

Benjamin E. Mays International Magnet School

“Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders Today”

IB World School since February 2007

560 Concordia Avenue

St. Paul, Minnesota 55103

(651) 325-2400 Fax (651) 325-2401

Principal: Dr. Graneze Fretwell graneze.fretwell@spps.org

IB Coordinator: Dr. Nancy Hall nancy.hall@spps.org

Website: www.maysmagnet.spps.org

Number of students: 343 (2006-2007)

Demographics (2006/2007):

72% African American 16% Asian American 4% Hispanic American

7% European American 1% American Indian

The mission of Benjamin E. Mays International Magnet School is: “Through rigorous intercultural and interdisciplinary studies, students will be empowered with the communication and leadership skills necessary to become productive global citizens who are inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring.”

Members of the St. Paul African American community established Benjamin E. Mays Charter School in 1977. The school was named for the late **Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays (1895 - 1984)**, the defining president of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. Mays was a mentor to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; advisor to former President Jimmy Carter; and in his later years, president of the Atlanta Board of Education. President John F. Kennedy appointed Dr. Mays to the very first Peace Corps Committee. The school became a part of Saint Paul Public Schools in the early 1980’s.

Dr. Mays was an internationalist, great communicator, and leader; hence, Dr. Mays’ legacy firmly supports our evolution as an International Baccalaureate school. One of his famous quotes is: “It is not a disgrace not to reach the stars, but it is a disgrace to have no stars to reach for.” This quote inspired us to write our “**Mays International School Challenge.**” The Learner Profile attributes were also incorporated in order to further support international-mindedness. Our students recite the “Challenge” each morning during their “Morning Meeting:”

Benjamin E. Mays International School Challenge

The world belongs to us,
And we will accept the challenge
To represent the global community in a **caring** way
We are the ultimate students.
We renew our quest for excellence everyday
By being **inquirers** and **critical thinkers**,
We pledge to be **open-minded, well balanced**,
And to live by high ideals and **principles**.
We strive to be responsible **risk-takers**
Who believe that “It is not a disgrace not to reach the stars
But it is a disgrace to have no stars to reach for.”
Knowledge will be our goal.
Reflection and **communication** will be our means
For making this world a better place.
We are the ultimate students.
The world belongs to us.
The future belongs to us.
And today begins with us!

Benjamin E. Mays International Magnet School received a federal magnet school grant in 1995. With these funds, we developed the magnet focus of **Communication Arts and Leadership** and acquired supportive resources. This curriculum has proven to be a good fit with the IB/PYP and we have incorporated it into our Programme of Inquiry and Units of Inquiry. Our school has open enrollment for St. Paul and suburban students with no test criteria for admission; however bus service is only provided for St. Paul students.

Benjamin E. Mays International Magnet School was authorized as an IB World School in February 2007. We incorporate the tenets of IB/PYP throughout our instructional program. Our staff is highly trained in the IB/PYP and work collaboratively to promote international-mindedness and high academic standards. Our students are action-oriented and have raised money for worthy causes such as Heifer International®, children affected by Hurricane Katrina, and those affected by the Tsunami in Southeast Asia.

Benjamin E. Mays International Magnet School has state of the art technology. In addition to our television studio, all grade 3 – 6 classrooms have SmartBoard® electronic whiteboards. This technology captures students' attention and enables teachers to bring the world right into the classroom.

Benjamin E. Mays International Magnet School understands that families are our students' first and most important teachers. We encourage partnership with our families to make schooling a positive and successful experience. We encourage all families to take part in school activities and to visit the school as often as possible. All families are expected to attend IB/PYP Family night Activities. As a part of their self-assessment, students are expected to take part in parent/student/teacher conferences at the end of each trimester. At these conferences, students share their portfolios and self-reflections.

Awards/Accomplishments

- 1995 – Federal Magnet School grant for Communication Arts and Leadership curriculum.
- 2001 – 2007 - Superintendent's Award for *Continuous Academic Achievement*.
- 2001 – 2007 - Made Adequate Yearly Progress according to *No Child Left Behind*.
- 2004-2005 - Recognition as the #1 elementary school in the *St. Paul Reads* initiative.
- 2007 - Authorized as an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme.
- 2007 - Recognized by the St. Paul City Council for *outstanding achievement*.
- 2007 - Celebrated the tenth year of our partnership with the Minnesota Supreme Court in the "Everybody Wins!"® "Power Lunch" reading program.

Program Offerings

- All-day kindergarten classes.
- School uniforms required Monday through Friday.
- Spanish instruction provided by a specialist for students in grades K – 6.
- Enrichment classes in television studio production, African drumming, harp, orchestra, band, and vocal music.
- Math Masters® and Lego League competitions.
- Collaborative/co-teaching model with classroom and support teachers (Special Ed., ELL).
- Gifted services for qualified students.
- Mays Book Club. Each year, the principal selects four picture books correlated to the Learner Profile or PYP Attitudes and reads them to the entire school.
- Speakers, residencies, and field trips correlated to IB/PYP Units of Inquiry.
- Teachers' "Leveled Library" for guided reading with book sets correlated to IB/PYP Units of Inquiry.
- Student produced morning announcements and weekly news show.
- SmartBoards® in all grade 3 – 6 classrooms.
- Leadership Council for fifth and sixth graders. These students serve as school ambassadors, implement community service activities, and learn public speaking skills through Toastmasters International®.

- “Everybody Wins!”® “Power Lunch” reading partnership with the Minnesota Supreme Court and US Bank. This program provides a reading buddy each week for every student in grades 1, 2, and 3.