



# GERMANTOWN FRIENDS SCHOOL



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When you begin with the belief that each person has a unique inner light, great things can happen. At GFS, we discover and nurture a multitude of hidden talents. We teach each child to speak his or her mind, and make sure every voice is heard. We believe that community is built on a foundation of mutual respect.

### OUR SCHOOL

Founded in 1845 under the care of the Germantown Monthly Meeting and governed by the School Committee, GFS is a Quaker, independent day school for students in preschool through grade 12, located in the historic Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. It draws students from more than 80 zip codes and three countries.

### OUR MISSION

Germantown Friends School is dedicated to reaching that of God in every person. Our mission is to seek truth, challenge the intellect, honor differences, embrace the city, and nurture each student's mind, body and spirit.

### HOW DOES GERMANTOWN FRIENDS SCHOOL INSPIRE A LIFELONG LOVE OF LEARNING?

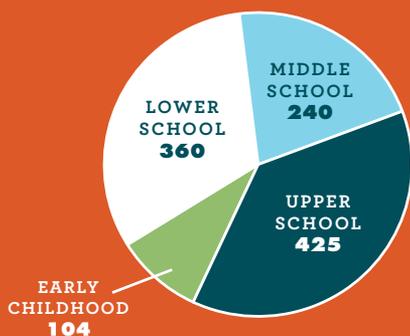
Creative faculty offer a rich, relevant, and engaging program for all ages—one centered on curiosity, well-being, and joy.

Students find their unique voices through infinite opportunities for discovery and inquiry, with age-appropriate freedoms to chart their own paths.

Our community embraces silence, reflection, and listening as we learn from—and with—each other, bringing our Quaker testimonies to life.

Alumni remain a central part of the GFS experience, mentoring students and sharing their talents as advocates, artists, entrepreneurs, educators, and scientists—changemakers of all kinds.

**1,129**  
STUDENTS



**6:1**  
STUDENT/TEACHER  
RATIO

**\$5.77MM**  
FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE  
AWARDED TO  
**28%** OF STUDENTS

**162**  
FACULTY MEMBERS  
(**75%** HOLD  
ADVANCED DEGREES)

**155**  
FRIENDS  
SCHOOLS LEAGUE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS  
**19** PAISAA  
STATE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS

**36.6%**  
STUDENTS OF COLOR

**60+**  
UPPER SCHOOL  
STUDENT-LED CLUBS,  
INCLUDING MORE  
THAN **25** AFFINITY  
GROUPS



## OUR COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT

We believe in the power and value of community. By nurturing and embracing bonds with our neighbors and each other, GFS strives to cultivate experiences that remove educational barriers and build affinity and understanding.

Through neighborhood initiatives, environmental action projects, and institutional partnerships, we are deeply connected to Germantown and Philadelphia. While many activities are student-driven and led, adults serve as guides, ensuring that everyone fully understands the important role our neighbors play in our lives and our world. Upper School student clubs, such as Community Action, Lunch for the Hungry, Gardening, and Education Justice, address food and clothing insecurity and educational inequalities. In the Middle and Lower Schools, community projects and service learning are woven into the curriculum. The Community Engagement office leads monthly drives for local organizations, creating partnerships to help identify the current needs of our neighbors.

Our vision for learning in community advances each year. In 2021, GFS deepened its relationship with Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia—an academic enrichment program for promising middle schoolers from Philadelphia—after housing it on our campus for 27 years. Breakthrough is now an official part of GFS, with faculty, staff, and students volunteering and supporting this growing organization.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

At GFS, we welcome the experiences and perspectives of all members of our community. We strive for continuous growth in understanding and valuing the intersections of age, ability, gender, race and ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. We aim to be mindful of the roles these varied parts of our identities play in making us who we are, individually and as a school community.

Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team coordinates with all members of our community to better engage in these principles. We see DEI as integral to our ethical foundation and as work we all share. GFS is a community that values both intergroup and intragroup connections. The work we do within groups and across our community permeates the fabric of our school life. Our desire is to improve relationships between people by dialoguing, engaging in constructive conflict, and working together in authentic and meaningful ways.

Each of our four educational divisions—Early Childhood, Lower School, Middle School, and Upper School—have dedicated Diversity Committees. These delegations explore where additional work may be needed and address, head-on, questions and fears that individuals may have in talking to students, parents, and colleagues about sensitive topics, such as race, gender, socioeconomic issues, and more.

# EARLY CHILDHOOD

GUIDED BY QUAKER PRINCIPLES, our multidisciplinary curriculum is taught through a combination of structured activities and free exploration, which fosters children's natural curiosity while providing them with the foundation needed for success in Kindergarten—and beyond. Classes delve into topics of group interest and critical thinking is woven into every activity as children make observations, discuss them, problem solve, and begin to understand how similarities and differences enhance the classroom community. Fostering a strong sense of self among our youngest learners reinforces positive self-esteem and respect for one another. We value a child's ability to express his or her feelings and ideas in appropriate ways, and nurture our students' capacity to listen and take turns. We model peaceful conflict resolution and the importance of being a responsible and engaged member of the group. The Early Childhood curriculum addresses the developmental skills that lead to Kindergarten readiness. This includes helping children sit and listen, focus, make thoughtful choices, interact with one another respectfully, follow multistep directions, and self-regulate. Weekly specials include art, library, movement, and music. We strive to work together, communicate often, and share our insights with parents and caregivers.

EC students attend Meeting for Worship weekly on their respective campus (either Center City or Germantown). Additionally, students from both locations gather together once a month in the historic Meetinghouse on Main Campus. Classes come together to read a story or poem, then sit quietly and reflect on the message of the reading for a few minutes. Children may share their thoughts with the group if they are so moved. We close each Meeting by shaking hands. Additionally, EC students attend GFS' annual all-school Meeting for Worship in the spring.

# LOWER SCHOOL



AT GFS, THE ELEMENTARY YEARS are truly wondrous, and we provide students in grades K-5 with an academic program that is developmentally appropriate, highly ambitious, well balanced—and joyful. We think of our Lower School students as young learners, but they are also authors and illustrators, mathematical acrobats, scientists, world explorers, and time travelers. Our curriculum is defined by its richness and depth. When our students explore ancient Greece, it is a yearlong experience of immersion: They study politics, commerce, and dramatic arts, make Trojan horses in woodshop, sew chitons for the annual Greek games, and travel to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. The result is a web of meaningful connections—and a sense of mastery.

It is this same mastery children find in art, as they study Mondrian or Jean Paul Basquiat; in math, as they learn not only to solve a problem through a prescribed set of steps, but to see it from every angle and inside out; and in language arts, as they become active and critical readers, equipped with strategies to engage in evermore challenging works. Spanish is introduced in Kindergarten, and students are immersed in the language through fifth grade. Extracurricular options offer even more opportunities: to study American Sign Language after school, to play sports with the Early Risers basketball clinic, to sing with the chorus or perform with the orchestra. Our Lower School provides outstanding preparation for the years ahead, but before looking forward, it is an experience to be cherished in itself.





# MIDDLE SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL AT GERMANTOWN FRIENDS is a magical, memorable place, with developmentally designed programs to meet the needs of 11-14 year olds. That includes finding joy in learning, but also finding joy in the discovery of who these young people are as individuals. It's a time for them to make some of life's most important discoveries about the kind of person they want to be. Students engage through academics, clubs, affinity groups, athletics, and service in ways that help them to discover their true selves.

The key areas of focus in Middle School include study skills and note-taking; self-awareness and meta-cognition; collaboration; communication and conflict resolution; asking for help and self-advocacy; time management, planning, and organization; social skills; empathy; and health and wellness. In the classroom, they explore works of literature thematically connected to lessons in history, tackle research projects working with primary sources, and master mathematical challenges, preparing them for Algebra or Advanced Algebra in eighth grade. In addition to English, history, math, and science, they choose to study French, Spanish, Latin, Greek, or Mandarin. Outside the classroom, opportunities expand as well: Middle Schoolers take on leadership roles in student government and in organizing community outreach projects, and in a wide and ever-changing variety of mixed-grade clubs and activities, including Yearbook, Adventure Club, Chess Club, and A Cappella. In these crucial years of development and personal discovery, Middle School at GFS is a great place to find yourself.



## SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

### SIXTH-GRADE SKILLS

**PROGRAM:** Intentional and measurable instruction focusing on academic, organizational, and social-emotional skills.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

**MINI-COURSES:** Week-long interdisciplinary deep dives that center on joy, curiosity, and rigor as students experience uninterrupted learning around a single topic. Teachers partner to design mixed-grade courses and students choose from a menu of options.

### SEVENTH-GRADE SERVICE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODEL:

Full-year exploration of service learning that includes students navigating curricula modulars that focus on food insecurity, homelessness, and environmental stewardship.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

**PLAY/MUSICAL:** Part of a year-long Theatre Movement Arts program, the winter features a Middle School play with participants across grades.

### EIGHTH-GRADE

**CAPSTONE:** Guided by a question, students explore passion projects that allow them to position learning in ways authentic to themselves.





# UPPER SCHOOL

A GFS EDUCATION IS ABOUT each person rising to meet their own standards of excellence; no two students leave having traveled the same path. What our ninth through twelfth graders share, in the process, is an experience of intellectual challenge and curiosity. We don't compute class ranks or GPAs, and we don't see test scores as the primary measure of achievement and academic success.

Upper School is a world of choices. Take Bioethics or the Political and Philosophical Origins of the Constitution, Advanced Physics or Ancient Greek, Journalism: Ethics and Activism or Advanced Music Composition. At GFS, high school students have the opportunity to pursue their interests, passions, talents, and goals. They make their education their own. All students read widely and learn to write well. All take at least three years of math, plus multiple years of science, history, and a modern or classical language. And all have the opportunity to do so much more. Through a vast offering of required and elective programs, our students pursue directed independent studies, participate in professional internships, take college seminar-style classes, and have the chance to explore multiple educational opportunities outside the regular curriculum. For those eager not only to learn but also to innovate, this is the place.

We have more than 60 clubs organized and led by students, relating to timely topics or current affairs, such as politics and climate change, social/self identity, service, and journalism. All are designed by students so they can pursue leadership opportunities in a multitude of areas and interests, including literacy, science, advocacy and social justice, mental health, anti-racism, community engagement, finance, law, art, music, sustainability, film, coding, entrepreneurship, and more. Students have the opportunity to participate in more than 25 affinity groups, from Latin American Student Solidarity Organization and Chaverim to the Black Student Union, Asian Students Association (ASA), and Sexuality and Gender Alliance (SAGA).

## SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

### DIRECTED INDEPENDENT STUDY (DIS)

The DIS program allows students in grades 9-12 to pursue interests outside the regular curriculum by studying individually or in small groups with a faculty member. Areas of study range from Arabic and International Current Affairs to Neuroscience, Jazz Theory, and Java Programming.

### ESSENTIALLY ENGLISH

During the spring term, students in grades 10-12 choose from a set of elective courses taught by GFS faculty and scholars from the surrounding community. These classes provide the opportunity to carefully examine the work of a particular author, to explore a specific genre of writing, or to consider how literature reflects certain ideological and cultural patterns. The program also includes creative and nonfiction writing courses.

### GLOBAL ONLINE ACADEMY (GOA)

Germantown Friends School is a founding member of the GOA, a consortium of more than 70 leading independent schools from around the world committed to offering world-class online courses taught by teachers from its member schools. Its mission is to replicate in online classrooms the programs and teaching that are hallmarks of its member schools; to foster new, effective ways for students to learn; and to promote students' global awareness by creating truly diverse, worldwide, online communities.

### JANUARY TERM

This month-long program enables students in grades 9, 10, and 12 to explore learning opportunities outside the regular curriculum. They choose from more than 70 "mini-courses," providing teachers and students space for experimentation and reflection.

### JUNIOR PROJECTS

During the month of January, all juniors research, secure, and complete a month-long independent study of their own design under the guidance of a faculty liaison. Students use this opportunity to gain insight into a potential career, pursue a passion, or do humanitarian work in the U.S. or overseas. A final paper and presentation complete the project.



# ARTS



GFS IS PROFOUNDLY ALIVE with the energy of the arts. Creativity and performance are woven into our culture—every day, across every division. The choir tours internationally, the theater program takes on classic musicals and modern masterworks from around the world, and the art department transforms the campus into one giant gallery for the annual spring All-School Art Show.

GFS offers a rich and deep curriculum in visual and the performing arts school-wide. Threads of art history and music theory weave through classes in the earliest grades, while students explore advanced electives and embrace ambitious artistic challenges in the Middle and Upper Schools. Our facilities support our top-caliber programs with spacious, light-filled studios, numerous practice rooms, and a main-stage theater with professional quality lighting and sound. Our program not only allows students of talent to go far, but is designed to involve all of our students in creative and meaningful ways.

# ATHLETICS

**HARD WORK AND TEAMWORK.** These ideals are invoked at GFS so often they're part of our daily practice. Every time our athletes take the playing field, they bring the best of themselves to the game. They learn lessons for life; they feed the fire of Tiger Pride.

The athletic program at GFS stresses participation and encourages all student-athletes to develop their capabilities to the fullest extent. We focus on process more than outcome, and know that constant improvement yields positive results. We value excellence in each sport, and aim to field successful teams—42 across the Upper and Middle School divisions—that are competitive within the Friends Schools League as well as against other peer schools.

We want our student-athletes to be committed to themselves, their teams, and the GFS school community. We recognize that success takes on many forms, from earning the respect of our peers to setting a personal record to putting in the effort to win a league championship. We prioritize our student-athletes' wellness and mental agility, and believe good sportsmanship promotes healthy competition. Participation in our athletic program has value well beyond the playing field. Our focus on team unity, the realization of potential, the development of a strong work ethic, and the sense of pride that comes with accomplishment are key components of the GFS athletic experience.



QUAKER VALUES are at the heart of the GFS experience, serving as our moral compass, driving our interactions with one another, and teaching us to honor the Light in each member of our community. Our educational philosophy is rooted in the Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship (SPICES).



In every way we can, we try to minimize the distractions that can draw our attention from the important things in life. This means not becoming overwhelmed by the busyness of daily routines. It means seeking balance and embracing **simplicity**.



We aim to deal fairly, equally, and honestly with everyone. We aim to do as we say, reflecting our beliefs in our actions. Even when it is inconvenient or challenging, we stand by our convictions, striving to lead lives of **integrity**.



We are all blessed with remarkable gifts. We are equally qualified to seek truth and let our inner Light shine. We all deserve the same respect. For these reasons, we work against prejudice and discrimination and for **equality**.



We believe each life is precious and unique. We stand against war and violence and work to eliminate their root causes, including ignorance, racism, hatred, and oppression. We are committed to creating **peace**.



'Alone we can do little, together we can do so much.\* We know there is strength in cooperation and wisdom to be found when many perspectives are shared and valued. We believe in the power of **community**.

\*The words of Helen Keller.



The planet we inhabit, the talents we've been given, the community of which we are a part—all hold remarkable value. We must be responsible, imaginative, and proactive in protecting these gifts and caring for the world and people around us. We must exercise good **stewardship**.

## COLLEGE MATRICULATION 2017–2021

Albright College	Columbia University (10)	Lafayette College	Pomona College	The George Washington University (5)	University of Notre Dame
American University (5)	Connecticut College (4)	Lehigh University (2)	Pratt Institute (2)	University of Pennsylvania (49)	University of
Arizona State University	Cornell University (5)	Loyola Marymount University	Princeton University (7)	The New School (3)	Pennsylvania (49)
Babson College	Dartmouth College	Loyola University New Orleans	Reed College (2)	Towson University	University of
Bard College (4)	DePaul University	Macalester College (6)	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	Trinity College Dublin	Pittsburgh (6)
Barnard College (13)	Dickinson College	Manhattan School of Music	Rhode Island School of Design	Tufts University (9)	University of Pittsburgh, BS/MD Program
Bates College (2)	Drexel University (13)	Maryland Institute College of Art	Rice University (3)	Tulane University (5)	University of Rochester
Bennington College	Drexel University, BS/MD Program	Massachusetts Bay Community College	Rochester Institute of Technology (3)	United States Naval Academy	University of Southern California (3)
Bentley University	Duke University (2)	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Ryerson University	University College London	University of St. Andrews (2)
Berklee College of Music	Earlham College	McDaniel College	Saint Joseph's University (2)	University of California, Berkeley	University of Vermont (3)
Boston College (2)	Eindhoven University of Technology	McGill University (4)	Sarah Lawrence College (3)	University of California, Davis	University of Virginia (2)
Boston Conservatory	Emerson College (2)	Michigan State University	Savannah College of Art and Design	University of California, Los Angeles (3)	University of Washington
Boston University (5)	Emory University (4)	Middlebury College (7)	School of the Art Institute of Chicago	University of Chicago (7)	University of Wisconsin, Madison (4)
Bowdoin College (3)	Fordham University (2)	Mount Holyoke College	Scripps College (2)	University of Colorado, Boulder (2)	Vanderbilt University (2)
Brown University (4)	Franklin and Marshall College (4)	Mount St. Mary's University	Skidmore College (3)	University of Delaware	Vassar College (7)
Bryn Mawr College	Georgetown University (7)	New England Conservatory of Music	Smith College (4)	University of Edinburgh	Virginia Polytechnic Institute
Bucknell University (2)	Georgia Institute of Technology (6)	New York University (16)	Soka University of America	University of London - The Courtauld Institute of Art	Washington University in St. Louis
California Institute of Technology	Goucher College (2)	Northeastern University (3)	Stanford University (4)	University of Maryland (3)	Wellesley College (2)
Canisius College	Hamilton College (5)	Northwestern University (4)	Stony Brook University, SUNY (2)	University of Miami	Wesleyan University (13)
Carnegie Mellon University (5)	Harvard University	Pennsylvania State University (2)	Swarthmore College (3)	University of Michigan (5)	West Chester University
Case Western Reserve University (2)	Haverford College (17)	Pitzer College (3)	Syracuse University (4)	University of North Carolina at Charlotte	Whittier College (2)
Champlain College	High Point University		Temple University (15)	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (3)	Widener University (2)
Chapman University	Howard University		Texas State University		Williams College (3)
Claremont-McKenna College	Johns Hopkins University (3)				Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Clarkson University	Kenyon College (5)				Yale University (4)
Colgate University					
College of William & Mary					