

SAN DOMENICO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Room to Explore



Facts at a Glance

176 years of excellence — continually evolving to meet the needs of today's learners



515-acre campus — garden, hiking and biking trails, and room to explore

2 world languages — Mandarin and Spanish offered to all Middle School students

35 after-school enrichment classes offered each year

Zero additional fees for bus transportation and lunch — included in tuition for every student

Hot Chocolate **Fridays** — a beloved weekly tradition

5,000+ Head of School high-fives shared annually at morning bus drop-off

Countless bowls of homemade soup served each week

680 K-12 students (161 in Middle School)

Ranked #4 in the world in sustainability by the Green Schools Alliance annual assessment

Millions of dollars in tuition assistance awarded every year

38 species of friendly animals spotted by students on campus

1-acre organic garden with outdoor kitchen, classroom, greenhouse, and performance space





Rooted for the Future

Middle School is a time of remarkable transformation. Since 1850, San Domenico has guided students through these pivotal years with an education designed to support intellectual growth, personal discovery, and growing independence. As California's longest-standing independent school, we continue to evolve our programs to meet the changing needs of adolescents while remaining grounded in enduring values that help students navigate an increasingly complex world.

At San Domenico, we believe growth happens when students are challenged, supported, and encouraged to stretch beyond their comfort zones. Through engaging academics, meaningful mentorship, creative exploration, and strong community connections, students develop resilience, confidence, and a deeper understanding of themselves and others.

Academic achievement is only part of the journey. We also help students cultivate empathy, integrity, and a sense of responsibility toward the world around them. As they grow into thoughtful learners and emerging leaders, students begin discovering not only what they are capable of achieving, but who they want to become.

This is what it means to be Rooted for the Future.

Our Core Values

For nearly two centuries, our timeless values have remained embedded in every aspect of the SD student journey—empowering generations with a framework for navigating challenges and a deeper awareness of the world beyond themselves.

STUDY:
Pursuing deep understanding through curiosity, thoughtful inquiry, and engagement with diverse perspectives.

REFLECTION:
Taking time to think—learning from experience and discerning what is true, valuable, and worth pursuing.

COMMUNITY:
Fostering an inclusive, supportive environment where everyone feels respected, valued, and a joyful sense of belonging.

SERVICE:
Acting with purpose to uplift others, advance justice, and improve the world beyond ourselves.



Guided by these values, we create an environment where students learn to try new things, to spread their wings and stretch their limits, to live with purpose—rooted for the future.





The K-12 Advantage



Consistent Values and Confidence

San Domenico's sequential K-12 structure provides a supportive, values-driven environment where students develop confidence, feel known and valued by the community, and are encouraged to take healthy risks as they grow academically and personally.



Leadership and Mentorship Opportunities

Bringing students of all ages together on one joyful campus creates natural mentorship opportunities. Older students gain leadership skills and empathy by guiding younger peers, while younger students draw inspiration from their role models.



Seamless Transitions and Personal Growth

Eliminating stressful school transitions allows students to confidently explore expanding opportunities. They thrive within a familiar, supportive environment, seamlessly accessing enhanced programs and experiences at each stage of their educational journey.



A Lifelong Sense of Community

The shared K-12 journey cultivates a deep sense of belonging. Students graduate equipped with strong community ties, integrity, kindness, and a lasting commitment to service, preparing them to positively impact the world.



A Campus Designed to Inspire

Set on 515 picturesque acres of open space, San Domenico's campus offers a college-like atmosphere, blending state-of-the-art facilities with expansive natural beauty, including miles of hiking and biking trails, lush woodlands, and stunning ridgetop vistas. Distractions fade as students settle into a peaceful environment that invites them to stop, think, and immerse themselves deeply in their studies.

From high school science labs analyzing creek water samples to seventh graders tending vegetables in the Garden of Hope to fourth graders hiking through the woods to refresh their minds and bodies, our campus provides unmatched opportunities for experiential learning.

This environment nurtures curiosity, promotes well-being, and strengthens each student's connection to nature and community.





Academics

Middle School is a time of transformation—and at San Domenico, we embrace it. Our program is built around the belief that adolescence is not something to get through, but a time to grow into who you are becoming. We design every learning experience to meet students where they are, challenge them with purpose, and support them as they stretch, question, and discover. With a focus on curiosity, connection, and confidence, our students are equipped with the skills and mindset to thrive in high school and in life.

Academics:

English

In Middle School English, students grow into analytical, expressive, and purposeful communicators. Building on foundational reading and writing skills, they explore how authors use language—word choice, tone, structure—to convey meaning and emotion. They learn to read beyond the surface, uncovering nuance, purpose, and perspective. Writing instruction focuses on crafting clear, structured, and compelling narratives, arguments, and informational essays. With an emphasis on audience awareness and writing with intent, students learn to organize their ideas, refine their voice, and express themselves with clarity and confidence. The goal is preparation not only for high school English, but for a lifetime of thoughtful reading and powerful writing.



Academics: Mathematics

San Domenico's Middle School math program nurtures confident, capable problem-solvers through a rigorous curriculum rooted in conceptual understanding. Beginning with Advanced Math 6 and progressing through Pre-Algebra and Algebra, students develop deep fluency in mathematical thinking. Students ready for additional challenges may advance into Honors Geometry. Lessons emphasize real-world applications and STEM connections, helping students see the relevance of math in everyday life. Inspired by growth mindset principles and supported by innovative methods like Building Thinking Classrooms and Problem-Based Learning, our program encourages collaboration, curiosity, and persistence. By focusing on understanding rather than memorization, we foster a lifelong appreciation for math as a tool for exploration and critical thinking.



Academics:

History

In Middle School History, students make meaningful connections between the past and their own lives. Through relevant projects, service learning, and immersive experiences, they explore how historical events have shaped—and continue to influence—our world. Sixth graders delve into ancient civilizations, examining enduring cultural legacies and the human characteristics that have shaped societies across time. Seventh graders study global medieval history, investigating everything from Aztec agriculture to the linguistic impact of the Battle of Hastings. Eighth graders focus on U.S. History and civics, diving deep into the Constitution and its real-world implications. An eighth-grade service-learning project encourages students to become engaged citizens, with the program culminating in a trip to Washington, D.C. Across all grades, history becomes a living subject: relevant, reflective, and empowering.



Academics:

Science

Science at San Domenico is rooted in relevance, and our vibrant curriculum encourages students to connect scientific concepts with real-world challenges that matter to them. Whether investigating climate systems, exploring genetics, or engineering biomedical solutions, students engage in hands-on experiments, collaborative projects, and inquiry-based learning. In seventh grade, students step up as leaders by spearheading green projects across campus. By teaching peers about recycling, or gathering and analyzing campus food waste data, students find their voices and build confidence while tackling real-world challenges. Science courses are structured around anchoring phenomena that spark curiosity and provide context for deeper exploration. With topics ranging from Earth's weather systems to chemical reactions to the solar system, students build a broad foundation across life, Earth, and physical sciences. By learning to ask why—and discovering how to find answers—students develop both scientific literacy and a lifelong interest in understanding the world around them.



Academics: Languages

Our Middle School language program immerses students in their choice of Spanish or Mandarin, guiding them through a dynamic, confidence-building progression. In sixth grade, students build foundational skills through engaging, interactive experiences—role-plays, songs, games, and cultural projects—that spark joy and curiosity. In seventh and eighth grade, they expand their communication skills through storytelling, presentations, and original written work. Throughout, students explore the people, traditions, and perspectives behind each language, fostering global awareness alongside language acquisition. Classes are taught primarily in the target language to build fluency and prepare students for authentic communication in real-world contexts.



Academics:

Philosophy, Ethics, and World Religions

In our Philosophy, Ethics, and World Religions (PEWR) course, students engage with the wisdom traditions of the world while developing their own beliefs, values, and sense of purpose. Through experiential learning—like tasting a Passover meal, building a Buddhist sand mandala, or taking a Taoist-inspired nature walk—students explore Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. More than a comparative religion class, PEWR encourages students to reflect deeply on what they believe, how they find meaning, and how they want to live. This signature program builds empathy, curiosity, and thoughtful self-awareness.





Academics: Character Development

Character Development is woven throughout Middle School life, reinforcing the social-emotional growth that supports academic success and personal well-being. Students meet biweekly with the Middle School counselor and in advisory groups, where they build relationships with trusted faculty and peers, set goals, and develop executive functioning and time-management skills. Through dedicated social-emotional learning (SEL) lessons, students strengthen self-awareness, emotional regulation, stress management, communication, and decision-making. In eighth grade, our Navigator curriculum teaches students relevant life skills, such as personal finance, effective communication, self-advocacy, and self-management. Together, these supports help students develop resilience, confidence, and a deeper understanding of themselves and others.



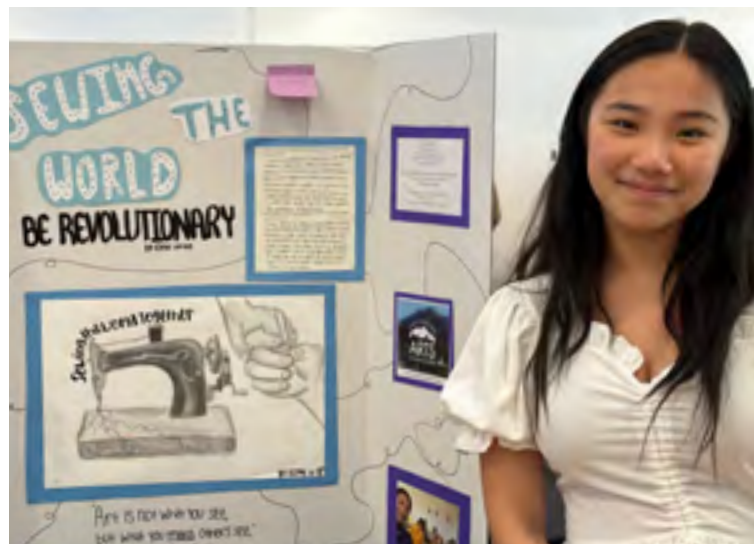
Academics: Learning Support

San Domenico's Learning Support program ensures that all students have the tools they need to thrive. Our learning specialist partners with teachers and families to provide tailored support, ranging from executive functioning strategies and metacognition coaching to small-group instruction in core subjects. Students learn how to self-advocate, manage their workload, and understand their own learning styles. When needed, the team also helps families navigate the evaluation process for learning differences. Whether a student needs short-term guidance or long-term support, our approach promotes confidence, independence, and academic growth.

Academics: Electives

Middle School students enjoy the opportunity to pursue their passions and try new things through a robust elective program. Students choose from a wide variety of semester and yearlong offerings designed to spark curiosity and build new skills in areas such as ceramics, yearbook, journalism, cooking in the garden, digital music, or photography. Eco-Serve, one of our most popular elective courses, combines environmental learning with community action, encouraging students to think globally and act locally.

No matter the subject, electives give students the chance to stretch creatively, explore new interests, and take ownership of their learning.



SERVICE: From Understanding to Action

At San Domenico, service learning is woven into the student journey from kindergarten through 12th grade. Students do not simply complete service projects; they explore real-world issues, investigate causes and solutions, reflect on their responsibilities to others, and take meaningful action connected directly to their learning. As students grow, so does the depth of their engagement: Lower School students build awareness and empathy; Middle School students develop understanding and agency; and Upper School students increasingly design, lead, and sustain initiatives of their own.

Throughout Middle School, with the support of teachers, advisors, and the K-12 Director of Service Education, students deepen their understanding of social and environmental issues while learning how to build community through service. Through workshops, collaborative projects, and leadership opportunities connected to larger schoolwide initiatives, students practice communication, teamwork, reflection, and project planning. As they grow, students take on increasing responsibility in designing and leading meaningful experiences that strengthen connections within both the school and the broader community.

These experiences intentionally prepare students for the independence, leadership, and engagement required for their Eighth Grade Capstone project. With school-sponsored and individually chosen projects, students employ their newly developed agency to identify a problem in their community, consider potential solutions, volunteer in service, and present their work to the school community. Along the way, students gain insight into the impact of their actions and come to see service as a source of meaning, connection, and leadership.

Arts

San Domenico’s Middle School arts program offers every student the chance to explore, perform, and create across four dynamic disciplines: ***music, dance, theatre,*** and ***visual arts.*** Across all areas, students are encouraged to try new things, take creative risks, and share their voices with the world.

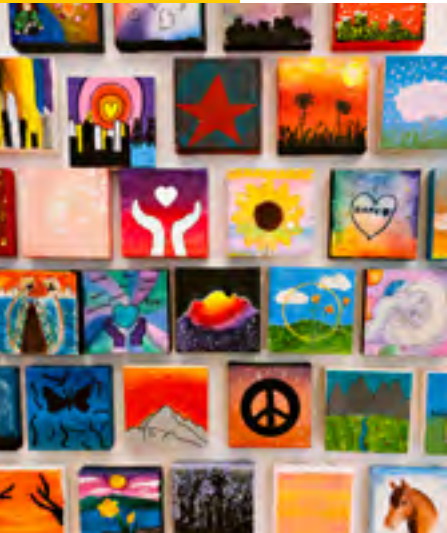
In music, students of all levels may participate in ensemble classes—chorus, band, guitar, or strings—building technical skills and confidence through collaboration and performance in our dedicated music conservatory space.



Our dance program, taught by professional dancers, blends styles like ballet, jazz, and hip-hop, culminating in annual showcases and additional performance opportunities.



Theatre classes spark creativity through acting, improvisation, and behind-the-scenes tech work, with the Middle School musical serving as a beloved community highlight.



In visual arts, students explore diverse materials and global inspirations, connecting creativity with self-expression and interdisciplinary learning, and exhibit their work in an annual year-end showcase.

Physical Education and Athletics

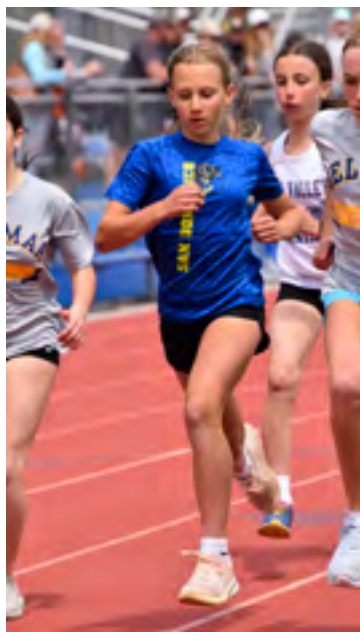
Our Middle School PE program promotes wellness, teamwork, and a lifelong love of movement. Students participate multiple times per week in a diverse range of activities—from tennis, swimming, and dance to trail hikes, fitness games, and relay races. Advanced tennis players enrolled in the Mouratoglou Tennis Academy receive instruction integrated into the school day. PE curriculum emphasizes skill-building, resilience, and joyful participation, creating an inclusive environment where every student can grow. This comprehensive program also gives students the opportunity to work directly with our top-tier varsity high school coaches, and perfectly complements our Middle School after-school athletics program, which includes basketball, cross-country, golf, flag football, mountain biking, soccer, tennis, track and field, and volleyball. Whether on the court or in the pool, students are encouraged to challenge themselves, support one another, and have fun.





After-School

San Domenico's after-school programs offer students an extensive mix of enrichment, creativity, and connection. Athletic teams—including basketball, cross-country, golf, flag football, mountain biking, soccer, tennis, track and field, and volleyball—give students the opportunity to stay active, build skills, and grow as teammates. Panther After School Enrichment (PASE) expands the fun with offerings like cooking, ceramics, mock trial, robotics, role-playing games, and more—encouraging students to explore new interests or dive deeper into existing passions. Additional opportunities, such as theatre productions, math lab, and private music lessons, support academic growth and creative expression. Whether on the court, on the stage, or in the studio, students discover joy in learning beyond the classroom.



Day in the Life

At San Domenico, no two days are exactly the same—and that’s by design. Our Middle School uses a rotating schedule to promote balance, engagement, and deeper learning by varying when each class meets throughout the week. This also helps students build strong relationships with teachers and develop the time management skills they’ll need in high school and beyond.

8:10 am – Welcome!

After arriving on any of our seven bus routes (included in tuition), your day starts with Morning Meeting or Advisory—a quick check-in to ground yourself, connect with your classmates, and set a positive tone for the day ahead.



8:15 am

Deep Work, Big Ideas

First class of the day. Maybe it’s Algebra, where you’re learning how to solve real-world problems. Or maybe it’s English, where a lively discussion about your latest novel is underway.



9:08 am

Try Something New

Next up: an elective or arts class. Head to the ceramics studio to finish your coil pot, dive into guitar practice with your bandmates, or stretch it out in dance class. These are the moments where you explore, create, and try something outside your comfort zone.

9:58 am – Soup Break

Time to refuel with an SD tradition. Today’s soup might be tomato basil, miso, or a surprise favorite. Grab a bowl, hang out with friends, and enjoy this delicious break built right into your day.



10:12 am

Move Your Body

Now it’s time for PE. You might be swimming laps, running relays on Kesterson Field, or learning new footwork on the basketball court. No matter what, you’ll get your heart pumping and your energy flowing.

11:05 am

Think and Reflect



Back in the classroom for a session on science, history, or world religions. Whether you’re designing a lab investigation or discussing global belief systems, you’re learning how to ask questions and think deeply.



11:55 am

Lunch with a View

Enjoy a fresh, healthy lunch (included in tuition!) with options for all appetites—including vegetarians. Sit outside with friends or catch up with a teacher—lunch is as social as it is satisfying.

12:38 pm

Expand Your Skills

After lunch, you might be in a language class practicing Spanish or Mandarin conversation, or in Study Hall working with a teacher one-on-one. Afternoons are varied, focused, and built around helping you grow.



1:31 pm

Create and Collaborate

Enhance your day with a hands-on visual arts project, a personal finance simulator game, or a class discussion on philosophy and ethics. No two afternoons are ever quite the same.



2:24 pm

End on a High Note

Your last class of the day could be anything from math to advisory to a community gathering. Whether you’re learning something new or coming together with classmates, it’s a chance to finish your day with connection, creativity, and purpose.

After-School Fun

Your day doesn’t stop at dismissal. Head to theatre rehearsal, compete with your team in cross-country or volleyball, stay for Math Lab, or take a music lesson. After-school programs align with our late bus schedule, so exploring your passions is always within reach.





High School Bound

By the time they complete eighth grade, San Domenico students are ready for new challenges. They've developed strong academic skills, including analytical thinking, quantitative reasoning, confident writing, and thoughtful communication. Just as importantly, they've grown into independent learners and self-advocates, eager to take on leadership roles and explore their sense of purpose.

Our Upper School builds on that foundation with advanced coursework (including Advanced Placement courses), distinctive interdisciplinary programs, and a diverse, global student body representing more than 20 passport nationalities. It's a place where students are challenged, supported, and inspired to grow.

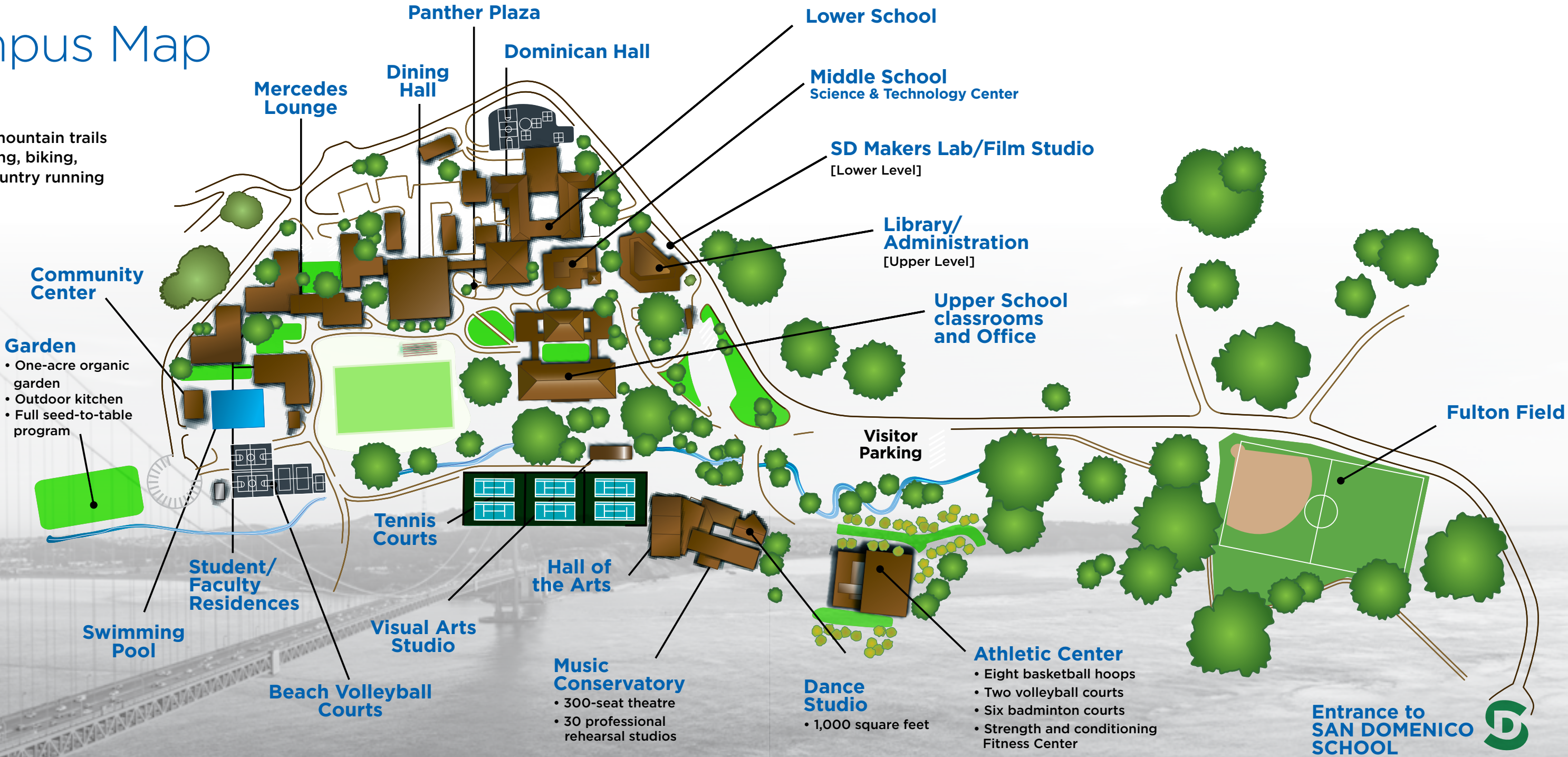
As students move through high school, they're assisted by a personalized, relationship-based college counseling program that begins with reflection and grows into intentional planning. We believe the best college fit is where each student can thrive—academically, socially, and personally. Each year, our students are admitted to exceptional colleges and universities, including highly selective programs in biomedical engineering, film, public policy, fine arts, and computer science. Success is not about name recognition, but about alignment with purpose.

With the foundation built in Middle School—academically, socially, and emotionally—San Domenico students rise into high school ready to define their goals, pursue their interests, and make a meaningful impact.



Campus Map

20 miles of mountain trails
ideal for hiking, biking,
and cross-country running





SAN DOMENICO SCHOOL

1500 Butterfield Road, San Anselmo, CA 94960

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San Domenico school admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

