

## MISSION

Bullis School provides a rich intellectual experience that inspires students to be critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and impactful global citizens. Our student-centered community embraces diversity, honors integrity, and fosters belonging. Meaningful opportunities in academics, arts, athletics, and service stimulate individual and collective growth and enhance joy.

## VALUES

Caring — Challenging — Community

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## LOWER SCHOOL ACADEMIC PROGRAM

**BULLIS**

CARING

CHALLENGING

COMMUNITY





THE BULLIS  
LOWER SCHOOL  
Academic Program  
encourages  
students to explore,  
create, and analyze  
the world around  
them. Through a  
well-integrated  
curriculum,  
Lower School  
students develop  
skills in multiple  
subject areas.  
Teachers actively  
seek ways to  
provide individual  
instruction based  
on student needs  
and interest, finding  
challenging and  
innovative ways  
to stretch student  
learning to meet  
high expectations.

	OVERVIEW
Language Arts	The Bullis Lower School language arts program develops critical thinking skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Beginning with a structured literacy approach in primary grades and transitioning to shared inquiry discussions in the upper grades, students learn to read with purpose. Teachers draw upon a range of resources, from phonics, word study, and grammar analysis to reading and writing workshop models, in order to support students in their individual growth as readers and writers. Skills are taught through authentic, interactive learning experiences using a variety of literature and ultimately help to create a love for reading.
Math	The Bullis Lower School math program centers around fostering a positive and empowered mindset within students as they delve into the core areas of numeracy and computation, algebraic thinking, data, geometry, and measurement. Bullis teachers engage and develop students’ mathematical reasoning as students refine their computational fluency. Activities such as number talks, collaborative critical thinking tasks, meaningful problem-solving, and math games engage students in the learning process.
Science	The Bullis Lower School science program encourages scientific inquiry and exploration. Students question, analyze, and develop scientific concepts in the fields of life, physical, and earth sciences. They develop critical thinking and processing skills, building their proficiency as problem-solvers and decision-makers. Emphasizing the use of inquiry-based methodology and hands-on experiments, students build conceptual knowledge and are encouraged to think like scientists.
Social Studies	The Bullis Lower School social studies program emphasizes the themes of community, social justice, and inclusion. Opportunities beyond the classroom promote skills of active observation, listening, and questioning. Students demonstrate knowledge through writing, creating visuals, and making presentations.
Art	The Bullis Lower School visual arts program guides students in developing an informed appreciation of art and a lifelong interest in learning about art. The program covers four interrelated disciplines: perception, creative expression, culture and heritage, and informed judgment.
Music	The Bullis Lower School music program focuses on presenting the elements of music through various activities, including singing, movement, listening, playing instruments, creating accompaniments, improvising, and composing. Kindergarten through 3 <sup>rd</sup> graders participate in general music while 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grade students choose between band, strings, or choir and theatre. Lower School students perform in two concerts per year: the Festival of Light and the Spring Concert.
Physical Education	The Bullis Lower School focuses on developing physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity through a variety of activities, games, and movements. All students participate in physical education classes where physical well-being and sportsmanship are emphasized.
World Languages	The Bullis Lower School world languages program focuses on developing elementary speaking and listening proficiency in Spanish and on exploring world cultures. The study of Spanish is introduced in kindergarten and offered through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade.

PROGRAMS	
Visual and Performing Arts (VPA)	
Band	Students in 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grades may begin or continue the study of a musical instrument in the brass or woodwind families.
Movement	Movement blends acting, dance, music, and improvisation while providing an excellent introduction for the future study of dance and theatre techniques.
Music Ensemble	Students in Music Ensemble use a variety of classroom instruments to perform ensemble music. Music Ensemble also focuses on choral singing techniques and music literacy through games and concert repertoire.
Strings	Students in 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grades may begin or continue the study of a musical instrument in the string family.
Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)	
Lower School students explore STEM concepts throughout the day. Teachers encourage a hands-on, exploratory-based approach that brings lessons to life and encourages the necessary steps of imagination, experimentation, and communication. Students study engineering, computer science, and robotics alongside the traditional physical, earth, and life sciences and the homeroom-based math curriculum.	
Design Class	Design is a cross-curricular program in which students build and create in various formats, ranging from hands-on construction to robotics and coding. The balance between free exploration and guided design-thinking evolves over the K-5 span. Each homeroom meets regularly in a scheduled design class, but projects are frequently integrated into other academic areas, and the design teacher works with students during homeroom and other subjects.
Entrepreneurship	
The annual 5 <sup>th</sup> -grade Entrepreneurship Fair is the culminating project after a trimester of learning economic and entrepreneurial concepts. First, students are introduced to the design thinking process. Next, teams develop prototypes and pitch their ideas in a “Shark Tank” presentation in front of members of the Bullis administration. Students then work individually to create their own businesses and sell goods or services at the annual Entrepreneurship Fair. The proceeds from the fair are donated to organizations nominated and selected by the 5 <sup>th</sup> grade class.	
Social Emotional Learning and Health	
Bullis Lower School students begin each day with a homeroom Morning Meeting to establish a positive tone and routine. Teachers encourage students to use positive language, to treat mistakes as opportunities to learn, and to reflect on their learning to grow into confident young scholars. Led by the Lower School counselor, students explore the CASEL core competencies—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making—in their Social Emotional Learning (SEL) classes. SEL lessons include identifying and fostering strengths, building self-esteem and resilience, learning vital health information, embracing and respecting diversity, gaining knowledge and strategies for regulating emotions, fostering empathy, learning social skills and social problem-solving, and building character.	