea arts district of Manhattan. Avenues has three distinct divisions: the Early Learning Center (grades nursery, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten), the Lower Division (grades 1-5) and the Upper Division (grades 6-12). The Early Learning Center and Lower Division provide a language immersion track in either Chinese or Spanish. All Avenues students follow a rigorous academic program that focuses on the qualities, competencies and knowledge necessary to live meaningful lives in an increasingly interconnected world.

The demands of the immersion program and the integrated curriculum necessitate a highly selective admissions profile for all grades. Avenues values a diverse learning environment and embraces diversity in all forms. Avenues New York families represent 75 countries and speak more than 40 languages.

A NEW SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

Avenues' graduation requirements are comparable to those of any top-tier private school in New York City and around the world. What sets Avenues apart, however, is the culture of flexibility and innovation that permeates our curriculum and that drives our commitment to problem- and project-based learning. A further distinction of Avenues is our mission to cultivate globally minded students who are "at ease beyond their borders." As never before, citizens of the world must understand the dependencies and connections between peoples and countries; they must move easily across boundaries; they must be comfortable with difference and ambiguity; they must speak languages other than their own; and they must search for answers beyond themselves. This is an Avenues education.

LOWER DIVISION

GRADES 1-5

Fostering creativity, imagination and a love of learning is central to the mission of the Lower Division. Each child participates in a rich, interdisciplinary curriculum that focuses on inquiry, discovery and building community. Our experienced and knowledgeable faculty understand that deep engagement in learning is critical to a child's success.

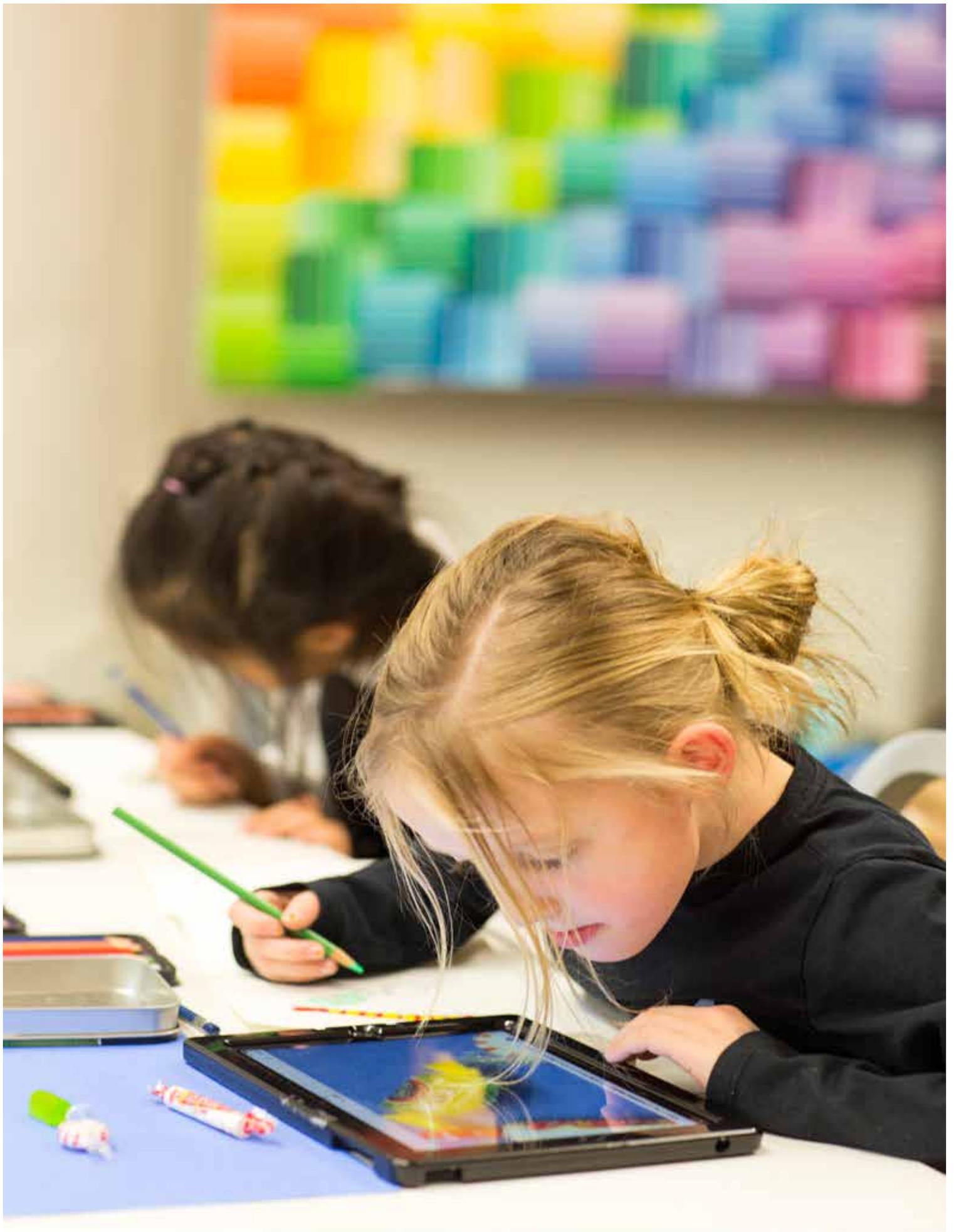
Unique to Avenues is our commitment to language acquisition. Following on from the Early Learning Center, children in the Lower Division continue to spend half of their time in either Chinese or Spanish and the other half in English. This is not language instruction but rather attending school and learning math, social studies, art, music, reading and writing in two languages—learning in a truly multilingual environment. Research has proven that immersion is the most effective method of gaining true fluency in a second language. In addition, immersion students will achieve the same (or higher) levels in their academic subjects compared to similar students working in a monolingual setting. Research also proves that the cognitive gifts of bilingualism extend beyond speaking another language and include greater cognitive flexibility, increased attentional controls, better memory, superior problem-solving skills and more.

The Lower Division curriculum also emphasizes traditional core subjects. Students begin the formal study of reading, writing, math and discovery-based science, exploring a problem to both seek a solution and understand the principles it demonstrates. Math instruction focuses on the fundamental principles of mathematics, logical thinking and problem solving.

By the end of their time in the Lower Division, students have cultivated the academic skills one would expect and developed the attitudes towards learning necessary for future success. Our students learn to ask questions, conduct research, solve problems and collaborate. We work to capture the energy and natural curiosity of young children and provide them with the academic and social skills to make them effective learners in a global world.

LITERACY

Research has shown that balanced literacy is the most effective approach for developing strong and independent readers, writers and communicators. Balanced literacy is not a particular program; rather it is a curricular approach that uses a reading and writing workshop model.



Our

Hopes

Grace
My hopes and dreams for this year are to learn a lot in World Course about ancient cultures and to have a really fun year!



Idana
My hopes and dreams for this year are to be better at science and improve my vocabulary. At Chelms Piers I want to learn how to climb higher and endure longer climbs on the rock wall.



My
all
rec



Mia
My hopes and dreams for this year are to learn more, persevere and be able to have an actual conversation. I also want to get good grades on math, word study and spelling tests.



The reading workshop model has three components: guided reading, small group instruction and independent reading. Whether students are reading in small groups or independently, workshop time begins with a short lesson that teaches a specific skill or strategy. The children then “try out” this skill or strategy using books that offer an appropriate level of challenge. Reading workshop is highly differentiated to accommodate all learning styles and build confident readers. It adapts well to instruction in both Chinese and Spanish.

Similar in design, the writing workshop model provides a range of experiences and instruction that help children express their ideas in writing across languages. Learners at all levels have the opportunity to draft, revise and edit their own thoughts and ideas in language.

We incorporate phonics, spelling, handwriting and vocabulary into the curriculum through our word study program. At each grade level, we adopt approaches that best meet the needs of students at that stage of development. Our youngest students use Recipe for Reading, a multisensory, phonics-based program. Using the scope and sequence of Recipe for Reading, we systematically introduce letter formation to help students develop proper muscle memory. In Chinese, children practice stroke order as they learn basic radicals and common characters in simplified Chinese. For children in older grades we use Sitton Spelling and Work Skills, a multifaceted program that provides students with the spelling, language and grammar skills in English and Spanish to help them become better writers.

MATH

Avenues selected the Singapore math curriculum because it encourages inquiry and problem-based learning without sacrificing computational fluency. Students explore numbers through hands-on activities and pictorial and numeric representations. Throughout all units of study, students learn problem-solving skills and practice using mathematical language to explain their reasoning. We also look for strong connections to our science and World Course curricula.

THE WORLD COURSE

The World Course is the heart of the Avenues curriculum. It is a rich, interdisciplinary spiral of study that focuses on inquiry, discovery, creativity and building community. In the Lower Division, World Course units start by allowing students to make personal connections with the topic at hand before encouraging them to expand their horizons. Once students have mastered concrete concepts, we move on to broader themes. Using a wide range of materials and tools, from blocks to iPads, our students engage in deep inquiry to learn about the world and their place within it.



SCIENCE

The science program begins in the Early Learning Center with an exploratory lab that includes the study of materials, life cycles and insects. Entering first grade, students begin implementing the scientific method to learn about the world around them in our science and maker laboratories. Whether it is recreating the Hudson River and dissecting fish or creating simple machines while studying inventions in the World Course, units are largely interdisciplinary and include plants, animals, habitats, the water cycle, geology, astronomy and robotics.

ART AND MUSIC

Lower Division students explore music and visual art throughout all grades and are introduced to drama in fifth grade. All of our artists are invited to create in fun and meaningful ways while tackling challenging, age-appropriate assignments that allow for the development of musical and artistic technique.

In the early grades, our music program utilizes a technique based on the eurhythmics concepts of the Swiss music educator Emile Jacques-Dalcroze. Classes are both highly structured and joyously playful to facilitate the success of each student. By second grade, we introduce instrumental work

IN A GROUP SCIENCE PROJECT, LOWER DIVISION STUDENTS RECREATE AND EXPLORE AQUATIC LIFE IN THE HUDSON RIVER.



with recorders, chimes and Orff instruments such as xylophones. This culminates in more formal training in strings, woodwinds, guitar, brass and chorus by fourth grade. Outside of their music classes, students frequently integrate music practice into their coursework for other subjects.

In art, students explore a range of media across a variety of projects, including self-portraiture, still life, puppets, papermaking, ceramics and 3-D construction. Our young artists in the Lower Division frequently visit world-class galleries in the neighborhood, allowing them to see firsthand the connections between their studio projects and the wider world.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Wellness and movement are critical both for healthy child development and engaged learning at school. From first through fourth grade, our students have access to Chelsea Piers, a state-of-the-art facility offering rock-climbing walls, gymnastics equipment, basketball courts, soccer fields, an ice hockey rink and a golf range. Activities focus on developing fundamental movement capacities, such as balance, speed, agility, coordination and dynamic stability.

TECHNOLOGY

Avenues is privileged to be named an Apple Distinguished School for the second time, an honor received in both our second and fourth years of operation. This designation is reserved for programs that meet criteria for innovation, leadership and educational excellence and that demonstrate a clear vision of exemplary learning environments.

In the Lower Division, technology is carefully and meaningfully integrated into all curricular areas. We never use technology to substitute teaching methods or materials, but rather to supplement our programs in ways that encourage our values. With the assistance of our technology integrators, teachers use technology to plan lessons and learning experiences that go well beyond the basics of Internet research and word processing. Students create models enhanced by augmented reality to explain their thinking, devise multimedia presentations to share their learning, use collaborative gaming to explore history and design code to model geometric concepts.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community is woven into the fabric of the Lower Division curriculum at all grade levels. As children mature, they develop a greater sense of responsibility for the community, whether it is found in the classroom, the neighborhood or the global environment. At Avenues, language immersion becomes a tool for making connections with “grandparent language buddies” at the local senior center or with attendees at the many community events organized by the Avenues Parent Association. Our oldest students lead by example and undertake service projects. Classrooms and families can support our partners in the community through food, coat and book drives—even through our special Valentine’s Day pajama drive. While we encourage generosity, we value discussions about gratitude and relationships above donations.

PARENTS

Parental commitment to a child’s education is the wind in the sails of any great school. At Avenues it is no different. To ensure strong bonds between school and home, the Lower Division communicates frequently with parents, sharing classroom blog posts, calendars and announcements. Avenues also regularly hosts grade-level coffees and speaker events on topics of relevance to parents. Parents are invited to view their children’s work and see them demonstrate what they have learned throughout the school year.

