

A Middle School Built for MORE

West End Day School





**A MIDDLE SCHOOL
WHERE MORE
IS POSSIBLE.**

WEDS

For **FORTY YEARS**, we've watched our elementary students learn, grow, and thrive at our More Than a School. We've been proud to offer our students the essential building blocks they need as they move on to older grades and their lives beyond the classroom: a love of learning, emotional support, social confidence, self-understanding and self-advocacy skills, and game-changing executive functioning tools.

But we've learned over the years—and heard from parents and students alike—that more is better. So we set our sights on the middle school years, a time when students go through significant neurological changes that affect their emotions, cognition, and behavior. The compassion and customized curriculum we provide are still needed—perhaps even more so—during this time.

From that need, our middle school was created. A school program built to give students more of the support and individualized learning they need before they transition into high school. **A middle school where no student “falls between the cracks,” feels lost, or is forced to sink or swim.** A middle school where thriving is the norm and falling behind falls away. A middle school where more is possible.

Learn MORE about the WEDS Middle School curriculum.

Our middle school curriculum is designed to cultivate both academic excellence and independence. We emphasize the development of executive functioning skills that enable students to manage their workloads, stay organized, and approach challenges with confidence. Through personalized support and a focus on social-emotional growth, we prepare students to take ownership of their learning.

more than
a school



STEM

Our STEM program centers on inquiry-based learning in which students explore scientific and mathematical concepts—cell theory, evolution, geology, and engineering design, to name a few—through collaborative, hands-on projects. Designed to develop their critical thinking skills, these projects and experiments sharpen students' ability to ask questions, analyze data, and apply science and engineering practices.



LITERACY

Our literacy program encourages students to engage with novels and advanced texts that align with their personal interests, building confidence—and joy in reading!—through structured guidance. Students develop strategies to identify key themes, analyze plot structures, and evaluate texts critically. By mastering skills like inferencing, predicting outcomes, and analyzing cause and effect, students gain independence in their reading.

WRITING

Our writing program follows the Basic Writing Skills Curriculum, emphasizing clear communication and well-structured compositions. Students learn to develop strong thesis statements, write summaries, and critique texts effectively. As they progress, they strengthen their ability to support arguments with evidence and organize their ideas logically. Our structured approach empowers students to become more independent in their writing, helping them tackle more complex tasks with confidence and clarity.

MATH

Middle school is a transformative time when students have the opportunity to build a strong foundation in math and develop a positive mindset about their abilities. Our Math & YOU curriculum fosters a love for the subject by connecting concepts to students' everyday lives and progressing at each student's individual pace. The program also emphasizes executive functioning skills by taking a step-by-step approach to problem-solving, with increased independence over time. Students learn how to break down problems, stay organized, and approach complex concepts with confidence, preparing them for continued success in math and beyond.



HISTORY

In our history program, students explore the fascinating narratives of the United States and New York State, studying everything from Native American cultures to the evolution of the U.S. Constitution. Through inquiry-based projects, students practice their planning and organization skills while learning to think critically about historical events. Engaging with topics like the American Revolution and Civil War, students are encouraged to think independently and make connections between past events and contemporary issues.

Every aspect of our program is designed to empower students with the skills and confidence to thrive as independent, lifelong learners.



TECHNOLOGY

In our technology enrichment program, students delve into the fields of computing, art, and engineering. We enhance the science curriculum by providing hands-on experiences that allow students to apply the concepts they're learning through creative design. Using the engineering design process, students explore a variety of topics, including computer science, robotics, circuits, graphic design, computer ethics, and more.



COUNSELING AND ADVISORY GROUPS

At West End Day School, we understand that adolescence is a critical period of development. Our middle school students continue to receive **individual counseling**, tailored specifically to meet the needs of this transformative stage. Each student has a trusted counselor they can turn to, providing consistent support as they navigate the complexities of adolescence. We also know how influential peer relationships become during the middle school years, and we utilize smaller social groups to support managing conflicts and build genuine relationships among peers.

At this age, counseling can focus solely on the adolescent, yet we remain committed to supporting the entire family. We continue to offer regular **parent-counselor meetings**, recognizing that parents also need guidance and understanding during this time of change.

Our **advisory groups** offer a safe and supportive space for our oldest students. Led by experienced counselors, these groups encourage students to explore self-awareness and build confidence as they prepare for life beyond middle school. Advisory Groups promote open dialogue, helping students learn to respect differing opinions and manage disagreements with empathy and tolerance.

Our collaborative environment fosters personal growth and equips students with the social-emotional tools they need for success in the years ahead.



FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

We believe that our middle school students should be well-rounded global citizens. Our Spanish language instruction provides a strong foundation for introducing students to world languages. Our aim is to empower students not only with core vocabulary and functional phrases for real-world communication but also with rich cultural knowledge, incorporating topics like geography, literature, music, fine arts, food, and other engaging aspects of global cultures. This approach helps students connect language learning with a deeper understanding of the world around them.



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EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

Targeted support for executive functioning is vital during middle school. The adolescent brain is undergoing rapid growth, particularly in the prefrontal cortex, the area responsible for executive functioning. While this development is promising, it also means students are still learning how to manage impulses, plan ahead, and stay focused. Structured support during this period of increased academic demands and peer influence accelerates their progress.

Each class works closely with a speech-language pathologist to learn how to break down long-term projects into manageable components and to monitor their progress as they advance through assignments. Additionally, we focus on increasing metacognitive awareness, meaning that students continuously reflect on their own learning and what is most successful for them in a classroom setting. There are also ongoing opportunities for direct instruction in studying, test taking, following rubrics, and implementing organizational systems.

Finally, we firmly believe in encouraging our oldest learners to continue to develop strong advocacy skills, and we work closely with our counseling team with that goal in mind.



ELECTIVES AND CLUBS

Our middle school program offers a diverse range of electives and clubs that allow students to pursue their passions, explore new hobbies, and connect with peers who have similar interests. Options include chess, engineering, music, theater, and arts. Plus, we are always excited to respond to the fascinating interests of our dynamic students!

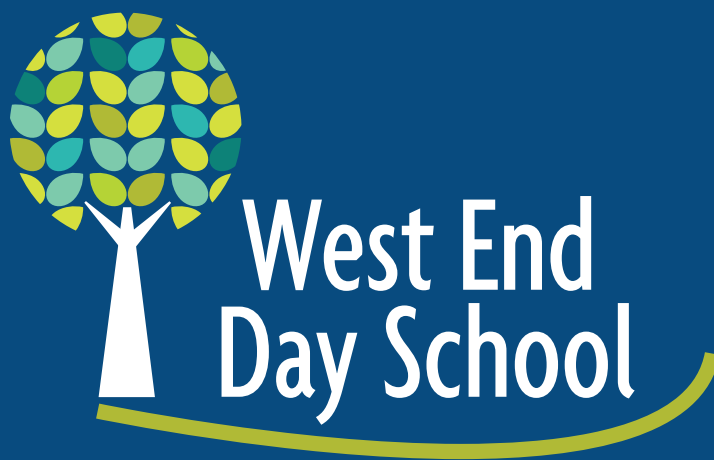


And MORE...

Middle school at West End Day School is filled with opportunities that expand horizons and build independence. Our 7th and 8th graders take part in day and overnight trips, where they engage in local adventures that foster friendship, teamwork, and curiosity, with immersive experiences that encourage friendship and personal growth. Lunch outings start with supervision, guiding students in planning and making choices, with the goal of our 8th graders confidently enjoying lunch independently. These experiences develop essential life skills, preparing our students for the next steps in their journey.

Want to learn more?

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