



the  
museum  
school



OF AVONDALE ESTATES



## How it began

- The Avondale Education Association, founded in 2003, was composed of volunteers primarily from Avondale Estates and the surrounding community.
- Interested parents, retired teachers and administrators, and good neighbors of all ages were involved in the effort to create a charter school.



- Charter school activities began in June of 2008.
- The current Board of Directors is a group of 16 diverse members from all backgrounds and professions who believe in the mission of The Museum School of Avondale Estates.



## Mission Statement

The mission of The Museum School of Avondale Estates is to inspire students, teachers and the community to collaborate to develop strong critical thinking, interpersonal and academic skills in our students, which will prepare them for real-world success.

## Our School Values:

- Responsibility
- Respect
- Sustainability
- Cooperation
- Creativity
- Kindness



## Core Values

The school's core values are interwoven in the curriculum and are an integral part of the school day and routine.

Students are recognized for their demonstration of these values through celebration assemblies and Explorer tickets.





## What is a Museum School?

- Innovative, proven school model
- Project-based learning through partnerships with museums and community organizations
- Real world projects and collaborative learning

- Our curriculum employs a **constructivist model**. We have worked with educational experts, including some from the Normal Park Museum Magnet School, to create interdisciplinary themes and units to guide learning expeditions into museum environments.
- The Museum School has developed creative, readiness-appropriate unit and lesson plans with partners that incorporate specific objectives, assessments, and learning activities.



## Museum School Model Details

- Organized into quarterly units or themes
- Biweekly Learning expeditions:
  - Students visit partners and other sites, on average, every other week.
  - Trips are focused, structured, pre-planned and organized.
- Students reflect on learning in individual travel journals:
  - Graphic organizers, “wonderings”, drawings, fiction/nonfiction writing, reflections

- Each grade explores 4 themes each year, each in a 9-week block.
- Themes include elements from the GSE for Science and Social Studies, presented in an integrated fashion.



## What is Exhibit Night?

- The school **becomes** a museum.
- The community is invited in to view student-created exhibits.
- Exhibits include museum pieces as well as written labels to describe them.
- Students serve as docents, teaching parents and other community members what they have learned.

- Students develop strong oral and written communication skills.
- Teaching parents and community members allows students to deepen their understanding of the subject matter.



## Partners

We have three types of partners: curricular, resource, and community

**Curricular:** works with the teachers and Principal to develop curriculum; students likely will visit these partners often and during several thematic units

**Resource:** works with Principal to develop teacher-education, donate supplies or materials, provide guest speakers, and host field trips

**Community:** will be available for students to visit occasionally

### Criteria for Curricular Partners:

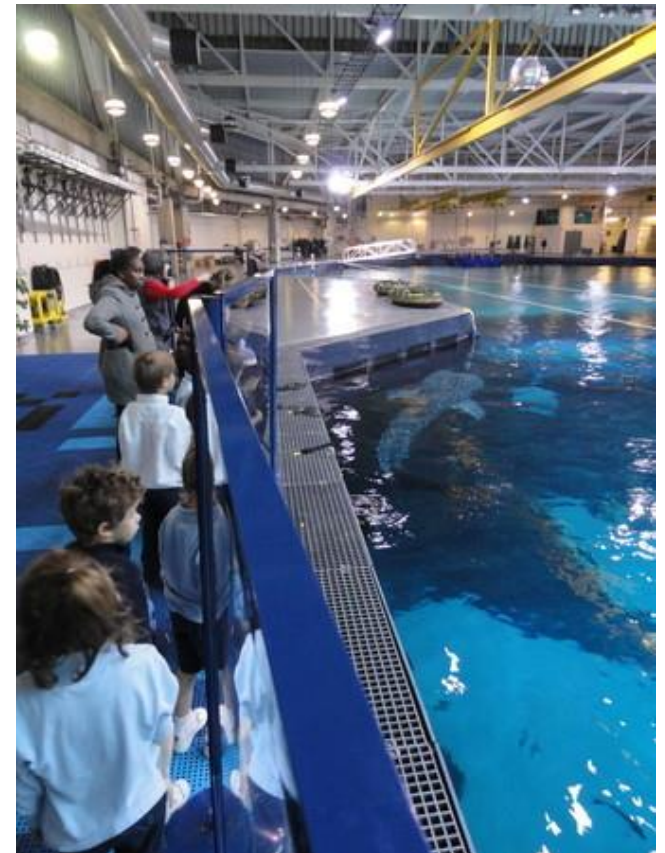
- Long-term financial viability
- Effective organizational structure
- Leadership and established educational department





## 2019-2020 Curricular Partners

- Alliance Arts for Learning
- ArtsNOW
- Atlanta Botanical Garden
- Atlanta History Center
- Center for Civil and Human Rights
- Fernbank Museum of Natural History
- Fox Theatre
- Georgia Aquarium
- High Museum
- Michael C. Carlos Museum
- Zoo Atlanta





## Key Features of the Curriculum

- Hands – on
- Interdisciplinary
- Interactive
- Project-based
- Collaborative
- Inquiry-based
- Based on constructivist philosophy
- Reinforced and enhanced by local museums and centers

- The curriculum programs and maps are aligned directly with the Georgia Standards of Excellence.
- The Understanding by Design process assists teachers in centering their curriculum and assessments on big ideas, essential questions, and authentic performances.



## Academic Programs:

- Reader's Workshop
- Writer's Workshop
- Word Study Program
- Eureka Math





## Middle Grades at The Museum School

- Class changes and lockers
- Revised uniform options
- Advisory groups, sports leagues, after-school clubs and activities and social events.
- Extends the museum model of education and follows the Georgia Standards of Excellence
- Advanced courses for HS credit
- Departmentalized classes
- Flexibility in selecting exploratory/connection classes
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade kickoff with parents and students



## Assessment

- We are a data-driven school that analyzes data in order to target specific areas of instruction. Lessons and activities are tailored based on students' levels, prior experiences, and readiness.
- Students participate in local, state, and federal testing as required, including Milestones, GKIDS, and all applicable ELL and Special Education assessments.
- All students participate in Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to determine areas of strength and areas in need of improvement.
- Diagnostic assessments are administered often, offering teachers immediate data on students' levels and strengths and weaknesses.

**All data strongly impacts curriculum choices, professional development, and overall school goals and improvement plans.**



## School Achievements

The Museum School is the **2019 Academic Georgia Charter School of the Year**.

On the Milestones Assessment, Museum School students **significantly outscore local and state** averages in every grade level and every subject category.

**Exceeding the norm.** Results from the national Measures of Academic Progress show, on average, 70% of Museum School students, are learning at a faster rate than their peers across the country.

**Collaborated** with several universities and colleges to serve as a model for pre-service teachers and student teachers.

Those institutions include:

The University of Georgia   Georgia State University   Agnes Scott College  
Clayton State University   Oglethorpe University   Georgia Southern University

- The Museum School was awarded the Governor's Award for the Arts and Humanities and the Georgia Association of Secondary School Principals Distinguished Breakout Middle School Award.



## Parental Involvement

- Parents are asked to volunteer a minimum number of hours per school year, 15 hours per child, with a maximum of 30 hours.
  - Flexibility will be offered in fulfillment of hours.
  - Parents are encouraged to become active members of our school family.
- Parents may volunteer by offering classroom assistance, chaperoning learning expeditions, working on specific school-wide projects, or getting involved in any number of ways.



## Facility Plans

- The school has a 10-year lease, with two five-year renewal options, with the DeKalb County School System for five buildings and 11 acres of land on Forrest Boulevard.
- For safety, code compliance and operational reasons, the facility required extensive renovations, for which The Museum School was solely responsible. The renovation costs were \$5 million.
- The recently built media center was a \$2 million project and concludes the school's facility build-out.
- The Board of Directors collaborated with an architecture firm to create a 5 year phase-in plan beginning with the initial August 2012 move-in. Five buildings, constructed between 1954 and 1998, have been renovated.





## Staff Recruitment:

- Attracting and retaining a high-quality staff is crucial to the school's success.
- Full-time instructional candidates participate in a 4 round interview process, including a performance-based demonstration.
- Portfolios and student work samples documenting differentiated instruction and increased student achievement are reviewed.



## Who Can Attend?

Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, the attendance zone for The Museum School of Avondale Estates is divided into two areas. First priority is given to children of families living in focus area 1, which follows the attendance lines established by the DeKalb County School System for Avondale Elementary School and Peachcrest Elementary School. If space allows, priority is given to children of families living in focus area 2, which is defined as the remainder of DeKalb County.



### Goals:

Provide quality education to as many children as possible

Promote community education and socioeconomic diversity

Maintain concept of a community school



## Student Enrollment

- Enrollment Period: January 5 – February 12
- If the number of applicants exceeds the capacity of a program, class, or grade level, all students who applied during the open enrollment period will have an equal chance at admission through a random selection process.
- All applications must be received by February 12 to participate in the lottery.
- The school expects to offer 60 Kindergarten spots, 6 4<sup>th</sup> grade spots, and 6 6<sup>th</sup> grade spots.



## Other Topics:

- Before Care Program
- After Care Program
- Lunch Program
- Uniform Policy
- Recess
- Exploratory Classes
- School Hours and Calendar





## Fast Facts

Is public, chartered by DeKalb County Schools, & open to all students in the attendance zone, based on available space.

Opened Aug. 9, 2010.

Includes grades K-8, serving three classes of students each in Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Limits classroom size to 20 students through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 22 students in 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade, and 24 students in the middle grades.

Offers gifted, special education programs, and early intervention programs.

Includes exploratory classes, including art, music, Spanish, technology, STEM and physical education.

Begins classes at 8 am and ends classes at 3 pm (3:20 pm for middle school). Students may begin arriving at 7:30 a.m.

Offers an after-school program from 3 pm until 6:30 pm.

Has a mandatory uniform policy.

The Museum School does not discriminate in its enrollment procedures or educational programs based on intellectual or athletic ability, aptitude, disability, race, class, gender, family structure, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry, or any other basis prohibited by law.



## Open Enrollment Demo

# Lotterease<sup>®</sup>

<https://www.lotterease.com>

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Learn more at:  
[www.themuseumschool.org](http://www.themuseumschool.org)

# Thanks for your support of The Museum School!

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