

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Program Highlights 2025-2026



The Middle School program focuses on developing skills, knowledge, independence, and self-advocacy for students in grades 6-8. The academic curriculum provides opportunities for hands-on, project-based learning, while students are supported in tackling increasingly rigorous content. Classes are always differentiated to support individual student needs, and opportunities for intensive remediation continue. Increased choice is a crucial part of the program, with students selecting arts and STEM courses, clubs, and extra curricular activities.

In Middle School we celebrate who students are during the exciting period of adolescence. With an understanding of how adolescent brains are becoming more specialized, more effective, and more efficient, we look to provide opportunities for students to develop and solidify skills, as well as dive into areas of passion and explore new and exciting opportunities.

EACH DAY INCLUDES:

- 40-80 minute classes in the following areas:
 - English/Language Arts
 - Reading
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Social Studies
 - Physical Education
 - 2-3 Electives
- Lunch/Recess
- Advisory
- Community Building & Social Emotional Skills

ACADEMICS

Class sizes range from 2 to 12 students.

LITERACY

Directly aligned with the Science of Reading and evidence-based instruction, classrooms utilize the Orton-Gillingham methodology and The Writing Revolution to provide direct instruction in reading and writing. Diagnostic-prescriptive teaching allows classroom content to be specifically adapted to student skill and need. English-Language Arts classes focus on reading comprehension and written expression, while students who continue to need instruction on the foundational processes of reading, take an additional daily Reading class focused on reading accuracy and fluency.

MATHEMATICS

Daily math instruction is provided in a diagnostic and prescriptive format, using a concrete - representational - abstract sequenced framework to guide students toward grade-level standards. Classrooms are created based upon student skill and need, giving us the opportunity to provide the “just right” amount of remediation and rigor, with classes ranging from Foundations to Geometry.

SCIENCE

Middle School science cycles through Life Science, Earth Science, Biology, and Physical Science using inquiry and project-based learning and guided by the Next Gen Science Standards.



SOCIAL STUDIES

Lab's project-based, arts-infused humanities programming allows students to enjoy hands-on exploration of history, geography, and sociology. Dynamic small-group experiences provide opportunities for immersive simulations and debates.



TECHNOLOGY

All students utilize technology and media including:

- 1:1 Chromebooks
- Speech-to-Text and Text-to-Speech software
- Google Workspace for Education
- Applications to support note-taking, organization, homework, etc.

OUR PROGRAM IS

Collaborative and Interdisciplinary

- Middle School courses are designed to target key concepts and skills that revolve around common themes.
- Our writing program is used across all content areas to aid with generalization.

Individualized

- Teachers use both formal and informal assessments to identify how each student learns best and to develop a learning plan to maximize each student's ability to learn and produce quality work.
- Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning by identifying how they learn best and utilizing the resources surrounding them.

Accessible

- Technology is integrated into the classroom to help students access the curriculum and produce work that represents their true abilities.
- Content can be provided at varied reading levels and accessed by assistive technology.



EXECUTIVE SKILLS AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

W.I.N.

Standing for What I Need, WIN is an additional period at the end of the day. Guided by an advisor and with a small group of classmates. WIN provides:

- direct instruction and consistent support for executive function skills
- opportunities for reflection and self-advocacy

COMMUNITY TIME

Students meet weekly in grade-level cohort groups to address Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Restorative Practices, Belonging, and Digital Citizenship skills. With the goal of building strong skills and a vibrant, inclusive community, lessons and activities focus on

- building and maintaining positive relationships
- perspective taking
- social communication skills
- emotional regulation
- decision making skills
- understanding diverse cultures, languages, experiences, and identities
- cultivating respect and admiration of the differences among people
- navigating technology, including AI, social media, and misinformation



CHOICE

We know that giving our students choice enables them to feel ownership of, and motivation for, their learning. Daily electives in the arts, STEM, as well as social clubs give students this important element of choice in their day.

ELECTIVES

Visual Arts	Performing Arts	STEM	Curricular Exploration
• Digital Art • Photography • Studio Art • Ceramics	• Theater • Musical Theater • Band • Dance	• Robotics & Engineering - Levels 1 & 2 • Videography • Design Lab	• Authors & Illustrators • American Sign Language • Yearbook

ATHLETICS
Lab Dragons shine in:

- Archery
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Fencing
- Kickball
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Track and Field
- Volleyball

EXPERT CLINICAL SERVICES

- **Integrated Services:** Teachers, artists, speech-language therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, and social workers work closely together to unlock each student’s potential.
- **Clinical Services:** Individual and small-group sessions in Speech/ Language, Occupational Therapy, and Psychological Services are available for an additional fee.



TRAVEL

Field trips are tied to curricular themes and take advantage of the many opportunities in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area.

8th Graders have an Experiential Learning & Travel week, which give students the opportunity to immerse themselves in learning from the environment either in Philadelphia, PA or at the Teton Science School in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

