



**International School
HO CHI MINH CITY
AMERICAN ACADEMY**

POSITIVE • CARING • ENGAGED



MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE

ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022

AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
For students aged 11-18

Table of Contents



WELCOME	4
TEACHING & LEARNING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS	5
MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE	8
Assessment and Grading in Middle School	8
Middle School by Grade Level	11
Grade 6 at a Glance	11
Grade 7 at a Glance	12
Grade 8 at a Glance	13
Middle School by Subject Area	13
Advisory	13
Humanities: English Language Arts and Social Studies	14
Mathematics	16
STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics	16
World Languages	17
Health & Physical Education (PE)	18
Information Technology & Engineering	18
Arts & Music	20
Exploratory Program	20
Field Studies Program - Where Character is Built	22

Welcome



Mr. Nathan Swenson
Head of School

A Welcome from Head of School, Nathan Swenson

I always welcome the opportunity to showcase our wonderful school to prospective students and their families, and to the fellow education professionals who frequently visit to find out the secret of our success.

We are a leading American curriculum secondary school in Ho Chi Minh City, inspiring and challenging students aged 11 to 18 years old to achieve personal excellence.

Our highly qualified and dedicated teachers are student-focused, committed to developing each child's unique interests, abilities, and ambitions. This approach creates a culture of achievement in our close-knit community of over 300 students, demonstrated in our graduates' U.S. \$1m scholarship fund to overseas universities.

We lay the foundations for success with 100% English language immersion and a rigorous American accredited curriculum from age 11. At the same time, we offer an extensive Vietnamese Studies Program to ensure our students maintain their Mother Tongue and cultural roots. ISHCMC - American Academy is proud to be the only school in Vietnam to offer university-level courses through both Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA) and Advanced Placement (AP), giving your child unparalleled competitive advantage.

Above excellence in academics, our vision commits us to empowering our students to reach their potential across all endeavors – in the arts, sports, technology, and elsewhere. I welcome you to visit us to experience first-hand what sets ISHCMC – American Academy apart in the world of education.

TEACHING AND LEARNING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

ISHCMC - American Academy is a learning community where students, parents and teachers work together to create a positive, caring and engaging environment where students develop the skills and mindsets they need to be successful in life.

School Mission

Welcome to the International School Ho Chi Minh City - American Academy (ISHCMC - American Academy). In everything we do at ISHCMC-AA we aim to be POSITIVE, CARING and ENGAGED.

We are POSITIVE

We take a positive approach to live using a growth mindset.

We are CARING

We care for ourselves and others.

We are ENGAGED

We engage in the world around us.

The School Curriculum: What We Teach

Our school curriculum is driven by American and International academic standards and is intentionally designed to be flexible and responsive to the goals and needs of our students. High School course offerings and graduation requirements are designed to give students options to build their own pathway towards graduation based on their own skills and interests.

Beyond those academic standards, we endeavour to build the skills and mindsets our students will need to lead successful and meaningful lives. **Future Ready Skills:** Learning experiences at ISHCMC-AA build students' knowledge and understanding of the world and develop skills and habits that will bring them success and well-being in an international context. Character and Mindsets: The core goal of education at ISHCMC-AA is the development of character and community. We foster mindsets that support learning, internationalism and well-being for all.

Our Academic Standards	Curricular and Co-curricular programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English: Common Core (New York State) • Math: Common Core Integrated Mathematics • Social Studies: Common Core (New York State) • Science and Technology: Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) • Vietnamese Studies: MOET Standards for International Schools. • Arts: AERO* Music, AERO* Visual Arts • Physical Education: SHAPE America • Health: Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAL (English as an additional language) • Advisory Program/Positive Education • House Program • Academic Counselling • Social and Emotional Counselling • College and Career Counselling • Field Studies Program • SISAC Sports teams • After-School Activities (ASAs) • Assistantship Program • Sports Leadership Program • Peer Tutoring • Peer Mediation • Outdoor Education: Cognita Framework
Advanced and College level courses (Grade 11-12)	
Advanced Placement (AP) Syracuse University Project Advanced (SUPA)	

Teaching and Learning at ISHCMC-AA: How we Teach

The amazing faculty at ISHCMC-AA is made up of highly motivated and experienced teachers from around the world. Our teachers use a range of methods in their classrooms to understand and support the needs and interests of our students.

Principles of Quality Teaching and Learning		
We develop positive mindsets and focus on growth in students. Every child has an opportunity to grow given personalized support and quality feedback.	We nurture caring classroom and school communities with a focus on well-being for all.	Foster student engagement using active, challenging, relevant, collaborative and meaningful activities.

Instruction and Learning Activities

Our teachers use a range of methods to support student learning in the classroom, depending on the needs of the students and the goals of the lesson. Teachers engage students using combinations of teacher-led direct instruction, individual tasks, collaborative learning, project oriented learning, research, problem-solving, student reflection, peer feedback and group discussion. The language of instruction is always English and students are supported to access materials and build their academic language skills.

Feedback and Assessment

Ongoing and continuous feedback and assessment is a hallmark of teaching and learning at ISHCMC-AA. Students begin each unit with **diagnostic assessments** to measure their skills and prior knowledge and allow the teacher to support and tailor instruction. Teachers use **formative assessments** to provide feedback to students, understand the effectiveness of their teaching and adapt as needed.

Summative assessments, which form the basis for a student's grade in a class, take place after a child has had time to practice and get feedback from the teacher. Types of assessment we use include ISHCMC-AA include quizzes, tests, projects, essays, and presentations.

Standardized testing

Each year in September and May grade 6-10 students sit the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) tests to measure basic skills in Reading and Math. Students and teachers review September scores to understand student strengths and needs for the year. Students and teachers review the scores in May to measure student growth and understand the effectiveness of our school programs.

Grade 11 students sit the PSAT tests in September and the results are reviewed by students and teachers to target strengths and areas for growth. The PSAT is also used as practice for the SAT and students are advised how to focus their studies and improve their scores.

Reporting Student Progress and Achievement

We report student progress and achievement at various times throughout the school year. Teachers update student records in PowerSchool each week. Parents and students are encouraged to review feedback regularly.

Semester 1 Reports Progress report and Parent-Student Conferences (October) Semester Report (January)	Semester 2 Reports Progress report and Parent-Student Conferences (March) Final Report (June)
High School Transcripts Transcripts include all semester grades and credits earned from grade 9-12. Transcripts are issued for graduating students and can be requested from the school registrar.	



MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE

Middle School (Grades 6, 7 and 8) are very important years for children. This is a time when they learn important academic skills and ideas that will prepare them for High School. It's also a time when children learn how to build positive relationships with their friends and develop interests, habits and mindsets that they will carry forward into their lives. The Middle School curriculum at ISHCMC-AA is designed to support all aspects of a child's development: academic, physical, social and emotional.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Achievement Grade scale and descriptions

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY		
Đánh giá kết quả học tập theo trình độ		
We define 4 levels of proficiency by grade level. A student's level of is determined using summative assessments. Có 4 trình độ theo từng cấp lớp. Trình độ học sinh được thể hiện qua các bài kiểm tra/đánh giá tổng kết.		
A	90-100%	The student is consistently achieving the standard of skills and knowledge expected at this grade. <i>Học sinh thể hiện một cách nhất quán những kỹ năng và kiến thức yêu cầu của cấp lớp.</i>
B	80-90%	The student is approaching the standard of skills and knowledge expected at this grade. <i>Học sinh đang đạt được những kỹ năng và kiến thức theo yêu cầu đối với cấp lớp.</i>
C	70-80%	The student's skills and knowledge are still developing. <i>Học sinh vẫn trong giai đoạn phát triển những kỹ năng và kiến thức.</i>
D	below 70%	The student has not yet demonstrated proficiency with the skills and knowledge expected. <i>Học sinh chưa thể hiện những kỹ năng và kiến thức theo yêu cầu.</i>
INC	Incomplete	The student has provided insufficient evidence to assess a level of proficiency. <i>Học sinh không thể hiện đủ kỹ năng và kiến thức cho việc đánh giá.</i>
PASS	Pass	The student has met the requirements for this course. <i>Học sinh đã đáp ứng đủ yêu cầu của môn học này.</i>

Attitudes to learning descriptions

ATTITUDES TO LEARNING	
Thái độ học tập	
We believe that Middle School is a key time to learn and develop attitudes, skills and dispositions that promote academic achievement. At ISHCMC-AA our most valued attitudes for learning are: <i>Chúng tôi tin rằng Cấp 2 là giai đoạn quan trọng để học và rèn luyện thái độ học tập, kỹ năng và định hình tính cách để giúp học sinh học tập thành công. Tại ISHCMC-AA, những thái độ học tập được đánh giá cao gồm có:</i>	
POSITIVE	Responsibility, task completion, practice outside of class, meeting deadlines, coming prepared to class, organization, use of English as expected. <i>Trách nhiệm, hoàn thành nhiệm vụ, luyện tập sau giờ học, nộp bài đúng hạn, đến lớp có chuẩn bị, biết sắp xếp tổ chức việc học tập, sử dụng tiếng Anh theo mong đợi của giáo viên.</i>
CARING	Citizenship, showing respect for others, upholding class agreements, cooperating with others, supporting the learning of others. <i>Tinh thần cộng đồng: tôn trọng người khác, giữ lời hứa và các cam kết, hợp tác với các bạn và có thái độ hỗ trợ với các bạn trong học tập.</i>
ENGAGED	Participation in class activities, use of class time, focus on learning, reflection and metacognition, asking questions, pursuing original ideas. <i>Tham gia vào các hoạt động của lớp, sử dụng thời gian trong lớp, tập trung vào việc học, tự soi xét và nhìn nhận sự việc, đặt câu hỏi, đưa ra những ý tưởng, sáng kiến.</i>





MIDDLE SCHOOL BY GRADE LEVEL

GRADE 6 AT A GLANCE

Advisory 6		Grade 6 Field Trip
Humanities 6 (English and Social Studies)	Math 6	STEM 6 (Science, Technology and Engineering)
Health & Physical Education 6	Beginner Band 6	Vietnamese Studies 6* (Geography, Literature and History)

**Vietnamese Studies is required for Vietnamese passport holders. Students who hold other passports have the option of taking Mandarin. Space is limited and parents are encouraged to make their choice clear at admission.*

Period 6 Options

Students select one of the following options.

Exploratory ICT (Information and Communications Technology AND Host Country Studies)	Mandarin Mandarin is taught in a multi-level technology rich classroom.	EAL Intensive (English as an Additional Language) <i>Enrollment is determined by WIDA testing and teacher recommendation.</i>
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GRADE 7 AT A GLANCE

Advisory 7		Grade 7 Field Trip	
Humanities 7 (English and Social Studies)	Math 7	STEM 7 (Science, Technology and Engineering)	
Health & Physical Education 7	Maker Space 7 (Engineering and Robotics)	Vietnamese Studies 7* (Geography, Literature and History)	

**Vietnamese Studies is required for Vietnamese passport holders. Students who hold other passports have the option of taking Mandarin. Space is limited and parents are encouraged to make their choice clear at admission.*

Period 7 Options

Students select one of the following options.

Exploratory Visual Art AND Drama	Mandarin Mandarin is taught in a multi-level technology rich classroom.	EAL Intensive (English as an Additional Language) <i>Enrollment is determined by WIDA testing and teacher recommendation.</i>	Middle School Band Option for students who have taken Beginner Band.
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GRADE 8 AT A GLANCE

Advisory 8		Grade 8 Field Trip	
Humanities 8 (English 8 and Social Studies 8)	Math 8	STEM 8 (Science, Technology and Engineering)	
Health & Physical Education 8	ICT 8 (Information & Communications Technology)	Vietnamese Studies 8* (Geography, Literature and History)	

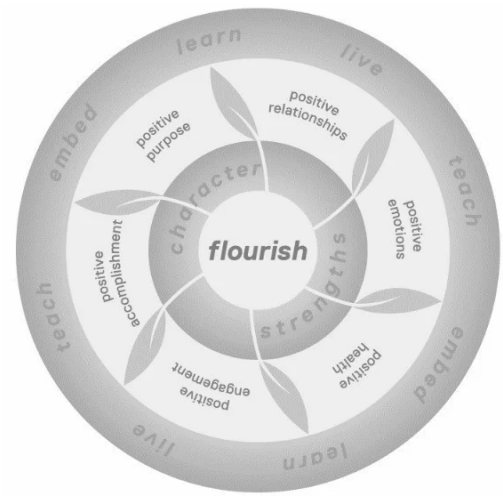
**Vietnamese Studies is required for Vietnamese passport holders. Students who hold other passports have the option of taking Mandarin. Space is limited and parents are encouraged to make their choice clear at admission.*

Period 8 Options

Students select one of the following options.

Exploratory Visual Art AND Study Skills	MS Mandarin Mandarin is taught in a multi-level technology rich classroom	EAL Intensive 8 (English as an Additional Language) <i>Enrollment is determined by WIDA testing and teacher recommendation.</i>	Middle School Band Option for students who have taken Beginner Band.
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MIDDLE SCHOOL BY SUBJECT AREA



ADVISORY

Students meet in their advisory groups each day. Our advisory program is based on the principles of Positive Education. In their advisory meetings, students develop skills and mindsets to support their academic progress as well as their social and emotional well-being.

HUMANITIES: English Language Arts and Social Studies

Students build their skills with English, including reading, writing, speaking and listening through exposure to different types of stories, books and non-fiction texts. They build their knowledge and understanding of the world around them by learning about world History and Geography and become socially aware global citizens. Within the humanities, students are encouraged to develop analysis, creativity, collaboration and self-expression of their ideas. Our goal is to allow students to connect their learning in English, Science and Mathematics to strengthen understanding of the human adventure.

English 6	English 7	English 8
Social Studies 6	Social Studies 7	Social Studies 8

<p>• English 6</p> <p>Students develop their language skills along with collaborative and organizational skills they need to be successful in Middle School. They use Literature Circles to explore a variety of genres and types of literature. Students develop their understanding of literary elements in fiction, informative text, non-fiction, and traditional literature.</p>	<p>• Social Studies 6</p> <p>Students explore the world’s physical geography and develop skills for understanding the world in spatial terms. They learn about how humans interact with their environment and explore issues related to culture, population and migration.</p>
<p>• English 7</p> <p>Students learn to become more independent and creative readers, writers and thinkers. We practice writing and critical thinking skills through our reading of novels, stories and informational texts. Students continue to develop their understanding of the elements of nonfiction and fiction as well as mythology, drama and poetry.</p>	<p>• Social Studies 7</p> <p>Students learn about the major regions of the world and how geography and culture have shaped our planet and continue to affect us. Students improve their analytical skills and demonstrate their understanding through collaboration and cooperative projects. We use simulations, texts and primary sources to promote critical thinking.</p>
<p>• English 8</p> <p>Students will be expected to read more independently as they continue to develop their speaking and writing skills and deepen their analytical thinking skills and knowledge of various types of writing. Students build their creative thinking, and analysis of the use of literary devices using a variety of texts including short stories, plays, poetry, and novels.</p>	<p>• Social Studies 8</p> <p>Students investigate the historical period from 1500 the present day to understand the broad themes of technological, political, economic and social change. Using simulations, texts and primary sources, students participate in engaging learning activities that promote cooperation and communication while developing analytical and information literacy skills for the 21st century.</p>



MATHEMATICS

Math 6	Math 7	Math 8
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Math 6

Grade 6 math focuses on developing number sense, computation, algebraic reasoning, data analysis, measurement and problem-solving skills. Students will be asked to explain their reasoning orally and in writing, as well as apply their math skills to solving real-world problems.

Math 7

Grade 7 math focuses on problem solving skills using a variety of tools. Students will work with proportions, equations, inequalities, graphing, and functions. They will be asked to explain their reasoning orally and in writing, as well as apply their math skills to solving real-world problems.

Math 8

Students will develop algebraic skills such as solving equations, graphing functions and modeling real-world situations with graphs and equations. Polynomials, radicals and rational equations and expressions are also introduced. Students learn by direct instruction, cooperative groups, project based learning, self-inquiry and working with manipulatives.

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

The STEM acronym stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. All of these subjects are all related to each other, and in the real world they are all integrated. For example, an engineer will apply scientific knowledge about the chemistry of materials, mathematics, computer simulations, and physics when designing a bridge. STEM units include many hands-on activities and students are expected to use creativity and collaboration challenges.

STEM 6	STEM 7	STEM 8
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STEM 6

In Grade 6 students explore the behavior of forces and organisms around them. They learn the basics of how scientists test theories and use the laboratory safely. They develop an understanding of the following topics: cells and body systems, energy, forces, weather and climate. Students learn together by applying science concepts to real world problems and participate in the Science Fair.

STEM 7

In Grade 7, students explore the relationships between natural processes and human activities that cause energy to flow and matter to cycle through Earth’s systems. Students develop conceptual understanding and skills related to the following topics: Earth systems and the cycling of energy and matter, the growth and development of organisms, ecosystems, biodiversity and natural selection. Students learn together by applying science concepts to real world problems and extend their skills in the Science Fair.

STEM 8

In Grade 8, students explore the interplay of physical forces that govern the universe. Students develop conceptual understanding and skills related to the following topics: space systems and the history of the Earth, chemical reactions, waves and radiation and adaptation of organisms over time. Students learn together by applying science concepts to real world problems and extend their skills in the Science Fair.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Students are encouraged to develop their understanding of world languages and cultures as a key to becoming global citizens. A strong grounding in your home language and culture is key to learning new concepts and higher order thinking as well as personal well being. Learning an additional language also brings benefits to all language and thinking skills.

Vietnamese Studies

Each year, students take a core academic class in Vietnamese Studies which covers Language Arts, History & Geography. Vietnamese Studies is required as a core subject for all students who are Vietnamese nationals.

Vietnamese Studies 6 Geography History Literature	Vietnamese Studies 7 Geography History Literature	Vietnamese Studies 8 Geography History Literature
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Vietnamese Studies 6

In Vietnamese Literature, students learn about the folklore, narrative writing and rhetorical devices. In Geography, 6th grade students learn about general earth science such as space, internal forces, external forces, the earth’s surface, topography, natural resources, and oceanology. In History, students explore the history of Vietnam from early societies to when King Ngô Quyền (939–944) restored sovereign power in the country.

Vietnamese Studies 7

In Vietnamese Literature, students learn about Medieval literature, sentence structure, rhetoric, expressive writing and informative and demonstrative cultural discourse. In Geography, students learn about natural Vietnamese Geography such as geographic location, topography, sea territories, and map skills. In History, students will focus on Vietnam’s development from the 10th century to the middle of the 19th century.

Vietnamese Studies 8

In Vietnamese Literature, we continue studying Medieval literature, modern literature, vocabulary and sentence structure. In Geography, students learn about natural Vietnamese Geography such as climate, river system, soil, ecology and biodiversity and map skills. In History, grade 8 students will look at the French invasion of 1858, Vietnamese reform Movements from the second half of the 19th century, and the patriotic movements from the early 20th century.

Mandarin Language & Culture

Mandarin language study is available to students who do not enroll in intensive EAL (English as an Additional Language). Mandarin classes are open for beginners as well as experienced speakers. Mandarin classes are mixed ability groups and students learn in a technology rich and collaborative environment.

Mandarin 1	Mandarin 2	Mandarin 3
Students will be introduced to Chinese script and will master 150 vocabulary items and basic grammar. Units include: Greeting & Introduction, Time & Date, Family Members, Jobs, Transportation, and Daily Routine.	Students will master 250 vocabulary items and more advanced grammar. Units include: Colors, Clothing, Weather, Directions, Traveling, Holidays, and School Subjects.	Students will master 600 vocabulary items and more advanced grammar. Units include: Body Parts, Currency, Food and Health, Shopping, Home Life, Stationery and Gifts, Asking Directions.

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

Health 6	Health 7	Health 8
Physical Education 6	Physical Education 7	Physical Education 8

Health Education

In Health Education students develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices relating to health and wellness. Students begin to practice and understand good nutrition and positive healthy behaviors. They develop wise decision-making skills and practice how to access accurate health information, use communication skills and advocate for personal and community health.

Physical Education (PE)

In Physical Education students develop an understanding of their individual and group responsibilities, and concepts such as accountability, communication, and preparation are practiced. Students actively participate in a variety of games and activities and are encouraged to demonstrate maximum participation in physical activity. Students will actively participate in a variety of games and activities aimed at preparing them for a lifetime of physical fitness.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING

Introduction to ICT (Exploratory Program)

As part of the grade 6 exploratory program, students develop computing skills and improve their understanding of online citizenship and safety.

MakerSpace (Exploratory Program)

The MakerSpace is a place students can physically construct creative solutions to real world problems and cross curricular tasks. They will pursue projects of interest to themselves and the various other subjects they undertake. To accomplish these tasks they will learn and utilise critical skills required for the 21st century, including Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Creativity, Flexibility, and Information & Technology Literacy.

During the course student will explore a wide range of immersive and physical technology topics, ranging from robotics, electronics, mechanics, programming and fabrication using tools such as laser cutters and 3D printers. Students will also get the chance to learn and use new emergent and integrated technologies.



ARTS & MUSIC

Grade 7 and 8 Art (Exploratory Program)

Students in Grades 7 and 8 can select Art as part of the Exploratory program (see below).

Grade 7 Drama (Exploratory Program)

Students in Grade 7 can select Drama as part of the Exploratory program (see below)

Beginner Band 6

Beginner Band 6 is an introductory-level course where students are introduced to band instruments and group performance.

Middle School Band

The band offers the chance for students to play a musical instrument in the school band with their friends. Students will learn saxophone, trombone, trumpet, flute, drums and clarinet individually, as well as the skills needed to perform in a large group. There are many benefits in learning an instrument - early musical training helps develop brain areas involved in language and reasoning. Musicians learn to think creatively, are more successful on standardized tests such as the SAT, and enhances teamwork skills and discipline. In order for an orchestra to sound good, all players must work together harmoniously towards a single goal, the performance, and must commit to learning music, attending rehearsals, and practicing.

EXPLORATORY PROGRAM

Middle School is a time to learn basic skills and get exposure to a range of areas for learning. The Exploratory option in Middle School gives students experience with the arts and technology and also aims to develop the skills they will need to be successful in life.

Grade 6

Information Technology and Host Country Studies.

Students develop computing skills and improve their understanding of online citizenship and safety. Host Country Studies encourages students to increase their understanding of culture and current events in Vietnam. They share their understanding with the school community at celebrations like Moonfestival and Tet.

Grade 7

Art and Drama.

Both Art and Drama inspire well being and mindfulness for everyone. Students will have an opportunity to practice self-expression through drawing, painting, acting and writing.

Grade 8

Study Skills and Art.

Grade 8 students get a chance to continue their learning and practice in Art. As well, they will develop study skills that will help them to be successful in High School.



FIELD STUDIES PROGRAM - Where Character is Built

Our field studies program is an important and valued part of our curriculum and student attendance is mandatory. Each year, students participate in 3-5 day trips designed to enhance classroom learning and to deepen the character and community building. Children develop an understanding of their character strengths, strengthen their relationships with others, build awareness of culture and history, and learn valuable outdoor and physical fitness skills. The field trips encourage children to:

- Be a leader in their school community
- Assist people who need help
- Accomplish their goals
- Believe in their ability to succeed
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Participate in service to their community
- Challenge themselves with new activities
- Compliment others on their strengths

Grade 6 Ke Ga	Grade 7 Madagui	Grade 8 Dalat	Grade 9 TBD	Grade 10 Vinh Long	Grade 11 Danang/Hue	Grade 12 Hang En
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**International School
HO CHI MINH CITY
AMERICAN ACADEMY**

POSITIVE • CARING • ENGAGED

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COGNITA

An inspiring world of education