



THE WORLD OF THE

UPPER SCHOOL

When visitors enter the Upper School, most often they comment on the light streaming through the glass walls; the roomy, modern, comfortable spaces; and, if it's between classes, the noise. Conversations, laughter, bursts of song—the building reverberates with sound. The GA Upper School is a lively, bustling place. Many girls call it their “second home,” spending most of their weekday hours on campus between classes, sports, club meetings, and rehearsals. It isn't just the physical space that's important, though—we're deliberate about creating a social environment where the girls feel known, supported, and loved. Here are some of the ways we foster this atmosphere.

ADVISORY

Each 9th grader is assigned a faculty advisor and an advisory of between six and eight students. Advisory becomes a student's home base at school; her advisor becomes her primary guide, counselor, and advocate. Advisories gather several times a week, sometimes coming together to share meals or let off steam with activities. Students have the option of staying with the same advisor for all of high school—and the majority do. The result? Deep bonds between advisees and with advisors, bonds that often last long after graduation.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Bringing together students from a wide array of backgrounds and experiences is a priority at GA. In the Upper School, 34% of students self-identify as students of color. There are also many opportunities for students to sort through difficult questions about identity—in particular race, class and sexuality. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Board, led by a senior and with representatives from every grade, invites all students to monthly lunches during which they discuss timely topics. Our DEI board hosts affinity groups and workshops and collaborates with the DEI Board at Brunswick. Among the student groups promoting tolerance and understanding are SCORE (Students of Color Representing Equality) and GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance). GA's faculty, too, actively educate themselves on these issues in regular discussions, book groups, workshops, and professional development experiences. This work remains a priority for all members of our community.

ASSEMBLIES

At least once a week we have an assembly. In student-run assemblies, topics range from students raising awareness of causes, to members of student government giving updates, to students sharing treasured parts of their culture. Faculty members sometimes present, maybe unpacking a current event or sharing a formative personal experience. There might be a performance by the student/teacher rock band, a preview for a play, or a trivia game.

We host speakers from slam poets to local politicians; from *New York Times* editorialists to scientists developing bacteriophages to college *a cappella* groups to Olympians who advocate for equity in sports. GA alums return to share their professional journeys. Most popular of all are *Senior Voices*—opportunities for our oldest students to share their wisdom.



ORIENTATION

In addition to traditional orientation activities for new students, all incoming 9th graders are integrated into the community through the Peer Program. "Peer" assembles small groups of GA and Brunswick students into "families" led by one GA senior and one Brunswick senior. Before school opens, families gather for a day of orientation activities on campus, then meet weekly in the fall to discuss relevant topics and hang out.

TRADITIONS

In addition to enjoying beloved all-school traditions like Ingathering in the fall and Charter Day in the spring, GA Upper Schoolers host their own traditions, among them the annual senior parade on Opening Day; Spirit Week leading up to Homecoming; the spoon game in the spring; and the spring Talent Show during school-wide elections.

FOOD

Fueling over 800 GA students is no small task, but our chef and his team work tirelessly to provide snacks and meals that are nutritious, plentiful, varied, and delicious. In the mornings, girls can grab a snack to tide them over until lunch. For lunch, there are hot entrees and sides (from the usual fare like macaroni and cheese to the popular dumpling bar); a comprehensive salad bar that continuously rotates vegetables and toppings; a deli bar with cold cuts, bagels, and breads; three prepared salads featuring seasonal vegetables; and a fruit bar. What makes lunch stand out most at GA, though, are Chef Anthony's special lunches—whether it's his Super Bowl *smorgasbord*, his celebration of the Chinese New Year, or his Italian street festival under outdoor tents featuring homemade pasta and sauces, chicken parmesan, and funnel cake.

GREENWICH ACADEMY

Toward the Building of Character

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