

U.S. Department of Education
2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [X] Magnet [X] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Maria Costa

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Herbert A. Ammons Middle School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 17990 SW 142 Avenue

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Miami FL 33177-7774
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Miami-Dade County

Telephone (305) 971-0158

Fax

Web site/URL http://ammons.dadeschools.net

E-mail costam@dadeschools.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Alberto Carvalho

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail acarvalho@dadeschools.net

District Name Dade Tel. (305) 995-1000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Perla Tabares Hantman

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2018 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2012 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 220 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 50 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 63 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 333 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	207	194	401
7	151	126	277
8	170	227	397
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	528	547	1075

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 9 % Black or African American
 - 72 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 12 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: <01%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	2
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	1054
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<01

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
1 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Spanish, Chinese, Somali, Indonesian, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Persian, Bengali, Russian, French, Italian, Portuguese,

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 48 %
Total number students who qualify: 519

8. Students receiving special education services: 3 %
29 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>5</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 9
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	54
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2017.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2009

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

To engage students in developing their intellectual, emotional, and social talents while promoting responsible citizenship in a global society. Engaged in a holistic approach, students grow in intercultural awareness, becoming compassionate, independent, life-long learners.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Ammons Middle School is a school-wide magnet providing all students the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program. Students must apply to attend Ammons and are selected through a random selection process. Students must meet the established criteria in order to be eligible to apply. Once the Magnet Office approves or denies each applicant, the District then conducts the random selection.

PART III – SUMMARY

Herbert A. Ammons Middle School is an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP). Ammons houses 1,075 students in grades 6-8. It is in the southwest section of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The school is represented by 30 different countries and a plethora of different languages. Its diverse population represents a multicultural mix of students. Of the total population 12.22% are white, 9.4% are black, 72.6% are Hispanic, 3.9% are Asian, and 1.5% are multi-racial.

Ammons has a total of 64 full-time staff members and part-time staff members. Three are administrators, one is a lead teacher, 54 are classroom teachers including 8 foreign language teachers, one exceptional education teacher, and three are guidance counselors. The ethnic breakdown of the instructional staff is as follows: white 14 (29%), black 12 (25%) Hispanic 17 (36%), and mixed raced 4 (8.5%).

Ammons Middle School was established in 1997 and moved to its current site in September 1998. Ammons was the first and only authorized, full-school International Baccalaureate Middle Years program in MDCPS. Ammons, a school of choice with no boundaries, capitalizes on an expansive recruiting and transportation area that stretches across 27 different zip codes, including 27 bus routes, provided to students free of charge. Within this transportation zone are many neighborhoods of high, medium, and low socio-economic levels. The mission of Ammons Middle School has always been to educate the entire child. Ammons provides a holistic learning experience that promotes global awareness through theme based learning and interdisciplinary units. The program features seven subject areas and a community service component. The goal of Ammons is to produce responsible global citizens who demonstrate certain character attributes such as “thinkers, risk takers, inquirers, and communicators.” Award winning programs in the arts and athletics help contribute to the goal of producing a truly well-rounded program that takes pride in educating the whole child.

Many instructional strategies are used to engage and develop the students academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. The Ammons philosophy is uniquely based on the integration of 6 major IBMYP Themes called Global Contexts. Identities and Relationships are one Global Context infused into the curriculum. Examining this theme empowers students to make informed decisions regarding their health. An example of Identities and Relationships are the student-led Health Fairs. At a typical Health Fair, the school nurses take blood pressure and measure body mass index. Then parents provide healthy snacks and students participate in organized games such as soccer and football while others walk laps around the field. PTSA provides oranges, water and other healthy snacks. Promethean Boards have also been installed in all classrooms. They allow for the instructional strategies such as teacher blended lessons to take place school wide. Students are immersed in cultural activities, group presentation and project based learning. As part of the IBMYP philosophy, students are required to address service learning. Students in each grade level work closely to support the efforts of various partner agencies. These agencies include the United Way, Community Blood Drive Centers of Florida, American Red Cross, The American Cancer Society, Perrine-Peters United Methodist Church and the Miami-Dade County Sickle Cell Foundation. All students are responsible for accruing 45 hours (10 hours in sixth grade, 15 hours in seventh grade and 20 hours in eighth grade) of community and service while attending Ammons. Furthermore, 8th grade students at Ammons are required to complete a community project that demonstrates the extension and development of their learning.

Additionally, Ammons upholds the MDCPS initiative, Values Matter. The nine core values of Citizenship, Cooperation, Fairness, Honesty, Loyalty, Kindness, Pursuits of Excellence, and Respect and Responsibility were infused into the daily curriculum. These values are implemented and highlighted each month during the morning/afternoon announcements, on our monthly calendars and email tree. Through the incorporation of Value Matters, the IBMYP themes, and IB Learner Profiles, students are expected to follow these attributes to create character, become life-long learners and help create an environment of care and respect. Our IB Ambassadors, selected by their peers, disseminate school information to their classmates. Ammons Peer mentor program allows 8th graders to mentor 6th graders in daily activities in and out of the classroom. As a former recipient of the National Blue Ribbon award, Ammons has continued to strive to focus on all aspects of developing the middle school student. This year, Ammons received the coveted RAMP

(Recognized ASCA Model Program) designation. As a RAMP school, Ammons' counseling department offers every student, family, and community a comprehensive and developmental program where student's academic, educational, personal, social and career skills are fostered based on school data.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

All students participate in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program. The students are offered annual courses in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language and half semester courses in the Arts and Physical Education. The students are on a 6th period day in an alternating block. Students take three classes each day for 110 minutes.

All courses follow the guidelines of the State of Florida's State Standards and the Miami-Dade Competency Based Curriculum. Also, the courses are in line with the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program subject area guides.

Students are placed in regular, advanced, gifted, advanced gifted, and ESE and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) settings. Ammons also offers the opportunity for the students to receive high school credits in Algebra, Biology, and Foreign Language.

Reading and Writing are taught across the board, but the Language Arts teachers perfect and reinforce the skills. Through the Language Arts classes the students are taught to find their voice, and to express their views on social and literary topics. The students are taught to read, analyze, present, defend and argue about literature. Students learn to communicate persuasively, critically, and clearly, with sensitivity toward cultural and ethnic differences.

Reading classes, with the support of Language Arts classes, are provided to enforce students' reading abilities. The students who scored a level 3 or below on the Florida Standards Assessment are placed in intensive reading classes to improve their reading comprehension and fluency.

Mathematics teachers plan and deliver lessons using the textbook and additional online resources, based on the district pacing guide, which is written based on the Florida State Standards and Course Descriptions. Students are using i-Ready as a tool for differentiated instruction, where students learn at their own pace. Students use Edgenuity, Math Nation, Khan Academy, ReflexMath and Gizmos to help them appreciate the power and practicality of mathematics as they solve problems in concrete and abstract settings. Science curriculum is divided by grade level, and addresses the regular, advanced, and gifted populations. The academic content is arranged according to four areas: Life Science, Physical Science, Nature of Science, and Earth and Space Science. Skills are reinforced and scaffolded across grade levels. For example, cells are taught in the 6th grade in terms of cell structure while 7th grade focuses on cell function. Advanced and gifted students are given the opportunity to take high school level courses (Physical Science and Biology), if they show significant maturity, motivation, and high achievement in their 6th and 7th grade courses.

Students are given the opportunity to participate in the District's Science Fair activities as well as STEM and SECME activities and competitions, where they can explore and expand their interest in science careers. Mastery of skills is measured by each of 8 science teachers by using informal and formal assessments. Examples are tests and quizzes, classroom formal and informal observations, lab activities and reports, individual and small group activities, etc. Technology is an essential component of all core content classes. Students can use their devices when appropriate and they are strongly encouraged to utilize technology both at school and at home. Since our school is an IB school, we view our lessons under the lens of Global Contexts, primarily Scientific and Technical Innovation. Regular reflection of students' progress is emphasized and encouraged.

Social Studies students in the IB MYP use the Global Concepts of Identities and Relationships, Personal and Cultural Identity, Orientations in Space and Time, Scientific and Technical Innovation, Fairness and Development, and Globalization and Sustainability to develop an appreciation of the world around them. Students "inquire into historical, contemporary, geographical, political, social, economic, religious, technological and cultural factors that have an impact on individuals, societies and environments." (ibo.org). "In this subject group, students collect, describe and analyze data used in studies of societies, test

hypotheses, and learn how to interpret complex information, including original source material. This focus on real-world examples, research and analysis is an essential aspect of the subject group." (ibo.org)

Social Studies teachers provide a variety of activities to encourage student participation and build knowledge. Students participate in Close-Up each year. The 7th grade students attend a field trip to the US Attorney's Office; Southern District of Florida. The students witness first-hand the county's legal system in action. As part of the IB curriculum, students build a Portfolio over their three years at Ammons. In correlation with the portfolio, each student is required to complete community service. Lastly, all 8th graders complete an IB MYP Community Project which focuses on community and service as action.

Students must research and advocate for a cause to promote action on an issue of public interest. Building productive citizens is a pivotal aspect of Ammons curriculum. The counseling department, in correlation with the teachers, has adopted the MDCPS initiative, Values Matter. As part of this program, the students are introduced to a core value designed to build character and produce productive citizens with values and morals into society. Ammons Middle School students are considered college and career ready. We provide them with a rigorous curriculum that provides the opportunity to acquire up to 6 high school credits and 1 AP credit. Mathematics students can accelerate in Math by taking high school level courses in Algebra I Honors in grades 7 or 8 and Geometry Honors in 8th grade.

Science students can accelerate in Science by taking high school level courses in Physical Science Honors in grades 7 or 8 and Biology Honors in 8th grade.

All students are required to take a three-year sequence of Foreign Language in either Spanish or French. All 8th graders leave with one or two high school credits in their second language. Some students at Ammons also further their second language experience by taking AP Spanish. After gaining an extensive knowledge of Spanish, the students can sit for national exams. The past 2 years, 100% of Ammons students enrolled in AP Spanish have passed the AP exam.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Ammons Middle School's goal is to educate the whole child. With our visual and performing arts program, students are afforded the ability to expand their curricular interests. Core courses are incorporated with other instructional areas to achieve a well-balanced curriculum that facilitates and encourages a growth mindset among the students.

In the Arts, both visual and performing, well-rounded students are created. Electives such as art, music, and drama, open to all students 6-8 grade, can provide an interdisciplinary overlap with the core courses and can create a richer learning experience. The electives give the students a creative outlet which for some students is the area in which they truly excel. As elective classes, the teachers can incorporate what the student learns in a core class and enrich their curriculum by giving them an alternate way to express what they learned.

The Art classes participate in numerous shows throughout the district. Students have their Art work displayed at various venues around the county: from the airport to the zoo. The Art students participate in a variety of juried Art shows throughout the county and contests throughout the country. Our Art students have had their work on exhibit in the School Board Building, the MIA Gallery at the Airport, Pinecrest Gardens, Zoo Miami and a variety of other venues in the district. They have had their art selected to be on exhibit in the IB headquarters and in Washington DC. They assist with the Drama department in putting together the drama presentations every year and produce the art work for the "Playbills" for the plays. The Music Appreciation students perform during many school performances ranging from the annual Turkey Bowl presentation to our parent orientations. Our Drama students act in numerous school plays, state competitions and district performances.

Physical Education and Nutrition are vital to the wellbeing of all Ammons students. The classes incorporate proper nutrition and exercise kinesiology which is essential to developing a healthy and well-rounded individual. Not only is Physical Education an outlet for the students but it is important to developing them into healthy adults. In P.E. classes, students work on physical fitness and team sports. Ammons encourages

student participation in district based sports. Ammons produces teams in all sports offered at the middle school level. Ammons has won county championships in Softball and Volleyball and consistently produces competitive teams in all sports at the middle school level. Most of the sports offer both Varsity and Junior Varsity teams which allows more student athletes to participate in our athletic program. Ammons has won county championships in softball (boys and girls), cross country (boys and girls), track and field (boys and girls), volleyball (boys) and soccer (girls). They have also produced top contenders in swimming, basketball (boys and girls), golf and tennis.

Our World Language program model has 3 main strands: French, Spanish Speakers and Spanish Non-Speakers. Each of these 3 strands carries 4 proficiency levels respectively: Beginners, Intermediate, High School 1 and High School 2. In addition, Spanish speakers can take a college level course - Advanced Placement -Language. This program is highly academic and challenging as well as motivating for the students. The curriculum follows the standards set by our school district and by the International Baccalaureate Organization. Students also participate in an array of competitions such as the Youth Fair and the Miami Dade County competition. All students complete a three-year sequence in either French or Spanish. All students finish 8th grade with one or two high school credits. Second language learning is enriched with cultural activities which include informative presentations from community leaders and international embassies.

The Media Center is a vital part of Ammons Middle School. All students have access to the media center before school, during school and after school. Student acquisition of essential skills and knowledge is addressed in our school's Media Center on an on-going basis for all grade levels. The Media Center is accessible to students daily before school, during the lunch waves, and throughout the day as needed. It is open twice a week for an additional hour after school for students who need the extra time. While there, students can enhance their knowledge with the thousands of books available for check out or reference and there are 35 computers available for their use. There is a library media specialist on hand to provide one-on-one help to students who need it as well as a daily parent volunteer. The Library Media Specialist also provides lessons designed to help students with their research projects and topics such as Plagiarism and Works Cited.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Every student – regular, advanced, gifted, English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Education students participate fully in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IBMYP).

The faculty at Ammons Middle School use a wide variety of instructional methods, along with appropriate interventions outside the classroom, to ensure each student progresses at his or her own pace. Every Monday morning, all teachers are available for tutoring before school starts to provide additional help to students who need assistance with the subjects they teach. After school, there are coaching and enrichment opportunities available to those experiencing academic difficulties as well as sports and extra-curricular opportunities to provide students with a well-balanced growth experience. Teachers in the i-Prep lab also offer math tutoring Monday through Friday to students who would like additional help through our Digital Academy. Intensive Reading classes are offered to students who scored an achievement level of 1 and 2 on the Florida Standards ELA Assessment. The class focuses on reading skills needed to receive a passing score. Students with special needs are included in the general education classrooms, but receive additional support and monitoring from certified SPED teachers using the inclusion model.

To maintain high levels of achievement and provide students with more opportunity for exploration and expansion, Ammons has clubs and groups that help to reinforce academic objectives. Chess Club, Drama Club, French Circle, Future Cities, SECME (Science Engineering, Communication Mathematics Enhancement) are just a few. The students compete in competitions around the state, and county.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Herbert A. Ammons is committed to providing educational excellence for all students. The administration and teachers provide the highest quality education so that all students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens. The mission statement of the Herbert A. Ammons community is to engage students in developing their intellectual, emotional, and social talents while promoting responsibility in a global society. Engaged in a holistic approach, students grow in intercultural awareness, becoming compassionate, independent learners. The vision statement of the Ammons community is action through Global Awareness. The core values stressed at Ammons come from the attributes of the International Baccalaureate learner profile. Students are encouraged to be inquirers who are knowledgeable thinkers and communicators, principled, open-minded, caring risk-takers who are balanced and reflective.

The aim of the IB program is to develop internationally-minded people, who recognize their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, to help create a better world. This objective is achieved through developing the IB Learner Profiles; character attributes students should strive for: Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-minded, Caring, Risk Takers, Balanced and Reflective. These attributes are reinforced in every class including electives and afterschool clubs and sports. Students might be encouraged to take creative or athletic risks by trying new artistic or musical techniques or trying out for a sport. Additionally, these attributes are rewarded through a certificate-based program called "Spot Success." After Haiti was devastated by Hurricane Matthew, students organized a school wide service project to collect supplies and toiletries. Gestures of that nature are often displayed by the students at Ammons and the recognition reinforces the promotion of global citizenship that is widely encouraged at the school. Student's intellectual growth is also a main component of the Ammons philosophy. A school wide effort to develop project based learning across the curriculum using technology blended lessons has led to some very interesting classroom experiences for our students. Our 8th graders developed scavenger hunts throughout the school's campus using algebraic equations embedded into QR Readers. The QR Readers were then posted around the campus and then student teams would solve the equations and ultimately find their way to the final location. It was a lesson designed to utilize current technology and get out from the traditional walls of the classroom.

Teachers are an essential part of Ammons' success. Teachers are made to feel valued and supported. The leadership team has an open-door policy and teachers can share ideas and give feedback on the daily activities that take place in the school. In the teacher's lounge there is a Level Up board, where teachers "shout out" the accomplishments of their peers. At faculty meetings, the leadership team pulls randomly selected numbers or teacher's names and rewards them with a small token of appreciation at the end of each faculty meeting.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Ammons parents join one of the most active secondary school PTSA in the district to collaborate in sponsoring programs that directly enhance student performance (65% of families join our PTSA). Community stakeholders and businesses such as Publix, Ibiley School Uniforms, McDonald's and Walgreens have all provided services to Ammons on different occasions. As a result, of our partnership with the drugstore, Walgreens, interested students and teachers will have access to the flu shot on campus.

Additionally, the "Get a Shot, Give a Shot" campaign will lead to access of medication for the needy in Central America. Miami-Dade College provides speakers to expose students to prominent national and international issues like bio diversity, deforestation, disease, clean water and global poverty (Global Speaker's Initiative). The various Spanish consulates around Miami have come in to speak to the students and broaden their knowledge of the immense cultures that make up our community. Also, with the help of parents, Ammon's McDonalds night fundraiser is always a tremendous success. With the help of parents, students collected items for hurricane devastated Haiti, raised \$7,750 for the United Way, supplied

Thanksgiving baskets for families in need and planned toy drives for children with sickle cell disease.

Parent leadership teams are evident at Ammons. These stakeholders analyze data at Educational Excellence School Advisory Council meetings, lead middle years development presentations, and partner with the custodians to beautify the school. This unified support of parents and community has been the blueprint of success for this award-winning school. Ammons Middle School has received the Five Star School Award recognizing community partnerships, student community service, and parent involvement since 1998. Ammons works diligently to keep parents and the community informed of student's academic achievements and challenges. During the school year, parents are kept informed of student's performance, information, school activities through a PTSA Remind app. They are updated and informed daily on activities and events going on in school. Parents also receive Connect-Ed message, from the principal, announcing upcoming events and testing dates. Monthly PTSA meetings are also used to disseminate information.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development training in all subject areas is pertinent to the success of our IB program. The goal of the IB professional development program is to provide services and products that successfully help deliver the International Baccalaureate program. Throughout the school year, PD's are offered to the staff.

A recent development at Ammons is the creation of Professional Learning Communities (PLC's). Within these PLC's, courses are offered that are designed to help teachers implement the IB theme, share best practices, and work to utilize technology based instruction to ensure that students are global thinkers. The Professional Learning Support Team (PLST) is responsible for analyzing data, planning meetings, organizing personnel, and developing a support system for PLC's. The most recent PLC at Ammons centered on building leadership capacity. The Curriculum Council, consisting of a diverse cross section of teachers participated in a book study, Strengths Finder by Tom Rath, that identified the individual strengths of each teacher. This exercise taps into people's natural talents and encourages them to develop their strengths. This, in turn, solidified the team to work collaboratively and build upon their individual skills.

The goal is for the staff to discover their talents and ultimately impact student learning. Our teachers are also offered IB workshops throughout the year. These workshops often require travel. Staff has attended workshops in Austin, Chicago, Philadelphia, Nashville, and Miami Beach. Professional development goals are reinforced twice a week through collaborative planning and team meetings. During these meetings, the IB curriculum is aligned through Interdisciplinary Units to coincide with local and state standards. Additionally, IB days are scheduled each semester. During IB days, teachers share best practices on how to infuse the IB Global context into their subject area. This allows for teachers to build a repertoire of instructional strategies to continually infuse the IB philosophy throughout the curriculum.

4. School Leadership:

Herbert A. Ammons Middle School has always utilized the "Shared Decision Making" model to successfully articulate its educational goals. The following stakeholders make recommendations on how school operation and improvement should occur: The EESAC (Educational Excellence School Advisory Committee). It consists of parents, students, and staff. PTSA (930 members), International Baccalaureate "MYP" Leaders, Curriculum Council (administrators, team leaders, department chairs).

These groups meet monthly and consider all aspects of school life ranging from school safety, curriculum development, community participation and student academic progress. The primary goal of each subgroup is to ensure the success of Ammons Middle School and its students.

The Ammons leadership has contributed to many awards and recognitions that make Ammons one of the most decorated schools in the district and state. Ammons has met and exceeded the United Way Student Goal since 2009. Ammons has also won the following prestigious awards: Magnet Schools of America Award - School of Excellence or Distinction for over 10 years, National Blue Ribbon 2009, RAMP and No Place for Hate (2017), State of Florida A+ School for over 10 years, and the State Department of Education

5 Star School Award (16 years in a row). Additionally, the principal was the South Region Principal of the Year winner for the 2016-2017 school year.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The goals, objectives and educational activities at Ammons coincide with the general themes of the IB program, teaching students to be culturally aware, compassionate and able to live and prosper in a multicultural world. The pivotal practice of culture immersion helps to ensure the success of the program at Ammons. Students develop a better understanding of the world around them.

As you walk into Herbert Ammons Middle School, you can see the flags of eight countries flown under the flag of the United States of America. This symbolic display represents the diverse student population at Ammons. Multiculturalism is interwoven into both our electives and core courses via performances, project based learning, and celebrations. Every student is required to take a French or Spanish course, allowing them the opportunity to immerse themselves in the cultural nuances, and basic language of the country. The classroom activities help students create a global mindfulness and ultimately a respect for the language and customs. Ultimately as an IBMYP, teachers strive to create opportunities within the classroom to foster a climate of collaboration and acceptance.

” My Journey to America” is a successful event that has taken place at Ammons. This event allows students to be immersed in the customs and traditions of the various ethnic, religious and racial make-up that Ammons offers. To make this event successful, the parents are asked to fill out a questionnaire about themselves and their country of origin. The parents are then invited as guest speakers to expose the students to a wide variety of cultures. In line with the IB curriculum, the students must complete a reflection form that indicates what they have learned from each parent. At the end of the event, the reflection form is placed in the student’s portfolio. Leading up to “My Journey to America”, literary connections are made with the various countries on display. For instance, many of the classes have incorporated works from authors from a myriad of countries including Europe, Canada and Africa. In addition, teachers from different departments are encouraged to collaborate and design lessons that will make the event even more meaningful to the students who visit.

Ammons also hosts various author events that highlight international issues. Christina Gonzalez, the author of “The Red Umbrella” spoke to our students about the struggles of Cuban immigrants during the 1960’s and its major impact on our country. Kate Parker, the author of “Strong is the New Pretty” spoke to our girls about being empowered to achieve their life goals.