

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL TRUTHS

While we have a more detailed Code of Conduct that outlines expectations for a safe and supportive community, we refer to these Middle School Truths as our rules to live by:

- Be Safe
- Be Kind
- Take care of your business
- Honesty is everything

STUDENT LIFE

During their middle school years, students are encouraged to find their people, seek out trusted adults, and try something new. In addition to their academic experiences, students benefit from being involved in and contributing to the life of the school. Students are asked to bring their own ideas to faculty in order to cultivate a more inclusive and diverse middle school culture that reflects who they are.

Examples of student involvement for all middle school grades.

Affinity groups - Groups with a common interest or core cultural identifier (A Foot in 2 Places, Boys of Color, Girls of Color, GSA)

Athletics - Organized teams and training groups for fall, winter, and spring sports

Clubs - Student driven clubs supervised by faculty

Subject competitions - National competitions in academic disciplines

Theatre - Annual middle school production with onstage and tech crew participation

8th Grade Leaders - volunteer student group helps plan morning meetings, spirit weeks, and other middle school events

Study buddies - middle school students serve as academic and social study buddy mentors to younger students and may also receive social and academic mentoring from upper school students

ADVISORY

Each student is part of an advisory group of approximately 11 students in the same grade level, supervised by one teacher who serves as the group's dedicated advisor. Advisory groups begin and end the school day together and meet mid-day for supervised study and lunch. The purpose of Advisory is to create a culture of connectedness and belonging where each student feels seen and known. We use a research-based curriculum, Second Step®, in our Advisory lessons to support students' social-emotional competence. Advisory lesson units include:

- Mindsets and Goals
- Recognizing Bullying and Harassment
- Thoughts, Emotions, and Decisions
- Managing Relationships and Social Conflict

We supplement this curriculum with lessons and activities around mental and physical health and well-being, often partnering with local professionals to ensure a comprehensive program that supports our students' academic, intellectual, social, and emotional growth.

AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION

After school supervision is fee-based and available for students in grades 5–8 from 3:30–6 p.m. Students enjoy a snack, outdoor recess time, and light homework help, if needed.

LEAP DAYS

LEAP Days occur on Wednesdays of five-day weeks, creating a pause amid the ABCD class schedule. These days dedicated to **L**earning, **E**xploration, **A**nd **P**rojects are planned by grade-level teams to provide academic support and challenge, student choice, as well as novel experiences for the community to enjoy together. LEAP Days include:

Extension - This double-block period is designed by the teaching team to hone skills that connect with core classes. Examples of Extension activities include workshops on etymology, research and citation skills, interdisciplinary projects, field trips, guest speakers, and math competitions.

Advisory - Using the Second Step® lessons, students engage in weekly check-ins and check-outs, class challenges, class meetings, and service-learning projects. Advisory lessons are proactively and responsively implemented by the grade-level team to meet the needs of each class.

Clubs - Students connect with peers and teachers across grade levels who share common interests. Club offerings have included: Anime, Bullet Journaling, Calligraphy, Chess, Cybersecurity, Literary Magazine, Puzzles and Logic, and Reader's Theatre. Students can choose to participate in the same club all year or try a new club at the midpoint of the year.

Dives - Dives are elective classes designed to drive student and teacher engagement. Teachers create course content around areas of personal interest or expertise and students make their selections based on their interest in "diving" into a new area. Students choose two Dive offerings in the fall and two in the spring. Dive options have included: Robotic Coding, Stock Market, Poetry, Constitutional Law, Watercolor and Mixed Media, Sporty STEM, and more.