



May 12, 2008

Dear 5th Grade Parents,

We are very excited about your child's transition to middle school in the upcoming months. All of the 5th graders have shown tremendous growth, both academically and socially, and we are thrilled to see their leadership skills growing as they take on more responsibility towards the end of their elementary years.

I wanted to take some time to familiarize you with Amana's Middle School format and expectations so that your child may be well prepared for success in the 6th grade.

Content areas in middle school are separated more than in elementary school. In other words, science and math will not be taught together in the same classroom by the same teacher. The reason for this is so that teachers who are very specialized in these particular subject areas can focus on in-depth studies in the rich Science and Math curriculum that is required of middle school students. However, Humanities will remain taught as a single block over several periods in the day, integrating Reading, Writing, and Social Studies. We have found that there is an enormous benefit in integrating the skill areas of reading and writing with the content of the 6th grade social studies curriculum, as they reinforce and deepen each other.

Amana's curriculum develops and deepens the Georgia Performance Standards for 6th grade. In Reading, students begin to experience more sophisticated literary works. They are challenged to read and comprehend a wide variety of genres, both fiction and non-fiction, and to analyze them thoroughly. In English Language Arts, they learn to edit more carefully and to develop and express their own voice in their writing. Math 6 integrates all the strands of math: number sense and numeration, geometry and measurement, algebraic relationships, statistics and probability, computation and estimation, and problem-solving. Sixth grade Social Studies students begin the study of major world regions: Latin America and Canada, Europe, Australia, and Oceania. They study the history, geography, and government and economic structures of these regions. Sixth graders also begin to specialize in the study one area of science: Earth Science. They spend the year intensively examining Earth Science strands like Meteorology, Oceanography, Space, the Structure of Earth, Energy, and Human Impact on Earth. Concurrently, they maintain and extend their hands-on science inquiry "habits of mind", learning how to think like a scientist. Art, Physical Education, Health, and Arabic will continue to challenge your child in competitions, projects, and mind-expanding creative activities in all these areas of enrichment and multiple intelligences.

As with all grade levels at Amana, Expeditions will be a main focus of the delivery of the content. Expeditions will be grade-level specific and one semester will concentrate on Social Studies while the other will focus on Science.

We will continue the practice of single gender instruction, with specific strategies and training in best practices for teaching adolescent boys and girls. We will continue the implementation of both the Student Council and the National Junior Honor Society, which are in their inaugural year this year at Amana.

We are very excited about the opportunities that the Middle School affords our students and look forward to your child's transition into the 6th grade. I invite you to learn more about Amana's Middle School by joining me for a meeting just prior to Showcase Night on Wednesday, May 14th at 6pm to discuss further these and other opportunities for your child. We also welcome visitors to sit in on current middle school classes to observe first hand the amazing learning going on.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact me at 678-624-0989.

Thank you,

Amaris Mohler

Principal