

PACKER

A photograph of a bright, modern workshop or classroom with large windows. In the foreground, two young girls are focused on a craft project. The girl on the left, with blonde hair and a purple patterned shirt, is holding a cardboard tube. The girl on the right, with dark curly hair and a grey t-shirt, is assisting her. They are working on a large cardboard box on a table. In the background, other children are engaged in various activities, including one boy holding a long cardboard box. The room is filled with natural light and has a playful, creative atmosphere.

Portraits of members of
the Packer community,
plus essential information
about a Packer education.



Who we are.

A brief introduction to
The Packer Collegiate Institute

We believe that the head and the
heart make each other stronger.

We balance the value of scholarship with the importance of relationships. We make space for new voices and new ideas, we hold the door for each other, we sing silly songs. We believe that great minds—and great schools—embrace difference and admit complexity. We think deeply, listen actively, speak courageously, and act with purpose and heart. The result is a learning community that is smart and serious and motivated—and warm and supportive and joyful. That's an unusual combination. But it works. And provides our graduates with tools to be knowledgeable, empathetic, and engaged members of an interconnected and dynamic world. Perhaps the best way to understand who we are is to spend time with us.

On the pages that follow, you'll meet a few
of the people who make Packer Packer.

Independent
co-educational
college preparatory
school, founded in
1845 on Joralemon
Street in historic
Brooklyn Heights



6 interconnected buildings on Joralemon Street,
including 66 classrooms, 2 gymnasiums, 2 libraries,
the Pratt Theater, and the Packer Garden



6000
class pets in Kindergarten
(composting worms!)

1,050+
students in Pre-K3
through 12th Grade

\$11+
million in financial
aid given to students



15
varsity sports teams, with
32 league championships
in the past 5 years

100
Clinton Street. The new
Packer Early Learning
Center houses 5 preschool
classes, a rooftop atelier,
an innovation lab, and
outdoor playspace



175
faculty

77%
of faculty hold an
advanced degree

7:1
student-to-teacher ratio

28
college-level
Advanced Topics courses

46%
of our students identify as Black/African-American,
Latinx/Hispanic, Asian American, Middle Eastern
American, or multiracial

Families from all **5** boroughs,
plus Long Island and New Jersey

100%
of junior class will have an international
experience at no additional cost





“It’s so great to have independence and responsibility. I love being able to spend free time with my friends—the people who make me who I am.”

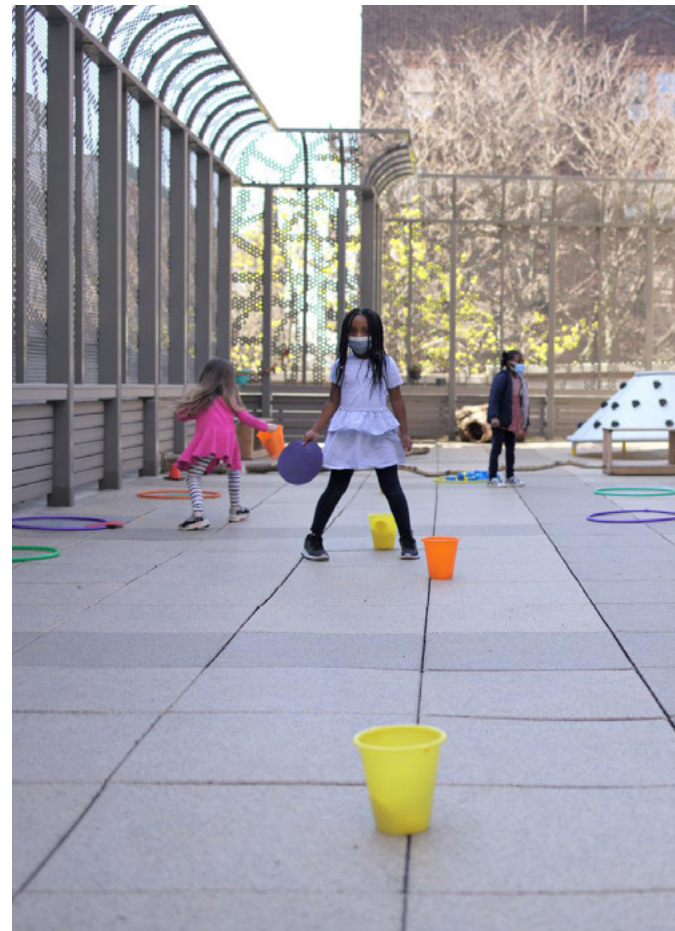


“You’re exposed to so much here, so much diversity of thought. You feel nurtured and confident, able to pursue things. There’s a kind of emotional maturity that you get from that experience.”





“We try to give students as many different experiences as possible. It’s about exposing them to new things, pushing them to be uncomfortable. It helps them figure out who they are.”





What it's like to be here.

The Packer experience

Packer's campus is the embodiment of its history. All around us, there are innovative spaces within traditional structures—a five-story Middle School space built inside a converted church, state-of-the-art labs in a building that Packer first dedicated to science education back in 1887, a digital video lab in a skylit art studio, a spacious atelier for our youngest students at the purpose-built Early Learning Center. And always, everywhere, there are the voices of students—laughter in the Atrium, debates (and the occasional pop-up dance party) in the student center, joyful shouts in the Garden. Students' voices take visual shape on the walls—fliers for club meetings and performances, Emerson quotes illustrated by 10th Grade English students: "Insist on yourself; never imitate." And on the doors to faculty offices, students' sticky notes to teachers: "Thank you for embodying learning." "Thank you for 100% loving what you do."

To experience life at Packer is to be surrounded by people who know you as yourself, to be uplifted by educators who 100% love what they do, and to be inspired to be an agent of change.



Preschool

Pre-K Threes, Pre-K Fours, and Kindergarten

Program

Our commitment to appreciating and nurturing the whole child begins with our youngest learners. Guided by the tenets of the Reggio Emilia early childhood philosophy, our Preschool program creates the space for children to explore areas of interest that promote joy and creativity.

- Our dedicated teachers act as researchers, guiding young learners in deep and thoughtful skill development that is based in play.
- Documentation of learning is regular and intentional, so that teachers, students, and families can share in children's development over the course of the year.

- Social-emotional learning experiences allow children to better understand themselves and appreciate different perspectives and ideas, while understanding the importance of maintaining an inclusive and safe community.
- Packer's identity curriculum begins in the Pre-K Threes, and is rooted in equity, inclusion, and belonging—focusing on essential questions like, *Who am I?* and *What makes each of us unique and special?*
- In Pre-Kindergarten, our students are immersed in emergent learning, working together with peers to study and deepen their understanding of topics that pique their interest.
- Our Kindergarten program strikes a balance between giving students essential social emotional learning experiences and introducing them to regular academic routines in literacy, math, social studies, and science.
- Specialist classes include physical education, dance, music, studio art, health education, and library.
- Early morning drop-off and extensive after school options are available starting in Kindergarten.

Experience

Our Preschool is housed in the Packer Early Learning Center, one block from the main campus. Launched in 2018, "Little Packer" was intentionally designed with our youngest learners in mind. It features classrooms that are flooded with daylight and designed to surround children with natural and found materials that they can access independently.

- A big part of our Preschool philosophy is inviting and valuing each individual family as important members of our school community. Whether it's visiting the classroom at pick-up or drop-off, sharing a read-aloud with the class, or being a guest speaker to share special holidays or family experiences, our preschool families connect with one another and the school community throughout the year.
- Beginning in Kindergarten, families have the option of having their child join affinity groups based on the following social identifiers: race, ethnicity, and family composition.

- Preschoolers regularly connect with big kids and adults on the main campus, or "Big Packer." Spending time in the Hart Library and playing in the Garden gives students a glimpse of what awaits them in Lower School.
- The light-filled Atelier allows teachers to bring the outdoors into the classroom, with sliding glass walls that open onto the expansive rooftop playspace.
- The Materials Room is packed with a collection of recycled and repurposed materials for children to select and incorporate into their projects.
- A spacious multi-purpose room hosts physical education, dance, and music classes, and provides a space for joyful community gatherings.
- Community partners include: Materials Truck, East New York Farms, Room to Grow, and more.
- Favorite events/projects include trips to the farmers market, Winter and Spring Sings, and school-wide events such as the May Day Arts Festival and Pumpkin Patch.



Lower School

1st through 4th Grade

Academic Program

Our Lower School program is experiential, exploratory, and integrated. Much of our curriculum work spans multiple disciplines so that students experience an interconnected approach to an interconnected world.

- Classrooms provide a print- and language-rich environment, with in-class libraries and immersive reading and writing lessons, balanced with phonics, word study, and author visits.
- Students learn mathematics through hands-on inquiry and problem-solving. Lessons are designed to build conceptual understanding through exploration.

- The division has designated literacy and math coordinators who support student and teacher growth through coaching and curriculum development.
- Social studies curriculum reflects students' expanding sense of the world: self, family, community, neighborhood, city, country, world. It emphasizes critical thinking, social justice, and tools to become changemakers.
- In our Lower School science lab, students develop critical thinking and inquiry skills, exploring projects that often integrate their work in social studies, literacy, and math.
- We maintain a two-teacher model throughout Lower School which allows for various modes of teaching and learning: individual, small group, half group, and whole class.
- Students have access to many special curricular offerings and specialists including science lab, innovation lab, art studio, library, health education, dance, music, instruments, theater, physical education, and daily recess.
- Social-emotional learning experiences focus on deepening understanding of identity, embracing

differences, navigating friendships, and working toward equity in the school community and beyond the walls of Packer.

- Throughout Lower School, students are encouraged to develop their voice and ideas, as teachers develop dynamic curriculum in response to interest and needs.
- Early morning drop-off and extensive after school options are available, including Chess Team, Robotics, and many more.

Opportunities

We offer a range of opportunities for students to “act with purpose and heart” and to have authentic, immersive experiences with other members of the community.

- The Packer community encourages the active participation of students' families on a daily basis. That might include joining kids for breakfast in the cafeteria or reading books together during morning library time.
- Students regularly make their learning visible, through presentations, publishing parties, skits, and celebrations.

- Lower School teachers lead numerous field trips each year, from the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens to Chinatown, Ellis Island to the Brooklyn Bridge.
- Affinity groups based on race, ethnicity, and family composition continue through the Lower School.
- Student leadership opportunities include: student activism, community engagement efforts, and 4th Grade Student Council.
- Students participate in new and ongoing service projects with neighborhood organizations such as the Arab-American Family Support Center.
- Monthly assemblies focus on celebrating community and honoring important events throughout the year.
- Buddy partnerships between Preschool, Lower School, and Middle School students foster cross-divisional connections.
- Favorite events/projects include Winter Sings, Lenape Celebration, Immigration Celebration, 4th Grade overnight trip to the Ashokan Center, and school-wide events such as the May Day Arts Festival and Pumpkin Patch.



Middle School

5th through 8th Grade

Academic Program

Our Middle School curriculum introduces students to more nuanced ways of understanding the world and themselves. As they engage in more intensive study our faculty support them in developing and refining their academic skills so that learning stays joyful and fulfilling.

- Our Fifth Grade academic program includes year-long classes in instrumental or choral music and physical education as well as a rotation among our four arts classes (Visual Arts, Digital Video, Theater, and Dance) and a semester each of computing and design and health.

- Fifth and Sixth Grade Students are introduced to interdisciplinary study in their humanities core classes, which combine English and history. This approach allows for synthesis of ideas and characteristics from across multiple disciplines.
- Our rigorous math and science curriculum is rooted in inquiry, collaboration, experimentation, and reflection.
- The broad language exploration that begins in 5th Grade is followed by full-time study of Spanish, French, Chinese, or Latin beginning in 6th Grade.
- Our computing and design classes focus on information literacy, creative thinking, and digital citizenship. Students learn coding and get an exposure to a variety of coding languages and techniques.
- Our extensive health education curriculum supports our young adolescents' social-emotional well-being and teaches students skills in decision making, risk assessment, and consent.



Opportunities

We offer a number of opportunities for students to explore their interests both inside and outside of the classroom and feel connected to the larger community.

- Students have the opportunity to select courses based on their personal interests during Spring Session, a two-day symposium. Examples include meditation, architecture, woodworking, and the stock market.
- In all of our arts (Dance, Digital Video, Theater, and Visual Arts) and music (both Choral and Instrumental) classes, we foster both the formal studio/class experience, and the co-curricular experience, in which students share their work in a supportive environment.
- Our theater program begins in 5th Grade, when students experience what it means to work as an ensemble, and progresses throughout Middle School with students learning how to analyze a text while also being able to live 'in the moment' on stage when working creatively off of an acting partner.

- Students have 20 clubs to choose from, including Model Congress, Dungeons and Dragons, and Spectrum (an affinity space for LGBTQ+ students). Middle School clubs are student-initiated and student-led, so the options may change each year.
- Our 10 Middle School athletic teams introduce students to interschool competition while emphasizing teamwork, mutual support, and fun.
- Favorite events/projects include Spirit Squads, peer-bonding games, Field Day and overnight trips for every grade.



Upper School

9th through 12th Grade

Academic Program

Our academic sequence begins with foundational studies, then expands to meet our students' varied interests. Close relationships between students and teachers build a trust that gives students a supportive foundation from which to thrive.

- The Packer Science Department uses a student-centered, inquiry-based approach to teaching science in all grades. In the Upper School, teachers utilize an approach known as Modeling Instruction. With this approach, students build models of scientific understanding by working collaboratively to draw conclusions based on a variety of observations and experiences.

- Our student-centered, inquiry based “physics-first” science program and comprehensive range of math courses focus on developing students’ analytical skills and conceptual understanding.
- The 9th grade humanities program is organized around a study of major literary works and ancient civilizations while the 10th grade courses focus on the *American Experience* from both a historical and literary perspective. In 11th and 12th grade, students choose from a wide range of humanities electives that span genres, cultures, time periods and interdisciplinary studies.
- Our Advanced Topics (AT) program is Packer’s intensive and intentional alternative to Advanced Placement; the wide range of topics includes Trans-Atlantic Slavery, Chinese conversation and culture, and organic chemistry.
- Students can choose from additional upper-level electives that allow them to pursue specialized interests, from astronomy to choreography, and from journalism to design thinking.
- In our optional three-year Independent Science Research Program, students design and conduct



a research project under the guidance of mentor-professors in college and university labs across the city.

- In our Independent Study and Senior Thesis Programs, students can pursue their intellectual passions with guidance from a faculty mentor.

Opportunities

Through clubs, activities, and other programs, students find countless ways to foster their personal interests, develop leadership skills, and feel a sense of belonging in their community.

- Our annual two-week Packer Symposium takes each student on an intellectual journey of their choice (and in Eleventh Grade, on a literal journey, to a range of international destinations, at no additional cost!).
- With well over 60 club and affinity group options, students connect with others who share their passions—from animal conservation to sports analytics, from screenwriting to chemistry.
- Students lead and contribute to vital diversity and equity work that extends beyond our classroom walls including Packer in Action Day,

the Change Committee, and the implementation of restorative practices through our Student-Faculty Justice Committee.

- Our short-term, faculty-led global travel programs have offered service-learning experiences in Cambodia, Cuba, New Orleans, and elsewhere.
- Our programs in the arts are a major force on campus, with theater, music, and dance performances, the senior art show, the Dance Concert, and the Packer Film Festival.
- Our athletics program teaches the value of character, discipline, teamwork, and leadership, and has achieved 32 championships in 15 different sports in recent years.
- Favorite events and projects include the 9th Grade camping trip, Winter Celebration, Spookagrams, Spirit Week, Student-Faculty basketball game, Poetry Celebration, Pajama Day, and Senior Countdown.



After Packer

We recognize our success in the varied contributions of our broad-minded, open-hearted graduates.

Our graduates go to college, yes—often colleges with prestigious reputations. But the priority of our college counselors isn’t finding the biggest names— it’s choosing the right college for the right reasons. They form deep relationships with our students. Their approach focuses on sanity, not stress, and on the importance of building an inspired, sustainable life. When our graduates arrive at college, they are prepared for its rigors and challenges in and out of the classroom.

COLLEGES TO WHICH 5 OR MORE PACKER GRADUATES WERE ADMITTED IN THE PAST 5 YEARS

Barnard College
Bates College
Bowdoin College
Brown University
Carleton College
Colgate University
Colorado College
Cornell University
Duke University
Emory University
Hamilton College
Kenyon College
Lehigh University
Middlebury College
New York University
Northeastern University
Northwestern University
Oberlin College
Pitzer College
Pomona College
Princeton University

Skidmore College
Stanford University
Tufts University
Tulane University
University of California
at Berkeley
University of Chicago
University of Colorado,
Boulder
University of Michigan
University of
Pennsylvania
University of Southern
California
University of St Andrews
Vassar College
Wake Forest University
Washington University
Wesleyan University
Yale University

We would love to hear from you.

Packer’s main entry points are in Pre-K Threes, Kindergarten, and 9th Grade, with limited space potentially available in other grades. We allow applicants to register for our open houses in the fall on a first-come, first-served basis. Our website offers complete information on our application process.

We’re deeply committed to ensuring that Packer is accessible to families from all walks of life. Our financial aid program offers more than \$11 million in tuition grants every year and one quarter of our students receive financial aid benefits.

www.packer.edu/admissions

PRESCHOOL AND LOWER SCHOOL ADMISSIONS
(718) 250-0254

MIDDLE AND UPPER SCHOOL ADMISSIONS
(718) 250-0385

The quotations in this viewbook were taken directly from interviews with members of the Packer community.

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Packer educates students to

think deeply,
listen actively,
speak courageously,
and act with purpose and heart.

THE
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COLLEGIATE
INSTITUTE

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