

## **MSA Accreditation**

For the past year we have been preparing our Self-Study Report for re-accreditation with Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA). ASM is one of the first international schools to follow the MSA Excellence by Design protocol. It has been an exciting process which fits in very well with the strategic planning that is currently being done by the Board of Directors, and the MYP review in the upper school.

The *Excellence by Design Self-Study* requires a school and its community to carry out a systematic and thorough self-examination and self-assessment to determine the quality of the school's educational programs and services. The aim is to determine what we do well at ASM and to identify areas in need of improvement, as measured against internationally recognized standards.

The Planning Team, which is made up of all stakeholders (members of the Board, parents, students, teachers and administrators), reviewed the Mission of ASM. It revised the Beliefs and added a Profile of the Graduate.

As a result of their recommendations the Board has approved a new Mission statement.

## **ASM Mission**

**The American School of Milan ensures a modern and rigorous education for International students to excel in the changing world of tomorrow.**

## **ASM Beliefs**

- 1. To provide a framework that embraces a combination of an American-style education with International school and IBO expectations;**
- 2. To develop high academic levels of language proficiency in the English language and to respect the culture and language of Italy, the host country;**
- 3. To continually increase the standards of excellence in all aspects of the school program by providing a well planned and sequenced curriculum through which students can achieve the highest international, academic standards and leadership.**

- 4. To develop the intellectual skills which include: information gathering, organization, synthesis, analysis, critical thinking, decision-making, problem solving and communication;**
- 5. To encourage creativity, curiosity and the spirit of scientific inquiry in mind, body and spirit to foster a life-long interest in learning.**
- 6. To provide the community of learners with a sound basis in the use of modern technology, its applications, potential, and limitations;**
- 7. To create a positive, caring, and safe learning environment that encourages questioning and risk taking;**
- 8. To help students function in an increasingly complex world by encouraging the development of individual integrity and high ethical standards as well as instilling a belief in the dignity and worth of all people;**
- 9. To celebrate the cultural diversity of this community of learners;**
- 10. To provide opportunities for students to pursue excellence and experience success in the arts, athletics and service to others.**
- 11. To develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.**

**The Planning Team has adopted a new Profile of Graduates which is based on the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). This identifies the qualities and characteristics that ASM students are expected to demonstrate by the time they graduate.**

### **ASM's Profile of Graduates**

**The ASM Graduate strives to be:**

- 1. Inquirers-** They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
- 2. Knowledgeable-** They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

3. Thinkers- They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

4. Communicators- They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

5. Principled- They act with integrity and honest, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

6. Open-minded- They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluation a range of points of view and are willing to grow from the experience.

7. Caring - They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

8. Risk-Takers - They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

9. Balanced- They understand the importance of intellectual, physical, and emotional balance to achieve person well-being for themselves and others.

10. Reflective- They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

**ASM's Plan for Growth and Improvement** has been developed from data gathered and analyzed from:

- a number of surveys completed by students, parents, and staff
- the reports of our self-assessment of the school's adherence to the 12 MSA Standards for Accreditation
- Profile of Student Performance

The Plan is based on three objectives, two of which focus on student performance and the third on ASM's organizational capacity. The objectives are:

**Student Performance Objective #1**

**By 2017 all students at the American School of Milan, regardless of learning styles and needs, will demonstrate improved proficiency in language literacy.**

**Student Performance Objective #2**

**By 2017 all students at the American School of Milan, regardless of learning styles and needs, will demonstrate improved skills in and understanding of the use of technology and information literacy.**

**Organizational Capacity Objective #1**

**By the year 2017 the American School of Milan will develop and implement a strategic plan that includes collaborative efforts by all members of the school's community.**