

MUSIC LATIN
ANCIENT WORLD HISTORY
ENGLISH
PHYSICAL EDUCATION
TECHNOLOGY
DRAMA AMERICAN HISTORY
LIFE SKILLS
FRENCH SPANISH CHINESE
SCIENCE LIBRARY
GEOGRAPHY
DANCE
ART MATH CHORUS

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Dear Parents and Students,

Thank you for your interest in the Middle School at Roland Park Country School. We are very proud of our program and the experiences our students have as they journey from girls to young women in our care.

This curriculum guide was developed to give you an overview of our academic and co-curricular offerings.

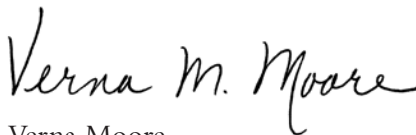
I know your decision about finding the best school for your family will involve a careful weighing of many different considerations. Please don't hesitate to follow up your visit by contacting the Admissions Office or me with further thoughts or questions.

I hope I will have a chance to meet you at some point during the Admissions process. Have a wonderful visit in the Middle School!

Sample Middle School Schedule:

8:05–8:20 am	Advisory (odd days); Middle School meeting (even days)
8:25–10:35 am	Three short classes or one long and one short class
10:35–10:50 am	Break
10:50 am–12:15 pm	Two short classes or one long class
12:20–12:50 pm	Lunch
12:55–2:20 pm	Two short classes or one long class
2:30 pm	Class, chorus, study hall, academic help, or athletics
3:15–3:30 pm	Advisory/GYTT (Get Yourself Together Time)
3:30 pm	Dismissal, athletics, activities, or supervised study hall

Sincerely,



Verna Moore
Middle School Head



To minimize our environmental impact, this brochure was printed on paper manufactured from 100% post consumer recycled fibers that uses Green-e Certified renewable energy.

Middle School Mission Statement

During the Middle School years, students experience intellectual, physical, social, and emotional growth at an extraordinary pace. The combination of a core advisory system and a challenging academic program encourages the Middle School students at Roland Park Country School to become increasingly independent adolescents and learners within a safe and supportive environment.

In the Middle School, a rigorous curriculum, enhanced by the integration of technology, focuses on mastery of content as well as the development of skills of inquiry and communication. Students foster respect for themselves and others through numerous opportunities for cooperative learning, community service, and leadership both in and out of the classroom. The Middle School has an array of co-curricular and extracurricular activities which permit students to explore their interests and talents.

Our standards of respect, honesty, and encouragement help students to build self-confidence and to make good choices. Students learn to be more responsible individuals, members of our School community, and citizens of the world.

Code of Conduct

“Rejoicing in our efforts, all members of the community strive to be the best they can be. While embracing individual differences and showing compassion, we help each other make good choices and learn from our mistakes. We also understand that the well-being of the community must, at times, come before the desires of the individual.”

—From the Middle School Code of Conduct Review Committee Report, 2004-2005

We demonstrate integrity in all that we do related to our community.

Specifically, we practice:

**Respect for ourselves, others,
and RPCS at all times**

Honesty in all that we say and do

Encouragement of differing voices

Middle School Curriculum

The Middle School Curriculum is an intellectually challenging, developmentally based program designed to meet the needs of early adolescent girls. Although the Middle School is organized by department, faculty work together on grade level “teams” to monitor student progress, to coordinate the teaching of skills, and to build upon interdisciplinary connections throughout the program. The result is a cohesive “three-year plan” that seeks to bridge the transition from concrete to abstract study, from little girl to young woman.

Our school day is designed so that students meet in advisories at the beginning and end of the day. There is a mid-morning break and a common lunch time. We use a 10-day cycle. Class periods are either 40 minutes long or 85 minutes long. Most students have several study halls per cycle.

Some extracurricular activities, such as Clubs, Organizations, and Chorus, as well as sixth grade team practices, are incorporated into the school day. Team sports for seventh and eighth grades, after-school enrichment activities, and rehearsals for the Middle School Musical take place after school.

Curriculum Grades 6–8

GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
CORE CLASSES		
Math English Geography Science	Math English American History Science	Math English Ancient World History Science
FOREIGN LANGUAGES		
French IB Spanish IB	French IA French IIA Spanish IIA Chinese	French IB French IIB Spanish IIB Latin I Chinese
SUPPORT CLASSES		
Content Area Support Lab Math Support Lab Language Support Lab	Content Area Support Lab Math Support Lab	
<p>VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS <i>These classes meet three days out of ten in grades six and seven. Eighth graders choose two arts electives, which meet five days out of ten for a semester.</i></p>		
Art Drama Music Dance	Art Drama Music Dance	Electives in Art, Drama, Music, and Dance
<p>PHYSICAL EDUCATION <i>All students have physical education classes five days out of ten.</i></p>		
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
ADDITIONAL CLASSES		
Technology Library Skills Life Skills	Technology Library Skills Life Skills	Technology Library Skills Life Skills

Advisory

In each grade a team of core teachers shares responsibility for teaching and mentoring the girls by serving as advisors. Each student is assigned to an advisory group of about ten to twelve students, and this group becomes her “home base” for support and community. The advisor’s job is to be the primary advocate for his or her advisees, getting to know them both personally and academically, helping them with organization and study skills, communicating with parents on conference day and at other times as needed, and facilitating each girl’s growth towards independence.

Each year, advisors help students in two particular ways. First, the advisor is the one who will get to know the student most closely over the course of the year. He or she will help with problems and give advice about both academic and social concerns. In eighth grade, the advisors will also meet with students and parents to discuss the plan of courses for the Upper School years. Second, the advisor serves as a contact person for parents. Parent-advisor conferences are scheduled twice a year, in the fall and the spring. In addition, parents may contact the advisor if they have concerns or to request a conference at any other time during the year.

Mathematics

The mathematics program at Roland Park Country School is an interactive, investigation-driven mathematics curriculum that strives to meet the needs of all students at all levels of instruction.

GRADE 6

Students build a thorough understanding of fractions, decimals, and percents and the relationships among these representations of rational numbers. They develop and apply algorithms for fraction operations, and review methods for finding products and quotients of decimals. In geometry, the focus is on two dimensions: students learn terminology and basic properties associated with polygons and develop formulas for area and perimeter of a variety of two-dimensional figures, including circles. Students begin to investigate the elements of algebra as they sketch and interpret qualitative graphs that describe real-world situations, and as they write and evaluate one-variable expressions, leading to the solving of simple equations.

GRADE 7

Seventh grade mathematics is a course designed to build on the concepts discovered in sixth grade math and prepare students for the mathematics studied in eighth grade. Throughout the course, basic mathematical and problem-solving skills are emphasized while preparing for the skills needed in algebra. Probability, data analysis, and statistics concepts are explored

through discussions and activities. Students begin to investigate the elements of algebra as they examine operations with signed numbers and linear relationships through graphs and tables. While studying linear relationships, students sketch and interpret graphs that describe real-world situations. They also write and evaluate variable expressions, leading to the solving of simple equations. A look at geometric concepts allows students to experience visualizing three-dimensional structures while they explore the concepts of surface area and volume.

GRADE 8

An integrated curriculum of algebra and geometry, the eighth grade mathematics course studies various types of relations and functions. We begin the year with a study of proportional reasoning and move into an intense study of linear relationships, graphs, and equations. We work hard to establish the links between a real-world situation, an equation that can be generated from that situation, the table of values that are solutions of that equation, and the graph of those coordinates. Students learn to graph both on paper and using the TI-84 graphing calculator. We then move on through a study of exponent rules and exponential growth models. Later, we study inequalities and systems of linear equations, and we wrap up the year with a look at quadratic equations. Along the way, basic geometric concepts, such as classifications of triangles and quadrilaterals, parallel line theorems, and similarity and congruence, are investigated.

English

GRADE 6

Sixth grade English instills in students a life-long love of words. Reading, writing, and the study of grammar strengthen and enhance students’ appreciation of the English language and their respect for fine literature. Major works include *Cheaper by the Dozen*, Newbery Award-winning *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, Nye’s *Habibi*, and Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The literature reflects a diversity of cultural as well as personal experiences. With writing instruction, emphasis is placed on revision and editing as important, necessary, and standard steps in the writing process. Students practice clear, coherent writing in a variety of written assignments. They are guided through first and second drafts, producing final copies which become part of their year-end portfolios.

GRADE 7

The curriculum is centered on a theme of courage and standing up for what is right and true. Students will read great literature, which can be discussed on a cross-curricular basis with the students’ history and science studies. Works include Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Erich Maria Remarque’s *All Quiet on the*

Western Front, Jerome Lawrence and Robert Lee's *Inherit the Wind*, and Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. In addition, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, short stories, poetry by women poets, and creative essays will be used to provide a broad spectrum of themes and perspectives. Students will produce their own works in the form of projects, presentations, and various forms of writing, both creative and expository. The course will continue the use of the writing process with students focusing on analytical skills and working toward an ability to create and support an argument through the use of quotes and examples taken from the text. Throughout the year students will work on various grammatical skills using sentence diagramming, various texts, and online interactive grammar tools.

GRADE 8

The literature studied includes works from a variety of genres. Texts include: Suzanne Fisher Staples' *Shabanu*, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*, Hiltgunt Zassenhaus's *Walls*, and selected short stories and poetry. The literature is explored through analytical writing, journal writing, and discussion. The focus in writing and discussion is on supporting one's ideas with specifics from the text. The students also have a number of opportunities to explore their own lives and interests through creative writing assignments that stem from the study of literature. Vocabulary and grammar studies supplement the literature choices. The importance of the writing process is stressed throughout the year, and students are able to evaluate their growth as writers through reflection upon and revision of their work.

History

GRADE 6: GEOGRAPHY

The sixth grade course strives to build geographic literacy. Students acquire a geographic vocabulary, utilize and improve map skills, gain knowledge about places and people around the world, and communicate that knowledge through writing. Key topics include Earth's basic life support systems and the use of resources, demographics, and culture. Special area studies include Africa and India. Textbooks, news articles, literature (including the novel *Homeless Bird* by Gloria Whelan), and Internet sources are used. Special projects support the annual celebration of National Geography Awareness Week.

GRADE 7: UNITED STATES HISTORY

The seventh grade U.S. History course begins with an exploration of the people who made up this nation and how the country was physically pieced together. We explore various factors that have shaped our nation: America's independence, the meaning of freedom and quality, the growth and progressions of the nation, the

issue of power (federal and state)—who has it and what do people do with it? An evaluation of the foundations of American government is followed by a study of the way in which the government works today and its importance in our lives. Analyzing the causes of the Civil War provides an opportunity for the students to understand how the entire system could break apart. Westward expansion and its effects are then examined in both rural and urban environments along with its relationship to progressivism. Finally, we examine the twentieth century and the way in which the U.S. deals with major domestic issues: the Great Depression, McCarthyism, Civil Rights Movements, and anti-war movements, as well as foreign issues, including WWI, WWII, the Cold War, and Vietnam.

GRADE 8: ANCIENT WORLD HISTORY

In the eighth grade students explore history from the emergence of the earliest river valley civilizations in Sumer and Egypt to the flowering of cultures in Greece, Rome, and China. Topics of close examination include the evolution and nature of government; the development of major world religions; the relationship between empires and the conquered; and the literary, philosophical, and scientific contributions of diverse cultures. The content provides a useful grounding for the students' work in eighth grade English, where *The Odyssey* and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* are studied. The course also provides an opportunity for those students who take eighth grade Latin to supplement their understanding of classical mythology and Roman culture. Critical thinking, note-taking, research, and writing skills are all emphasized. In addition to short essays, group projects, and oral presentations, students will complete a research paper on a topic in Greek history.

Science

In the Middle School, science is taught through activity- and inquiry-based learning. Students are asked to learn science by engaging their hands and their minds. Students learn scientific process skills as part of their course each year. By doing science activities and then thinking about the results, students learn the why's and how's, not just the what's and when's. Ultimately they learn to see science as a system for making sense of the world. At all times concepts and skill development are emphasized over memorization of facts. The common thread throughout the three years is the emphasis on doing science.

At all times, students learn a balance of physical, biological, earth, space, and environmental science topics. Too often students view science as a series of separate disciplines—chemistry, biology, astronomy, geology, and so on. Each discipline is called into play as needed in

covering a main concept or theme. In the Middle School science program, these disciplines are integrated throughout each year. In this way, science disciplines are woven together so that the emphasis is on student comprehension of the “big picture” rather than on isolated components of the different areas of science. We use themes to create a framework for the unification of the disciplines. Students learn that seemingly different processes, structures, or systems can be shown to have underlying similarities.

A constructivist learning model is used in Middle School science. In this model students “construct” an understanding of concepts step by step. Students begin by identifying what they already know about a topic. Misconceptions are identified. Next, students do hands-on activities to experience the subject matter directly. The new experiences cause them to revise their previous mental model, make decisions about a course of action, and identify new questions to explore.

GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
Planetary Science: The Earth and Moon System	Biodiversity: Sustaining Life on Earth	Human Body Systems
The Water Planet	Force and Motion	Electricity and Magnetism
Matter and Energy	Engineering: Mouse Trap Car	Engineering: Maglev Trains
Engineering: Energy for the Future		Weather and Climate

Foreign Languages

Four foreign languages are offered to Middle School students: French, Spanish, Chinese, and Latin. For students new to RPCS without prior experience studying French or Spanish, preparation may take the form of summer study or work with a tutor followed by a placement test. RPCS offers summer camps in French and Spanish that provide 40 hours of language instruction over two weeks, enabling students to join French IB or Spanish IB in sixth grade.

FRENCH IA, IB, IIA, AND IIB (GRADES 6–8)

For students who began the study of French prior to entering Middle School, French IB (sixth grade), IIA (seventh grade), and IIB (eighth grade) are designed to continue the presentation of the fundamentals of the French language in a highly structured program that develops the abilities to listen, speak, read, and write. French vocabulary and idioms are presented with emphasis on using these in developing conversational

skills. The goal is that students develop the skills to function comfortably in a French-speaking environment. Students will also learn how to write strong, grammatically correct sentences and paragraphs in the target language. An additional goal of these courses is to broaden the students' cultural awareness of the various French-speaking nations around the world by using multiple forms of technology and multimedia. Upon successful completion of this Middle School sequence, students may advance to French III at the start of ninth grade.

French 6 IA does not have a prerequisite, and for some of the students who will be new to RPCS, this may be the best choice. Current RPCS students who wish to transfer out of Spanish to begin French in sixth grade need to submit a letter of request to the Middle School Head and Chair of the Foreign Language Department. Current RPCS students who need to review French IA material from fifth grade may take this course with teacher recommendation. French 6 is offered only in years of sufficient demand.

SPANISH IB, IIA, AND IIB (GRADES 6–8)

For students who began the study of Spanish prior to entering Middle School, Spanish IB (sixth grade), IIA (seventh grade), and IIB (eighth grade) are designed to continue the presentation of the fundamentals of the Spanish language in a highly structured program that develops the abilities to listen, speak, read, and write. Spanish vocabulary and idioms are presented with emphasis on using these in developing conversational skills. The goal is that students develop the skills to function comfortably in a Spanish-speaking environment. Students will also learn how to write strong, grammatically correct sentences and paragraphs in the target language. An additional goal of these courses is to broaden the students' cultural awareness of the various Spanish-speaking countries around the world. The texts are supplemented with technology, including Internet use and teacher-created multimedia presentations, to introduce students to the various Hispanic cultures. Students are also expected to research and create multimedia projects reflecting different aspects of learning another language and culture. Upon successful completion of this Middle School sequence, students may advance to Spanish III at the start of ninth grade.

CHINESE (GRADES 7–8)

A two-year sequence in Chinese is offered to students in the Middle School. The sequence begins in seventh grade. In this course, students will learn the structures and vocabulary necessary to communicate in Mandarin Chinese about various aspects of daily life and experience. Students will also study aspects of the customs, life, and historical geography of China. This course is available to students who are not taking French or Spanish. Beginning Chinese may be offered in the sixth grade in years of sufficient demand.

INTRODUCTION TO LATIN (GRADE 7)

This course is designed for students who have not studied foreign language prior to entering RPCS. The basic elements of the Latin language are taught in this course as a means to introducing the fundamental study skills and work habits of foreign language acquisition. While studying Latin, students explore several cultural aspects of ancient Roman life. The course places an emphasis on Latin word roots and provides an opportunity for students to strengthen their skills with English grammar and reading comprehension. Introduction to Latin is offered only in years of sufficient demand.

LATIN I (GRADE 8)

Latin I presents the fundamentals of grammar and vocabulary in the Latin language. While Latin I focuses on the development of reading skills, there is also an emphasis on Latin roots in English words as well as the connections to Spanish and French. Investigations of ancient culture, history, and mythology support the study of the Latin language and complement the English and history curricula in eighth grade. Latin I is a one-year course designed for eighth grade students; for most students, it is taken in conjunction with their continuing study of Spanish, French, or Chinese. Latin II–V are offered as electives in the Upper School and are taken at the Gilman School.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEFERRAL

For students in need of additional support in the English language during their sixth grade year, the Language Support Lab (LSL) course allows for that support while enabling students to defer their study of foreign language. Students coming out of LSL will enter foreign language study in seventh grade with an Introduction to Latin course that will use the Latin language as a framework to teach skills utilized in the study of foreign language. These students will then take Latin I in eighth grade to extend their knowledge of Latin. Students may enter the LSL/Intro to Latin course of study based on teacher recommendation or placement by the Head of the Middle School in consultation with the Head of the Foreign Language Department.

Support Classes

CONTENT AREA SKILLS LAB (Grades 6 and 7)

Content Area Skills Lab (CASL) is a small class which provides remediation and reinforcement in all of the content areas, often on an individualized basis. CASL complements classroom instruction across the curriculum by emphasizing organization and personal responsibility while strengthening the skills needed for success in the content areas.

MATH SKILLS LAB (Grades 6 and 7)

Math Skills Lab (MSL) provides re-mediation and reinforcement of basic as well as current mathematics skills. MSL complements classroom instruction by offering additional support for the current math curriculum, as well as extra practice on earlier skills, while also emphasizing organization and personal responsibility.

LANGUAGE SUPPORT LAB (LSL)

Students with language-based learning differences may delay foreign language study and will instead work with the K-12 Learning Specialist in sixth grade to strengthen their reading skills and practice strategies to support them in accessing the standard curriculum.

Technology

The School's vision for technology is to integrate its use appropriately into the curriculum as a tool to prepare our students for the challenges of college and career. Our goal is to provide a curriculum that balances teaching of content with teaching students how to think logically and creatively using all of the resources available. Access to technology "anytime, anywhere" is an important component of this goal; hence students are required to purchase tablet computers for use in Grades 7-12.

Beginning in Grade 7, students use tablets as part of an integrated curriculum that combines traditional educational resources with Internet and software tools. Additional technology classes in all three Middle School grades introduce and strengthen Microsoft Office skills, teach students HTML programming, hardware and software applications, network access, file storage, laptop care, Internet safety, and responsible computer etiquette.

Library Media

The Middle School Library Media program is designed to support the students and teachers with information, materials, and instruction which will enhance the curriculum. All students will have a scheduled period of library instruction once a cycle and the opportunity to use the library media center during the school day. During library skills period, students will receive instruction in the use of all types of information including our electronic research resources. Students will learn about the wide variety of information sources available to the library users and will learn to be discriminating users of information with an emphasis on evaluating electronic information and citing information sources.

Visual & Performing Arts

GRADE 6

ART: Sixth grade art invites students to creatively explore a variety of media and to celebrate their emerging sense of self. In addition, students develop new skills, including working with a live (clothed) model in order to accurately draw the figure. Other art experiences include: creating a personal collage, telling a story through ceramic sculpture, and creating a landscape painting in the Impressionist style. Students are encouraged to expand their use of art vocabulary, especially the elements of art and principles of design. A wide variety of artist exemplars are studied. Lively discussions stemming from student observations and reactions to this artwork are encouraged.

DRAMA: Sixth grade drama is a one-semester course which emphasizes the fundamentals of basic theater study. This includes improvisation, poem interpretation, an introduction to cold readings, beginning audition techniques, theater terminology, and scene study.

MUSIC: The sixth grade music program is multi-faceted. The Kodaly/Orff techniques are utilized for in-tune singing, sight reading, and rhythmic development via Orff instruments, continued playing of the recorder, hand bells, and two-part choral repertoire. Music theory, encompassing both written and aural skills, is approached in a more formal way. Music theory supports the performance opportunities that are an important dimension to the curriculum in both the winter and spring concerts.

DANCE: Students are introduced to a variety of dance styles and stretching exercises during this one-semester course. The emphasis is on participation, enjoyment, and performance.

GRADE 7

ART: In seventh grade art, the focus is on building and strengthening skills and techniques, with an emphasis on observational drawing and painting. Students also grow more confident in taking artistic risks, exercising their creativity and speaking knowledgeably about art. Students are invited to explore still-life drawing, drawing using linear perspective, monochromatic painting and creating sculpture inspired by the vibrant wood-carvings made by the people of Oaxaca, Mexico. As in sixth grade, a diverse collection of adult artists is studied for inspiration and discussion.

DRAMA: Seventh grade drama is a year-long course which begins with a review of stage directions and theater terminology. It includes group projects as well as monologue workshops for individual performances. Students explore character analysis, theatrical professions, and physical movement for the stage.

MUSIC: In the seventh grade music program, Kodaly/Orff techniques are used at a more challenging level to improve sight reading skills and in-tune singing. Music theory, and instrumental and vocal literature moves into an intermediate level. Beginning guitar is taught during the winter trimester, allowing the student to apply musical skills learned in sight reading and theory.

DANCE: The focus of this course is to examine and refine dance technique. Through structured technique classes, the students are presented with new dance vocabulary, are given specific exercises for strength and stability, and discuss the importance of strong technical skills in the development of performing skills. Students also perform a class dance in a selected genre, which is choreographed to be technically challenging.

GRADE 8 ELECTIVES

STUDIO ART: This course allows the student to expand her repertoire of art techniques and skills while building a personal artistic style. Art experiences include painting an expressive self-portrait with acrylics, building a symbolic shelter with clay, and creating a personal still life that reflects various aspects of the artist's interests and background. Students are challenged to create work that is personally meaningful as well as aesthetically strong. A wide variety of artist exemplars are viewed and critiqued for inspiration and technical knowledge.

DANCE: This course provides many opportunities for students to grow as performers and choreographers. The students learn and perform two class dances. One dance performance piece focuses on technique and the second focuses on partnering skills and dancing as an ensemble. The first dance gives students the opportunity to perform a solo, duet, or trio, while the second class dance features student choreography. Class assignments include choreography exercises, attendance and critique of a dance performance that takes place outside of the middle school, and a final exam dance solo choreographed by each student.

DRAMA: This course is designed for those students who wish to expand their knowledge and experience of the theater. Students explore directing, casting, and the business of theater. Participants are involved in a mock audition workshop which enhances their confidence and poise. As a culmination of this course, the students perform in a showcase.

EIGHTH GRADE SINGERS (Fall semester) (By audition only.) This vocal ensemble is selected in the spring of the seventh grade year and meets as a class in the Fall semester of eighth grade. Students who enjoy the challenge of a cappella choral music and other accompanied choral works should consider auditioning for this group. More emphasis on vocal production, blend, breath control, and sophisticated harmonies are studied during this course. Performance opportunities beyond the winter and spring concerts are available. This group is the heart of the MS Chorus, and each member is required to participate in both choral ensembles.

THE ART OF THE MUSICAL: PART I AND PART II (Spring semester)

PART I: Students will learn different aspects of working backstage on the MS musical. Instruction will be given on scenic construction, painting, lighting, and sound. Scenic construction and painting being the primary focus, students will learn how to use a carpentry shop to help create different worlds on stage. This would include instruction on the safe use of various scene shop tools, such as a table saw, chop saw, circular saw, screw gun, and pneumatic tools. They will be introduced to commonly used painting techniques for scenic art and also to the basics of lighting and sound support. Each of these techniques will be in conjunction with preparation for and the building of the set for the MS musical.

PART II: Following spring break, the students will discover through readings, videos, discussion, soundtracks, and a culminating field trip to Broadway itself, the evolution of the Broadway musical from the 1900s to the present. Notable composers, lyricists, authors, and choreographers will be featured and studied in order to capture how the musical, as a means of communication and a reflection of life, has changed over the last 100 years. This is a non-performance course.

Physical Education

GRADES 6, 7, AND 8

The physical education program in the Middle School includes both team and individual sports for classes. Activities include field hockey, soccer, volleyball, ropes course, badminton, basketball, new games, tennis, and softball. The students are challenged to improve their physical condition through fitness testing at the beginning and end of the school year.

Life Skills

The Life Skills course in the Middle School is a three-year, developmentally based curriculum. It is a nongraded course which meets once or twice per cycle.

GRADE 6

Life Skills 6 is focused on the studying, time management, organizational, and personal responsibility skills necessary for a successful Middle School experience.

GRADE 7

Life Skills 7 is a discussion-based course focusing on broader life issues that are of concern to Middle School aged girls. Topics covered include health and wellness, substance abuse prevention, social and emotional development, and physical development/human sexuality.

GRADE 8

Life Skills 8 is a continuation of the focus on independent and group growth. Topics are extensions of those covered in seventh grade. Additionally, this course addresses the developmental passage from Middle School to Upper School.

Outdoor Education

One of the ways students build resilience is through physical challenge. The school is fortunate to have a challenge course on campus in the wooded area called the Backwoods. Use of the challenge course is integrated into the Physical Education curriculum. In addition, an extended camping trip of several days is a required part of each year in the Middle School. These camping trips, conducted under the guidance of professional outdoor education organizations in our region, increase in rigor each year and involve hiking, pitching tents, and preparing food. Additional activities may include kayaking, rappelling, and cave exploration. Many girls name the camping trip as the highlight of their year.

Community Service

In addition to the Student Government organization, an elected group of students that organizes School wide service events and fund-raisers, there are a number of ways that service and outreach activities are integrated into the Middle School program. At each grade level, the team of teachers organizes a series of visits to sites off campus including elementary schools and community gardens where our students can actively engage in work that is practical and helpful to others. In addition to these grade-wide opportunities, student clubs promote service to others through fund-raising drives and hands-on projects throughout the year.

Activities

ATHLETICS

The interscholastic sports teams for sixth grade include field hockey, basketball, and lacrosse. Four to eight games are scheduled for sixth grade per sport season. All students in the sixth grade are eligible to play on the teams if space allows. Practices take place during activity periods. The interscholastic sports teams for seventh and eighth grade include fall soccer, cross country, field hockey, and volleyball. Winter sports include squash, soccer, and basketball. Spring sports for seventh and eighth include softball, tennis, and lacrosse. Eight to ten games are played each season and students in the seventh and eighth grades are placed on teams of their

ability at the A and B squad levels. A teams are for students who have the highest level of athletic maturity. B level is for students who are not quite ready for A level of competition. All interested girls may participate upon meeting the practice requirements.

CHORUS

All students who enjoy singing are encouraged to join the Middle School Chorus which meets during the academic day. Ordinarily, Middle School Chorus is a full year commitment. No auditions are required. It is the expectation that Chorus members will be present for the two major concerts.

MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSICAL

Each year the Middle School presents a full-scale musical in late February. Auditions for this performance are held in the fall. Casting in the musical requires careful preparation for the audition, which will require skill in singing, acting, and/or dance. Students who are not chosen for the cast are encouraged to join the tech crew.

EIGHTH GRADE SPEECHES

In her eighth grade year, each student presents a speech to the entire Middle School. These speeches are required to be organized around a thesis, and each student is assigned to a faculty mentor who will guide her through the process.

Middle School Activities

Student Government Association

Community Council

Athletic Association

Visual and Performing Arts Association

Pen-In-Hand (Literary Magazine)

Stuck in the Middle (Student Newspaper)

Moore United Voices Gospel Choir

Tap Line

Chess Club

Handbell Ensemble

Big Ideas/Philosophy

Scrapbooking

Hip Hop

... and many more!



Roland Park Country School

5204 Roland Avenue • Baltimore, Maryland 21210 • 410.323.550

www.rpcs.org