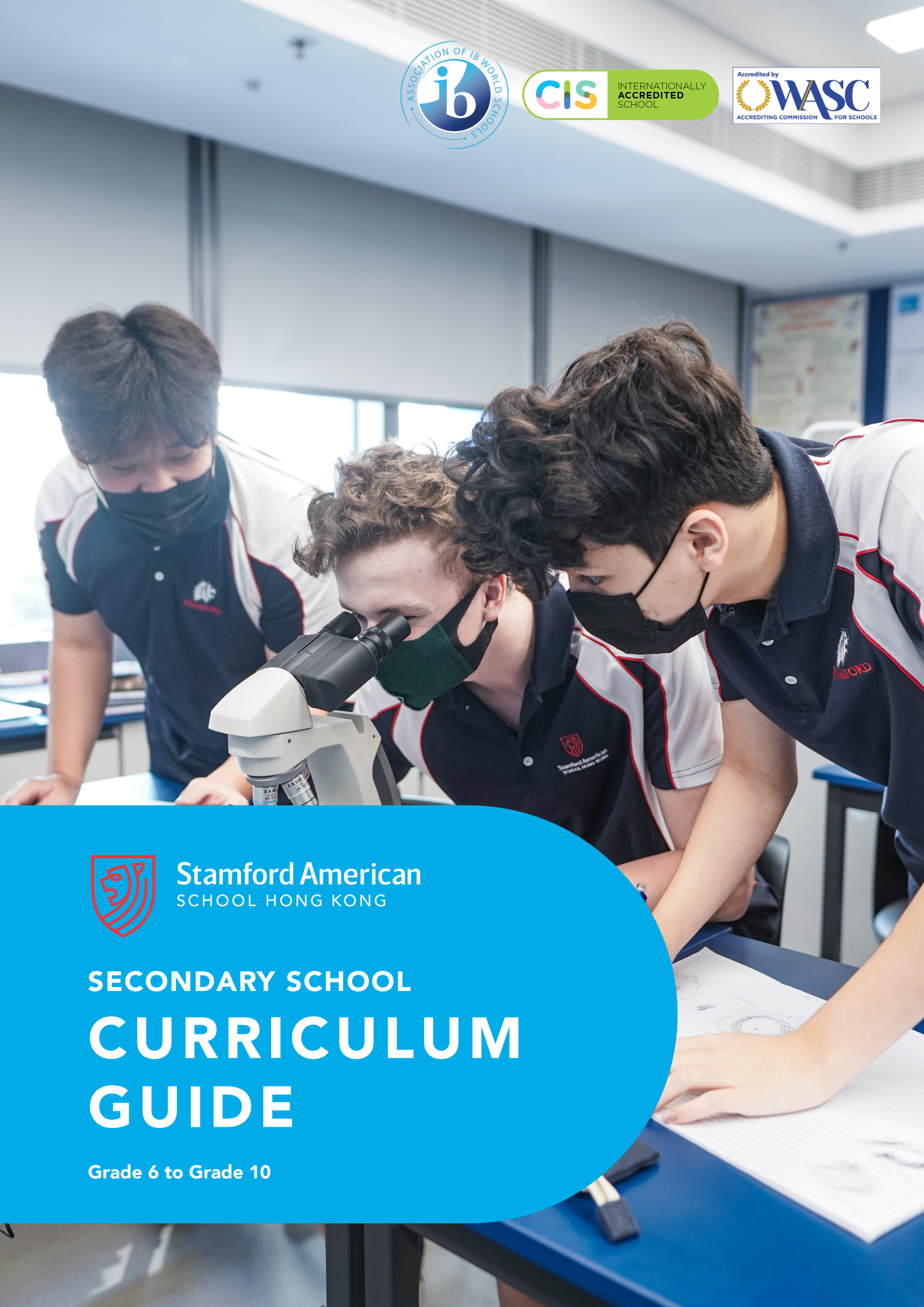

Stamford American
SCHOOL HONG KONG

SECONDARY SCHOOL

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Grade 6 to Grade 10

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Stamford American
SCHOOL HONG KONG

COGNITA AND STAMFORD SHARE A COMMON VISION

An Inspiring World of Education: Building self-belief and empowering individuals to succeed.

STAMFORD'S ACADEMIC TEAM WELCOMES YOU

Stamford's faculty and staff extend a warm welcome to all new and returning students as we embark on a new school year. The Secondary School team comprises about three dozen qualified, experienced and passionate educators whose primary goal is to make learning rewarding and impactful.

The experienced leadership team of the Head of School, Secondary Principal, Dean of Academics, and subject leaders ensure the curriculum supports and challenges students to nurture their greatest potential and set them on a path to their best-fit university.

Our in-house social-emotional and university counseling team guides students to develop a strong foundation of life skills and character that enhance their academic performance, supporting them through critical transitions between elementary, middle school, and high school.

Together as a community, we look forward to another year of growth and the excitement that engaging learning brings to our students.

OUR TEACHERS

Our teachers bring a wide range of experiences to Stamford that enrich our collaborative community with diverse perspectives and a deep commitment to students and learning.

In addition to our core subject faculty, approximately 15 additional specialist teachers teach the secondary school in the subjects of language acquisition (Mandarin and Spanish), physical and health education, and all the arts (drama, music, visual art).

Our teachers have an average of 12 years of teaching experience, two-thirds have a master's degree, most have IB experience, and everyone is familiar and engaged with the latest progressive best teaching practices.

Teachers continue to grow through rich professional development opportunities within established learning communities at Stamford, formal external training, internal learning with colleagues and educational consultants, and daily interaction with their students and colleagues. At Stamford, we firmly believe that learning takes place every day for everyone.

At specific times during the year, parents receive formal feedback on their children's progress through report cards and parent-teacher conferences. Teachers also inform parents of class progress via teacher blogs throughout the year.

Please feel free to contact your children's teachers at any time using their email addresses with any questions, comments, or concerns.

AMERICAN STANDARDS

A curriculum has many parts, all working together to provide students with the best possible learning experience. The curriculum at Stamford represents an ongoing process of reflection and innovation to ensure the latest teaching and learning tools and practices are delivered in our classrooms.

Stamford American's curriculum includes:

- academic standards that define knowledge and skills
- key concepts and enduring understandings
- essential questions to guide learning
- learning activities supported by primary and secondary resources
- cross-disciplinary elements such as 'Approaches to Learning' traits, Learner Profile attributes, and global citizenship linkages
- ''approaches to teaching' strategies that guide teaching pedagogy
- the style and personality of the teacher
- the dynamics of the class as well as individual learners

First and foremost, the anchor of our curriculum is well-established rigorous American standards.

Subject Area	Standards and Benchmarks
English, Humanities, Mathematics, Sciences	American Education Reaches Out (AERO) (based on Common Core framework)
Modern Languages (Spanish and Mandarin)	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
Music, Drama, Visual Arts	Massachusetts Arts (MA)
STEM/Innovation	Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
Physical and Health Education	Society of Health and Physical Education (SHAPE) National Health Education Standards (NHES)
Social Emotional Learning	Second Step Program (gr. 6-8) School-Connect (gr. 9-12)

Every unit of study a student participates in is underpinned by these standards.

EDUCATING THE WHOLE CHILD

Academics are essential during a student's time at school. We know that life does not consist of just knowledge and skills—young adults need to be able to function socially and emotionally in an evermore complex world. To address this, Stamford embeds programs and projects into its curriculum framework to help students build self-confidence, develop communication and collaboration skills, and learn how to think critically.

These components either serve as extensions or are part of standard coursework:

- Global Citizenship
- Approaches to Learning
- Action and Service
- IB Learning Profile
- The Sophomore Project
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Global citizenship is closely linked with an international-mindset and intercultural understanding. We want our students to have a world perspective that is balanced and informed. We want them to genuinely care about the future of humankind and develop a basic framework for understanding the complexities of our global society, which is no small task! It requires students to be able to consider multiple perspectives, critically examine the costs and benefits of different options, and then to have the courage to take action.

Each unit of study includes the element 'global citizenship,' where teachers link the concepts of multilingualism and intercultural understanding to the other aims of the unit. Using identified curriculum standards, knowledge and skills, teachers identify natural connections to global citizenship.

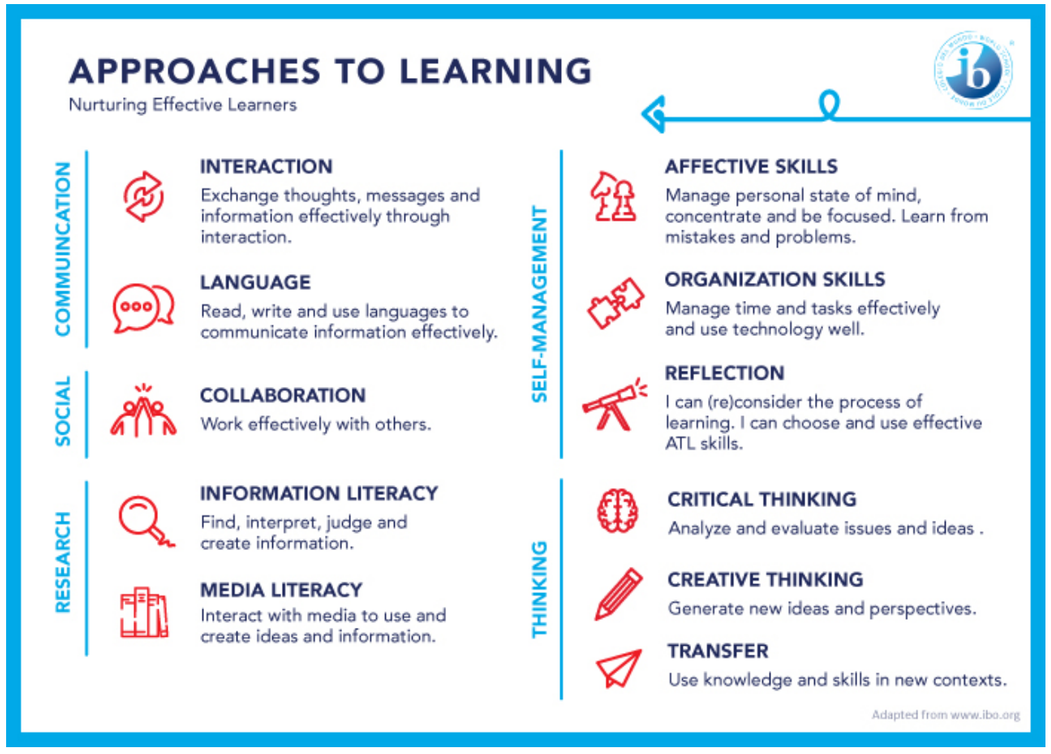
Additionally, there are many times during the day when global citizenship connections can happen naturally. Perhaps it comes up during a student council discussion when students are pondering how to use their limited time and material resources. Alternatively, maybe it comes up in the lunchroom when a student notices another with a different kind of food from home, and wonders what it is and why they have chosen that for lunch. The possibilities are almost endless.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING (ATLs)

Approaches to Learning (ATLs) are a set of 134 academic and affective skills grouped into five areas:

- Communication skills
- Research skills
- Thinking skills
- Social skills
- Self-management skills

ATLs are cross-curricular skills that essentially help students learn how to learn. While they are purposely embedded in every unit of instruction (meaning they are explicitly taught and assessed), ATLs also turn up in all sorts of less formal co-curricular experiences too, like during outdoor education camps, in after-school activities, at sports competitions or when students are performing in a play or choral concert.



ACTION AND SERVICE

All students in grades 6-10 are encouraged to participate in service, creative and active (physical) endeavors. In grades 6-8 the school offers opportunities for students to participate on an optional basis. These can take the form of service opportunities (i.e., Box of Hope, Sunshine Action), after-school sports teams or involvement in the school drama production.

The Award for Young People (AYP) scheme is a framework for students in Grade 9 and above that encourages them to be well-rounded, not just focusing on academics only. This directly supports the concept of 'developing the whole child.' The main aims of the Award for Young People (AYP) are that students:

- have fun, make friends
- improve self-esteem, build confidence
- gain essential skills and attributes for work and life
- learn resilience, problem-solving, teamwork, communication and drive

Each quarter, students are given guidelines to follow for participation in a range of activities outside of the normal academic school day, and instructions for how to document these experiences. There are five sections of activities students participate in:

- Service
- Skills
- Physical Recreation
- Expedition
- Residential Project (Gold Level)

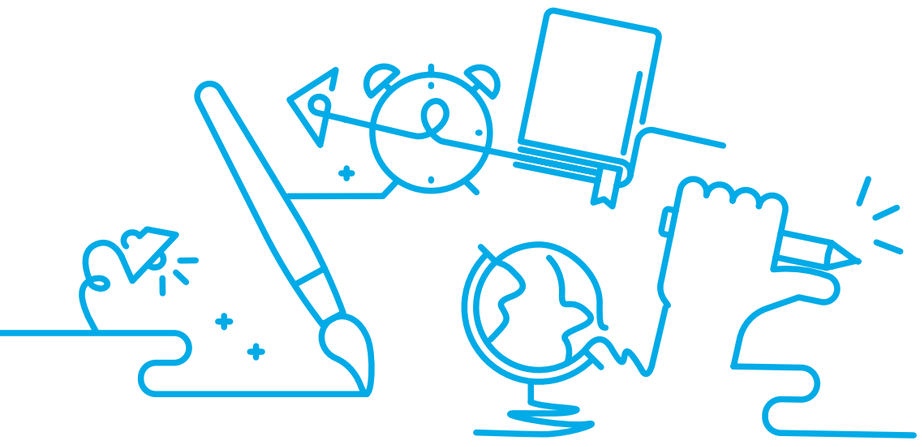
All students in Grade 9 will complete the "Bronze" level of the award, and students in Grades 10-12 may optionally choose to further pursue the "Silver" and "Gold" levels, with the support of the school.

Community Food Drive.

IB LEARNER PROFILE

The IB Learner Profile includes 10 attributes valued by IB schools worldwide. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help students become responsible members of local, national and global communities. The Learner Profile supports the notion of international-mindedness and is a central component to all our unit plans.

As IB learners we strive to be:



THE SOPHOMORE PROJECT

The Sophomore Project is a culminating experience for students in Grade 10 (Sophomores), an essential preparation for the diploma options at Stamford. The project is an 8-month-long project where students choose an area of interest to them, research, develop a plan to produce a product, create that product, then hold a final exhibition. Students document the experience in a process journal and report. This project combines the learning and skills and pushes students to the next level with support from an assigned teacher-mentor. The mentor will help guide them through the process, skills, and evaluation criteria.

Students must earn a '4' or higher to be eligible to apply for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

Every child receives formal instruction in social-emotional learning (SEL) every week. Students with these skills are better able to maintain healthy relationships with peers and adults and have more coping strategies to manage stressful situations which can result in a 10% increase in academic achievement.

IN GRADE 6-8, STAMFORD USES THE SECOND STEP FRAMEWORK. UNITS INCLUDE:

1) mindsets and goals

2) values and relationships

3) thoughts, emotions and decisions

4) serious peer conflicts

IN GRADES 9 AND ABOVE, STAMFORD USES THE SCHOOL-CONNECT FRAMEWORK. S AMPLE TOPICS INCLUDE:

1)building rapport with teachers

2)using active listening

3)managing digital tools

4)cultivating curiosity and grit

5)taking effective notes

TOPICS IN GRADE 10 INCLUDE:

1)coping with stress

2)defusing anger

3)outsmarting media

4)advertising, planning for university

5) the Grade 11/12 course selection process

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENGLISH

English includes a balanced study of genres, literary texts, and a world literature component. Students' interactions with readers generate moral, social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental insights. Students learn how to form opinions, make decisions, and engage in ethical reasoning through their studies. The course equips students with linguistic, analytical, and communicative skills that help to develop interdisciplinary understanding. Students develop skills in six domains: listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and presenting independently and with others.

One of the aims of English is to encourage and enable students to use language as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning, self-expression, analysis, and social interaction. It seeks to develop in students the skills involved in critical, creative, and personal approaches to studying and analyzing literary and non-literary texts. Students learn to explore and analyze aspects of various cultures through literary and non-literary texts. They will explore the language through multiple media and modes and apply linguistic and literary concepts and skills in different authentic contexts.

American Standards – American Education Reaches Out (AERO)

Key Concepts – communication, connections, creativity, perspective

Middle School topics include:

GRADE 6 – personal narratives, a deep study of character, research-based information writing

GRADE 7 – writing realistic fiction, investigating characterization, the art of argument

GRADE 8 – investigative journalism, analyzing craft and theme in literature, position papers

Middle School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Know, understand and interpret	Analyze and evaluate	Communicate

High School topics include

GRADE 9 – visual texts, short stories, literary features, novel study, Shakespeare

GRADE 10 – novel study of U.S. authors, world texts (Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe)

High School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Know, understand and interpret a variety of texts	Analyze and evaluate ways to use language	Communicate clearly, logically and persuasively

MODERN LANGUAGES (MANDARIN AND SPANISH)

Studying the modern languages of Mandarin and Spanish helps students develop intercultural awareness and international-mindedness. Students reflect upon and explore a range of cultural perspectives in addition to the language itself. Language develops critical thinking and global citizenship and explores and sustains personal development and cultural identity.

One of the aims of modern languages is to gain proficiency in an additional language while supporting the maintenance of a student's mother tongue and cultural heritage. It allows students to develop a respect for and understanding of diverse linguistic and cultural heritages. On a deeper level, they appreciate a variety of literary and non-literary texts and develop critical and creative techniques for comprehension and constructing meaning. They recognize and use language as a vehicle of thought, reflection, self-expression, and learning in other subjects. Modern languages are structured in phases (1-6), and students progress through the phases as their cognition and skills improve.

American Standards – American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

Key Concepts – communication, connections, creativity, culture

Phase topics include:

PHASE 1 – introduction to pronunciation and writing, topics of student interest
PHASE 2 – extension of phase 1 with more depth into geography, current events, history
PHASE 3 – interpersonal and cultural contexts, sports, holidays, entertainment, vocabulary
PHASE 4 – short stories, life topics, building vocabulary, grammar, work, media, technology
PHASES 5/6 – reading strategies, authentic sources, academic language, analyze and evaluate

Middle School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Comprehending and communicating spoken and visual text	Comprehending and communicating written and visual text	Using language

High School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Communicate clearly and effectively	Understand and use language interpersonally	Understand and use language with fluency and accuracy

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 5
Identify, organize and present ideas on a range of topics	Understand, analyze and reflect on written, audio, visual

HUMANITIES

Humanities encourage learners to respect and understand the world around them and equips them with 21st-century skills. Students will explore the historical, contemporary, political, social, economic, religious, technological, and cultural contexts that impact our world. This encourages learners to consider local, regional, and global contexts. Students collect, describe, and analyze data used in studies of societies. Students test hypotheses and learn to interpret complex information, including source material. They develop their identities as individuals and as responsible members of local and global communities.

Humanities help students appreciate human and environmental commonalities and diversity. They learn to understand the interactions and interdependence of individuals, societies, and the environment and also how to identify and develop concern for the well-being of human communities and the natural environment. They develop inquiry skills that lead toward conceptual understandings of the relationships between individuals, societies, and the environments in which they live. Ultimately, Humanities helps students learn how to act as responsible citizens of local and global communities.

American Standards – American Education Reaches Out (AERO)

Key Concepts – change, global interactions, systems, time, place and space

Middle School topics include:

GRADE 6 – geography, early humans, natural disasters, culture, time, continuity and change
GRADE 7 – mapping, environmental change, quality of life, ancient China, world religions
GRADE 8 – ecosystems, technological changes, Middle Ages, Renaissance, society and identity

Middle School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Investigating and communicating	Thinking critically

High School topics include

GRADE 9 – identity, 20th century political systems, philosophy, human rights
GRADE 10 – religion, economic development, nationalism, IoT, globalization

High School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Demonstrate application and analysis	Demonstrate synthesis and evaluation

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Demonstrate use and application of appropriate skills

SCIENCE

Science and its methods of investigation offer a way of learning that contributes to developing an analytical and critical way of thinking. Inquiry allows students to independently and collaboratively investigate issues through research, observation, and experimentation. Students explore the connections between science and discover the tensions and dependencies between science and morality, ethics, culture, economics, politics, and the environment. Students develop the ability to demonstrate critical-thinking skills to analyze and evaluate information to make informed judgments in various contexts. Learning science relies on understanding and using the language of science, which involves more than simply learning technical, scientific terminology.

Science helps students understand and appreciate science and its implications and consider it a human endeavor with benefits and limitations. Students will cultivate analytical, inquiring, and flexible minds that pose questions, solve problems, construct explanations and judge arguments. They will design and perform investigations, evaluate evidence and reach conclusions.

American Standards – Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS/AERO/CC)

Key Concepts – change, connections, relationships, systems

Middle School topics include:

GRADE 6 – water systems, weather and atmosphere, cells and heredity, thermal energy

GRADE 7 – atoms, biochemistry, ecosystems, geology

GRADE 8 – motion forces and energy, evolution and natural selection, space science

Middle School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Applying skills and practices	Analyzing and reflecting

High School topics include

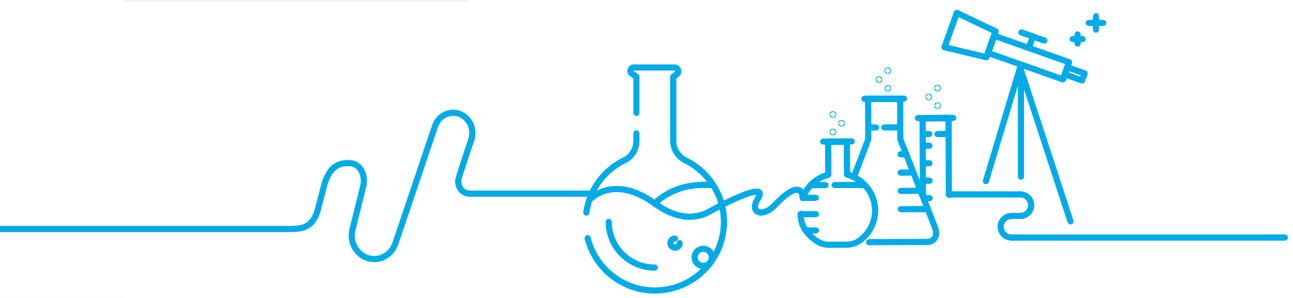
GRADE 9 – periodic table, chemical reactions, human physiology

GRADE 10 – cellular processes, genetics, classical mechanics, stoichiometry

High School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Make inquiries and design experiments	Process data and evaluate conclusions

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Reflect on the impacts of science



MATHEMATICS

Mathematics promotes a powerful universal language, analytical reasoning, and problem-solving skills that contribute to developing logical, abstract, and critical thinking. Through mathematics, students can learn to make sense of the world and analyze and search for patterns and relationships. Mathematics is more than simply teaching formulas or rules but is a means for new knowledge to be applied to situations outside the classroom. It helps students develop problem-solving techniques and provides the foundation for studying sciences, engineering, and technology.

Mathematics at Stamford encourages students to enjoy and develop a healthy curiosity for the subject. Students develop an understanding of the principles and nature of mathematics, as well as logical, critical, and creative thinking. Students learn to build powers of generalization and abstraction and the ability to apply and transfer skills to a wide range of real-life situations. They come to appreciate mathematics's moral, social and ethical implications. Students will see the international dimension in mathematics through an awareness of the universality of mathematics and its multicultural perspectives. They develop the ability to reflect critically upon their work and the work of others. And ultimately, students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to pursue further studies in mathematics.

American Standards – American Education Reaches Out (AERO)

Key Concepts – form, logic, perspective, relationships

Middle School topics include:

GRADE 6 – ratios, rates and percent, algebraic expressions, surface area, intro to statistics

GRADE 7 – operations, algebraic equations, angles, geometry, volume, statistics and probability

GRADE 8 – exponents, linear equations, functions, congruence, statistics and probability

Middle School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Investigating and communicating patterns	Applying mathematics

High School topics include

GRADE 9 – reasoning and proof, perimeter/volume/surface, geometry and trigonometry

GRADE 10 – functions, graphs, systems of equations, sequences and series, exponents, and counting

High School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Solve real-world problems through appropriate models	Communicate, interpret, and reason with sound arguments

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Investigate, analyze and test with efficient use of technology

THE ARTS: DRAMA, MUSIC, AND VISUAL ART

Drama engages students in an active relationship with theater and encourages autonomous learning and exploration. It promotes the growth of creative, reflective, and communication skills through practical work. There is an emphasis on the artistic process and the student's understanding of it as an essential component of their creative development through continuous investigation, planning, goal setting, rehearsing, performing, reflection and evaluation.

Music gives students access to musical experiences that allow for the development of thinking skills, intuitive skills, practical abilities, communication, and the ability to relate to others. Engagement with existing and emerging music from the local community and from around the world allows students to understand the significance of music to the cultures of the world and, by engaging in practical work, to develop an understanding of how the act of making music is a significant and universal aspect of human expression.

Visual art allows students to experience a wide range of visual art activities, both traditional and contemporary. While traditional practices such as painting, sculpture, ceramics, and architecture have historically provided cultural records, modern approaches and access to technology now give the tools of visual art an extensive palette. Digital technology, time-based art, installation, and performance add to traditional practice and bring an extra dimension and meaning to the student's experience in visual art.

The arts enable students to develop skills specifically related to the discipline of creating and presenting art. Students will engage in creative exploration and self-discovery making purposeful connections between investigation and practice. By understanding the relationship between art and its contexts, students can respond to and reflect on art and ultimately deepen their understanding of the subject.

American Standards – Massachusetts Arts (MA)

Key Concepts – aesthetics, communication, creativity, identity

Drama topics include:

GRADE 6 – dramatic sequence and structure, drama strategies, signs and symbols, storytelling
GRADE 7 – voice, visual elements of drama, forum theater, play scripts, vocal expression
GRADE 8 – drama in the community, Russian theater, melodrama, physical theater, masks
GRADE 9 – theater production, commedia dell'arte, puppet theater, devising, script writing
GRADE 10 – Greek theater, semiotics, devising techniques, theater theory, Shakespeare

Music topics include:

GRADE 6 – music and advertising, intro to music technology, ad jingle, radio commercial
GRADE 7 – music and animation, history of animation and film, Leitmotifs, aural analysis
GRADE 8 – electronic dance music (EDM), history, technology, compose EDM, notate themes
GRADE 9 – jazz music, baroque and classical period, film music, 20th century music and art
GRADE 10 – Asian world music, aural analysis, romantic period music, music research project

Visual art topics include:

GRADE 6 – design/inquiry cycle, 2D and 3D drawing, self portraits, proportion, sketching, symbolism
GRADE 7 – elements of design: line, value, shape, form, texture, space and color; mixed media
GRADE 8 – principles of art/design, various art movements such as Renaissance, Cubism, Pop Art
GRADE 9 – 2D focus on graphite, colored pencil, charcoal, ink, drawing skills, 3D sculpture, photography
GRADE 10 – color theory and acrylic, abstract ideas and representation, points of view, historical perspectives

Middle School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Developing skills and thinking creatively	Reflecting and responding

High School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Demonstrate application and analysis	Demonstrate synthesis and evaluation

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Select, use and apply skills and techniques

STEMinn

The STEMinn program combines science, technology, engineering, and math and focuses on innovation to elevate students into innovators ready to tackle global issues. At its core, students build a strong understanding of all areas of science and technology while learning how to design and engineer with a focus on sustainability and social responsibility. Through various units and hands-on projects, students gain in-demand skills such as leadership, complex problem-solving, and analytical thinking to drive success in any field.

The secondary STEMinn program builds on the core foundational skills across the STEMinn domains, takes their designs and innovations to the next level, and teaches more advanced technologies. Students learn advanced coding, user experience design, product design, and modeling. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals play an integral role in shaping the design and engineering outcomes to drive innovation that focuses on sustainability and solving global challenges. The STEMinn program builds a strong portfolio of innovative projects and in-demand skills to foster graduates who are attractive to universities and equipped to achieve beyond graduation.

American Standards – Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)

Key Concepts – communication, communities, development, systems

Middle School topics include:

GRADE 6 – game design, audio/video development, CAD, textile arts, jewelry and toy design, ICT skills

GRADE 7 – aerodynamics, UI/UX, graphics, architecture, habitat design, sustainable development

GRADE 8 – mechanisms, robotics, automation, wave science, information science

Middle School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing, understanding and inquiring	Developing and applying skills	Developing solutions, analyzing and evaluating

High School topics include

GRADE 9 – data science, IoT, the science and art of music, sustainable design and manufacturing

GRADE 10 – circuit boards, development boards, product design, CAD, resistant materials

High School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Apply design and technology skills, concepts and methodology	Construct, analyze and evaluate solutions and methods

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 4
Demonstrate research, experimentation and modeling

PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Physical and health education helps students understand and appreciate the value of being physically active and develop the motivation for making healthy life choices. The course fosters the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that contribute to a student's balanced and healthy lifestyle. Students will explore various concepts that help foster an awareness of physical development and health perspectives, empowering them to make informed decisions and promoting positive social interaction. Physical and health education helps students appreciate and respect the ideas of others and develop effective collaboration and communication skills. This subject area also offers many opportunities to build positive interpersonal relationships that can help students to create a sense of social responsibility.

One of the aims of physical and health education is to have students participate effectively in various physical activities and understand the value of physical activity. Students work to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle through an inquiry-based approach. They collaborate and communicate effectively, build positive relationships and demonstrate social responsibility. Students reflect on their experiences and make modifications for improvement.

American Standards – Society of Health and Physical Education (SHAPE)
National Health Education Standards (NHES)

Key Concepts – change, communication, development, relationships

Middle School topics include:

GRADE 6 – dance, territory/invasion games, adventure challenge, striking and fielding, nutrition

GRADE 7 – gymnastics, throwing and catching, basketball, injury prevention and safety and environmental health

GRADE 8 – badminton, soccer, international games, life fitness, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs

Middle School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Knowing and understanding	Planning and performing	Reflecting and improving performance

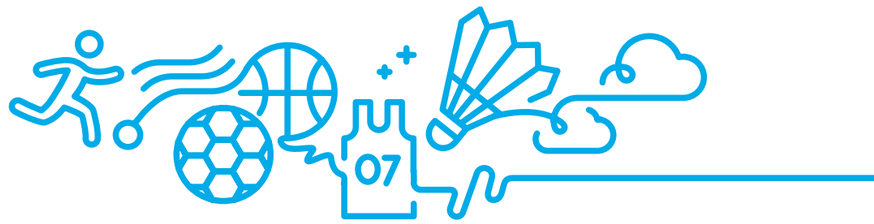
High School topics include

GRADE 9 – swimming, net and wall games, Australian football, soccer, human growth development and family life

GRADE 10 – water polo, international games, basketball, soccer, personal and community health

High School assessment objectives

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 1	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 2	ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE 3
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Plan and perform routines, sessions and events	Reflect and improve on performance



BRILLIANT BASICS

TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY

PERIOD	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUS	FRI
Morning Advisory 7:45 am - 7:55 am	Morning Advisory				
Period 1 7:55 am - 8:35 am	Music	Math	English	Science	Phys Ed.
Period 2 8:35 am - 9:15 am	Music	Math	English	Science	Phys Ed.
Snack 9:15 am - 9:35 am	Snack				
Period 3 9:35 am - 10:15 am	Modern Language	Modern Language	Modern Language	Modern Language	Modern Language
Period 4 10:15 am - 10:55 am	English	Assembly	Assembly	STEMinn	Math
Period 5 10:55 am - 11:40 am	English	Science	School Connect	STEMinn	Art
Period 6 11:40 am - 12:25 pm	Lunch				
Period 7 12:25 pm - 1:10 pm	STEMinn	Science	Corerstones	Math	Art
Period 8 1:10 pm - 1:55 pm	STEMinn	Humanities	Corerstones	Math	English
Period 9 1:55 pm - 2:40 pm	Humanities	Humanities	Corerstones	Humanities	English

Co-curricular activities typically happen for one hour after school.

HOMEWORK

Homework provides the opportunity for practicing, extending and consolidating learning in class and develops planning and organization abilities in students to assist with their learning. Homework should be relevant to classroom learning, appropriate to the individual student's learning abilities (taking into account any accommodations) and purposeful—not homework for the sake of homework.

Homework should have a purpose. It may be to:

- prepare students for upcoming class work
- be an extension of the lesson to practice or revise skills already developed
- encourage students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively
- occasionally finish off incomplete class work
- transfer new skills or concepts to new situations

Teachers clearly communicate to students the guidelines, expectations and use of assessment objectives for homework or coursework. When appropriate, clear exemplars can be used. Outlined below are the general time guidelines for homework responsibilities per night for all subjects total taught in a day:

GRADE 6 – 70 minutes
GRADE 7 – 80 minutes
GRADE 8 – 90 minutes
GRADE 9 – 100 minutes
GRADE 10 – 110 minutes
GRADES 11-12 – 120 minutes

ASSESSMENT

Progress reports are made available to students and parents four times a year to give an update of the child's progress across all of his or her subjects. The purpose is to provide a basis for constructive conversations about areas of potential growth and improvement. Achievement is reported on a 7-point scale and feedback is also given for overall effort and progress made in a course. The grading scale is a follows:

7 = excellent performance, significantly exceeding grade level expectations

6 = very good performance, exceeding grade level expectations

5 = good performance, fully meeting grade level expectations

4 = satisfactory performance, occasionally requires support, mostly meeting grade level expectations

3 = mediocre performance, requires significant support, sometimes not meeting grade level expectations

2 = limited performance, below grade level expectations

1 = significantly below grade level expectations

Stamford grading is learning-outcomes-related, not norm-referenced. This means individual student performance is compared to pre-developed and communicated expectations which may come in the form of a set of grade level descriptors or a rubric. Therefore, students are not compared to each other, ranked or placed on a percentage scale. Grades are not calculated or averaged out, but instead are determined using a "best-fit" approach, which research supports as being the best way to give ongoing feedback and as being a reliable indicator of real student performance. Using best-fit requires professional judgement on the part of the teacher, and judgements are always supported by multiple and varied examples of student performance.

In the 'Course Descriptions' section on pages 10-19, each course includes a set of 'assessment objectives,' which can be thought of as areas of learning. When a teacher identifies learning outcomes for the unit of study, they are linked to one of these assessment objectives. In this way, teachers can ensure there is strong linkage between learning outcomes and assessment tasks, and between assessment objectives and final progress report mark.

CONCEPT-BASED UNIT PLANNING

Curriculum planning for Grades 6-10 at Stamford is based on the Understanding by Design® framework, which emphasizes identifying what is intended to be explicitly taught and assessed first (American standards), and then designing a unit of study with those goals in mind. There is a strong focus on developing deep understanding and also the ability to transfer that understanding to new and interesting situations. Key primary resources for each course (textbooks) are merely resources, not curriculum.

The basis of all curricular planning at Stamford is built on the structure of a 'unit.' A unit of study is what provides the structure for a cohesive, comprehensive, multi-week series of lessons coalesced around a single 'concept.' At Stamford, every single unit in all grade levels are focused on a single concept that serves as the lynchpin for the 'enduring understanding' and 'essential questions' for the unit of study. The sixteen concepts incorporated across all subject areas and all grade levels are:

AESTHETICS	CHANGE	COMMUNICATION	COMMUNITIES
CONNECTIONS	CREATIVITY	CULTURE	DEVELOPMENT
FORM	GLOBAL INTERACTIONS	IDENTITY	LOGIC
PERSPECTIVE	RELATIONSHIPS	TIME, PLACE AND SPACE	SYSTEMS

By building units of study around these 16 concepts, it is possible for students to come away with a higher level of understanding, not just topics and knowledge. Each Secondary School course will typically have about 4-6 units of study during an academic year.

COURSE CHOICES

INTEGRATED COURSES

All students in Grades 6-8 study the same subjects; English, a second language (Mandarin or Spanish), humanities, sciences, mathematics, STEMinn, physical and health education, drama, music and visual art. All courses are integrated, meaning that for each grade level a range of topics organized under learning areas are covered. As students progress through the years, the complexity and depth of learning increases, so that students are able to advance their learning. Students explore a range of areas every year, so will never go long without studying a certain area, such as 'statistics and probability,' 'forces and motion' or 'connections and conflict.' Ongoing application of knowledge to different contexts allow for deeper and longer lasting learning

LEVELED COURSES

LANGUAGE

In second language studies (language acquisition) of either Mandarin or Spanish, students are placed in cohorts of students who are at a similar level. Because of the nature of language studies, this is the best way to organize students for these classes.

MATH

Beginning in Grade 9, students are placed in one of two courses: 'Applied Mathematics' or 'Pure Mathematics.' Both of these courses are two-year courses (Grade 9 & 10) Students cover topics from all five math areas: operations/algebra, real and complex number systems (functions), geometry/trigonometry, statistics/probability and calculus. The Applied Math course has more of a focus on real and complex numbers (functions) and statistics/probability. The Pure Math course has more of a focus on geometry/trigonometry and calculus.

For mathematics, students and parents will be led through a course selection process by Stamford's academic team at the end of Grade 8. They are placed according to a number of factors including: career aspirations, university studies plans, personal interest, ability to access courses as evidenced by Stamford progress reports, and feedback from teachers.

MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS (MAP)

In addition to normal Stamford American progress reports, all students also sit for Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) exams twice a year, at the beginning and end of the school year. The purpose of these exams is to provide us more data on individual student growth over the school year. We use these as just one measure of learning, to be considered alongside the rich three-dimensional picture of learning that your child's report card, Seesaw portfolio (in the Elementary) and parent-teacher communication provide.

The MAP assessment is an external, standardized, adaptive computerized test in the three subject areas of reading, mathematics and science to provide an estimate of the student's achievement and growth levels. The version of the MAP assessment that our students take aligns with the American AERO/Common Core Plus standards frameworks on which our planning for learning is based.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

All students who satisfactorily complete their courses while at Stamford earn a 'Stamford American School Hong Kong – High School Diploma.' All courses in Grades 9-12 count toward the high school diploma, so students should be aware that all semester grades that are earned beginning in Grade 9 will appear on their official high school transcript. This transcript will be submitted to universities during the college application process that happens in Grades 11 and 12 (along with several other things).

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

6 credits for each subject below

STEMINN/ ELECTIVES

4 credits for each subject below

ENGLISH

3 credits for each subject below

HUMANITIES

SCIENCE

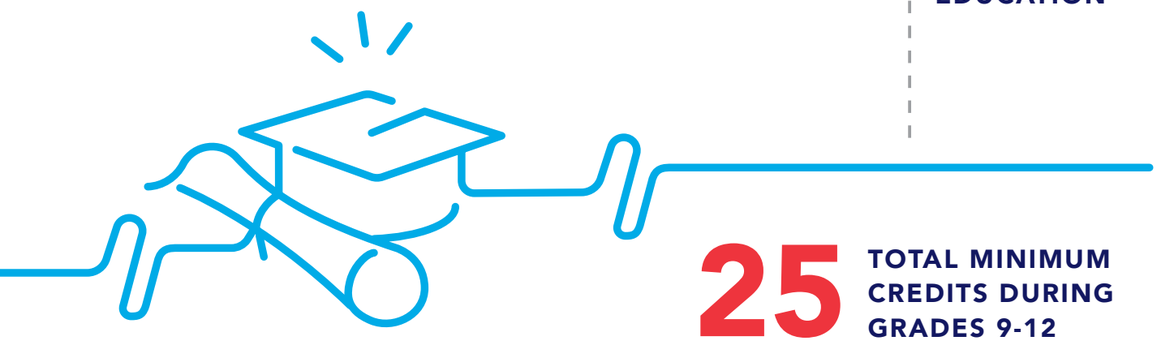
MATHEMATICS

2 credits for each subject below

MODERN LANGUAGES

THE ARTS

PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION



25 **TOTAL MINIMUM CREDITS DURING GRADES 9-12**

BEGINNING TO PREPARE FOR THE IBDP

As students approach Grade 11 and the beginning of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Progamme (IBDP), it is helpful for them to think about what an IB Learner looks like.

IB learners generally have the following qualities:

- want to challenge him or herself against world benchmarks
- enjoys collaborative work practices
- ability to work across different subject areas
- good work ethic and time management skills
- interest in internationalism
- wants success at university, not just 'get in'
- higher order thinking skills
- wants to impact positively on the world
- wants to keep career options open
- see him or herself as being a 'lifelong learner'.

Some of the things students in grades 8-10 should be striving for include:

- have perfect or near-perfect school attendance
- demonstrate academic honesty and respectful, safe behavior
- maintain good working relationships with teachers
- develop good note taking and study habits
- devote time almost every day to your studies, be constantly reviewing
- follow the advice of your teachers
- take personal responsibility for your learning
- work hard to develop 'academic literacy' with the assistance of your teachers
- understand that your 'job' is to be a student; do it well
- for the Sophomore Project, follow all the guidelines and do well ('4' or higher).

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

CORNERSTONES PROGRAM

All students in Grades 9 and 10 have the unique opportunity to work with world-renowned organizations to find their career aspirations and prepare for universities while earning high school course credit. Students choose two options (one for Semester 1 and one for Semester 2), where they are guided by that organization's industry expert and a Stamford faculty advisor. The eight opportunities students choose from for this school year are:

FLUX COMPASS – Focus on Design Thinking for the Future
OWN ACADEMY & ENZYME – Focus on Architecture
OWN ACADEMY – Focus on Finance Industry
OWN ACADEMY & PRESS START HONG KONG – Focus on Game Design
TRAM PLUS – Focus on 3D Modelling and Design Challenge
HONG KONG ART SCHOOL - Focus on Visual Art (Ceramics and Painting)
OWN ACADEMY & MAZU CONCEPTS LIMITED – Focus on E-commerce Entrepreneurship
OWN ACADEMY & EUCAN PRODUCTIONS – Focus on Film Making
OWN ACADEMY – Focus on Biotechnology
TEST KITCHEN – Focus on Food and Beverage Industry

Each semester-long collaboration consists of 12 meeting dates (always periods 7-8-9 on Wednesdays) and results in a culminating project. Ongoing and final performance feedback is blended into the progress reports for the most closely related Stamford course. Cornerstones is an excellent opportunity for students to display project-based learning and provides a standout addition to their portfolios when applying to universities.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CAMPS

All students in grades 6-10 participate in outdoor education camps organized by the school. The current range of locations for grade level trips have students in grades 6-8 staying in the Hong Kong area and students in grades 9 and above traveling elsewhere in Southeast Asia. Locations and timing of the trips are published at the beginning of each school year.

The aim of the camps is to provide a model of holistic, field-based learning in the effort to develop leaders who are ecologically literate, compassionate, and engaged global citizens. Research shows that well designed, field-based experiences can produce learning which transfers from the field to students' home environments. Through immersive and often challenging field study experiences, students develop leadership traits, compassion for others and communication skills useful in today's world.

Outdoor education camps are seen as an extension of the normal school curriculum, oftentimes with elements that support what is taught in the traditional classroom.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND TEAMS

Stamford currently offers about 50 after-school co-curricular activities (CCAs) and clubs in which students can participate. Activities are organized into four different areas: athletics, innovation and technology, the arts and special interest CCAs. CCAs is to help students build self-awareness, skills and confidence. Stamford fosters sportsmanship and leadership through activities and school teams.

A few examples of activities recently offered include: basketball, coding, digital media, robotics, 3D printing, ceramics, Chinese arts and crafts, Chinese speech and drama, choir, drama production, drawing and painting, string orchestra, and speech and debate. Students in grades 6-8 are especially encouraged to see CCAs as a good way to have 'action and service' experiences. Likewise, students in grades 9 and 10 can view CCAs as a manageable way to meet Award for Young People (AYP) requirements.

Stamford is a member of the Association of China and Mongolia International Schools (ACAMIS) which also provides additional opportunities for competitive events and leadership building.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How do students choose between applied and pure math?

A: The first consideration is what is best for the student. Two important factors to consider will be career-university aspirations and actual mathematics ability. There will need to be some honest heart-to-heart conversations in some cases, to reconcile reality with options.

Q: How does your American-framework-style education compare to the MYP and the IGCSE?

A: All three include a range of courses, ensuring a balanced content approach. One other similarity with the three is that all of them include a grade 10 culminating project experience. Both the MYP and IGCSE have a strong academic achievement exams-based element to their program, whereas Stamford's approach is more focused on growth strategies (MAP exams) and less on student ranking. The IGCSE does not include components of holistic education, but the MYP and Stamford's approaches do. These include elements of: global citizenship, Approaches to Learning, Action and Service, Learning Profile attributes and social-emotional education.

Q: Considering the MYP e-assessments and the IGCSE standardized assessments, what external standardized test does Stamford use to ensure students are well-prepared for the IB Diploma Programme?

A: All students in grades 6-10 take the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) exam twice a year, at the beginning and end of the school year. While the primary purpose of this exam is to inform teaching and learning, with a focus on growth targets, the data (RIT scores) are statistically sound and can be used as a barometer for student achievement as well. Used in concert with other student-specific longitudinal data the school collects, we can show a complete picture of a student's academic standing at the end of grade.

Q: What should I be doing with my child right now (grades 8-10) to help prepare them for the rigors of the Diploma Programme?

A: The best thing you can do is simply be involved in your child's learning. This means having conversations with them at the dinner table about their school day, briefly reviewing their homework with them as regularly as you can, staying in contact with key teachers and encouraging conversations in English using increasingly sophisticated language. One of the most important predictors of success is their reading comprehension and writing abilities. These things alone will benefit almost all other subject areas regardless of content and concepts being discussed. Let your child know you are on their side and there to support them.

Q: How do Stamford's AERO (Common Core) standards prepare students for the Diploma Programme?

A: AERO standards are used by teachers to design all courses up through Grade 10 and also any other 'Stamford' courses such as 'Computer Science' and 'Sport for Life.' Diploma Programme courses do not use AERO standards and instead use a set of very specific IB-directed learning outcomes. In actuality, the DP learning outcomes look and sound very similar to AERO standards, but they are specific to each course. In contrast, AERO standards cover an entire discipline or subject area. In that regard, they are perfectly suited to the nature of our 'integrated' courses in Grades 9 and 10.

Q: What kinds of ongoing professional development do teachers participate in?

A: Ongoing training and support is multifaceted:

- formal external in-person training workshops
- formal internal workshops with other Stamford teachers
- online, multi-week training modules
- school-sponsored training workshops
- normal ongoing collaboration with on-site colleagues
- targeted training and support offered by curriculum coordinator.

Q: Does Stamford offer standardized tests like the SAT and ACT?

A: Yes. Stamford is a test site for both the ACT and SAT assessments. Likewise, we have all Grade 10 students sit the Pre-SAT (PSAT) during Semester 2 of Grade 10. Then, beginning in Grade 11, students typically will sit two different sessions of either the ACT or SAT exam, according to the needs of the universities to which they plan to apply. Schedules and venues are communicated in due time.

Stamford American
SCHOOL HONG KONG

School Campus

25 Man Fuk Road, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon, Hong Kong

T: +852 3467 4500
E: schooloffice@sais.edu.hk

Admissions Office

Unit 1807-1809, L18,
700 Nathan Road, Mongkok, Hong Kong

T: +852 2500 8688
E: admissions@sais.edu.hk

www.sais.edu.hk