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O O L

LOOKING AT LEARNING DIFFERENTLY



The Lab School transforms the way students think about themselves and about learning. We understand that our students' learning differences have nothing to do with intelligence, but come from *differences* in the ways they learn. And because we know that, The Lab School of Washington is different in how we teach.

Lab offers bright children with language-based learning differences and ADHD an innovative, arts-infused education that recognizes their talents, capitalizes on their strengths, builds their skills, and shows them how their non-traditional approach to problem-solving and achievement is truly an advantage. In fact, we help students turn differences into advantages every day.



## *The Difference is Extraordinary!*

Founded in 1967, The Lab School provides a rich, rigorous, college-preparatory academic experience for students who think and learn differently.

At Lab, we value and respect students as individuals and help them discover how they learn best. We integrate the most effective teaching strategies (many pioneered here at Lab) and cutting-edge research to help our students achieve their goals. We don't accommodate learning differences, we celebrate and leverage them!

Lab students are totally immersed in learning; they are active players. Classrooms are filled with energy and excitement, hard work, laughter, and thoughtful discussions.

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### **LAB'S FOUNDATION**

The Lab School's program is guided by the principles put forth by John Dewey who promoted a progressive education based on a variety of authentic learning experiences that engage the natural curiosity of children.

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## Lab Students Find Joy in Learning

For many of our students, feeling seen, safe and happy at school is a new and welcome experience. When our students learn how their brains work and begin to understand the ways they learn best, they become deeply involved in their education.

They master new skills for learning and discover their personal pathway to success within an environment that supports curiosity, creativity, and the joy of learning for its own sake.

**“When your child goes to school so happy, so comfortable, and with such self-esteem, you know that she is in the right place.”**

— LAB SCHOOL PARENT

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### WORKING TOGETHER

Lab School has approximately 380 students in grades 1 to 12, in three on-campus divisions and our online Global Division. Our students work closely with teachers and staff in small-group settings and have individual support when needed.

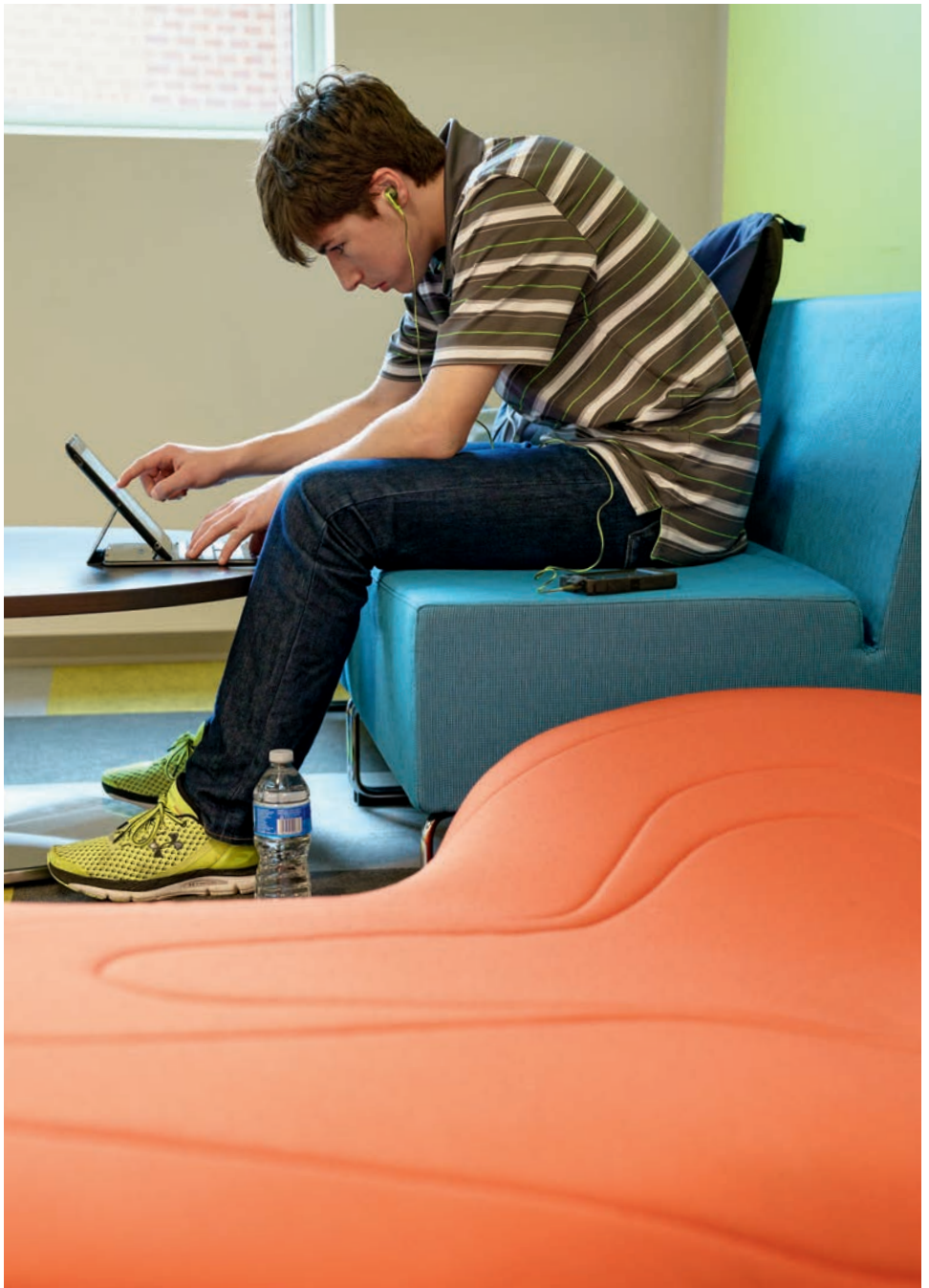
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## Lab Students Learn by Doing

The Lab School believes your child is capable of accomplishing extraordinary things. Our student-driven curriculum is multisensory, experiential, and progressively rigorous. At Lab, students learn college preparatory academics, but we approach those subjects in an unconventional way.

Our students learn to view a single topic from different perspectives through primary source research, expressive writing, hands-on projects, and arts media. They see how the concepts they study in class contribute to their knowledge of the world around them. When students become engaged, start asking questions, dive deeply into the subject matter, and begin to discover answers on their own, they gain ownership of their ideas.

At Lab, we understand the power of experiential learning—from our unique Academic Club model to global travel, from science labs to leadership opportunities.

## INTEGRATED HUMANITIES

Our innovative Academic Club methodology is the backbone of our arts-integrated Lower School and early Middle School curriculum. In themed spaces designed to foster student engagement, students occupy the roles of historic cultural leaders as they create hands-on projects that bring a compelling past world to life. Through these daily sessions, students engage in project-based exploration of history, literature, geography, science, archaeology, sociology, anthropology, and visual and performing arts.

Our Academic Clubs integrate our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging values by presenting students with a wide variety of representation throughout history, allowing them to see mirrors of themselves, as well as to appreciate perspectives and experiences different than their own. Rich language, big ideas, critical thinking, and authentic materials come together to unlock the intellectual capacity of young students who learn differently.

While role-playing your child may:

- Explore the natural world outdoors and our Earth's history as scientists with naturalist Rachel Carson in Discovery Club
- Learn stories from the Griots, oral historians, of West African Empires in Folklorists Club
- Travel the Silk Road from Asia to Europe investigating the learning, trade, art, and collaboration between cultures that shaped our modern world.
- Curate exhibitions of art and artifacts from world religions and early human history in Museum Club















## Lab Students Use Art to Train their Brains

Our immersion in the arts encourages students to discover new ways to process and express their ideas and show their competencies. They learn to use their minds to full advantage. At Lab, art is the springboard that helps students learn to solve problems and attack difficult questions.

Visual, digital, and performing arts classes encourage students to stretch their imaginations and tap into their creativity. For some students, this leads to the discovery and development of new talents. For everyone, our rich curriculum develops critical thinking, increases attention, builds organizational skills and mastery, strengthens and enriches vocabulary, and bolsters a sense of self-worth—all essential components for academic success.

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### ARTS & ACADEMICS

Research proves that the processes that artists use—*brainstorming, collaborating, creating, revising, and reflecting*—are particularly valuable when applied to science, math, humanities, and other challenging subjects. These executive functioning skills help students become creative and effective problem-solvers.

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**“There’s something to be said for learning with your hands, understanding complex concepts not simply by tackling the facts but by using creative means to make those facts come to life.”**

– LAB SCHOOL TEACHER

- Lower School students build models of hot air balloons and jellyfish mobiles to compare and contrast the way they move in Club Discovery. They also make dyes for art projects, write papers from the perspective of an ant or pollinator, and learn about companion planting in science.
- Middle School students in Renaissance Club build models of important buildings and sites around the world in order to better understand architecture, engineering, and the global explosion of arts and culture during that time.
- 8th grade videographers practice editing techniques by directing and filming a music video for the song “Soy Yo” in collaboration with the students in Dance class.
- Upper School students create detailed musical instruments out of unexpected objects to demonstrate sound waves and place notable Revolutions on mock-trial to better understand the perspectives of those involved. Our Tinkering Engineers of Color Program explores the significant contributions of Black and Indigenous People of Color in STEM/STEAM fields.













## Lab Students Thrive in Our Intentionally Diverse Community

At Lab, students are surrounded by other students who learn differently and by teachers who understand them and how they process information. As a result, learning differences are not burdens that create anxiety. Success in school does not need to depend on many hours of tutoring after school.

Our teachers know how to unleash a child's capacity and passion for knowledge. Individual attention, recognition, and reinforcement give young learners the extra support they need to succeed.

**“If we teach today as we taught yesterday,  
we rob our children of tomorrow.”**

— JOHN DEWEY, *American psychologist, philosopher, educator*

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### TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

All of our teachers are specialists in learning differences. More than **80%** of our teachers have advanced degrees, many in special education.

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**“Being surrounded by parents of kids with learning differences is a relief. Instead of feeling like you have to explain yourself or your child’s learning challenges, there is a baseline understanding that we are all in this together. ”**

— LAB SCHOOL PARENT

## **SUPPORT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

- Lab has a cadre of professionals—speech-language and occupational therapists, social workers, and psychologists—who provide consultation to teachers and direct services to students. By offering this support, we assure that students get the help they need, when they need it.
- We recognize that being a student with a learning difference, a parent of a child with a learning difference, or an educator of a student with a learning difference is but one aspect of the identity our community members bring to Lab. Our work in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging grows from that starting point, and is supported by our staff, administrators, students, and parents.
- Lab offers programs and opportunities that our families have called “professional development for parents.” Parents have access to experts, support, a network of other parents, and our Learning with Lab Series.















## Lab Students Dare to Take Risks

Coming to school each day with others who learn like you do, and where you are seen, heard, respected, and valued is a game changer. At Lab, students feel confident enough to take risks in front of the class, and to be daring in ways that might not be encouraged elsewhere. And they demonstrate their learning in ways other than written—in ways that are more natural and suited to a student's strengths.

Lab doesn't consume every ounce of energy or every second of time—our students have more time outside of school to pursue other passions.

**“Lab helped me view my dyslexia as a strength.... I see different solutions to problems, ways of looking at things that others don't.”**

— LAB SCHOOL ALUMNUS

## Lab Students Compete and Win

Lab students test their physical limits on school teams and in individual activities. Student athletes learn important lessons about pride, humility, leadership, discipline, responsibility, and sportsmanship. Plus they experience the thrill of victory through shared effort. We challenge our athletes to strive to be the best they can be—both on and off the field.

Students in grades 5 to 12 can participate on more than 19 teams including basketball, cross country, fencing, soccer, tennis, track, and volleyball. Our teams are competitive, yet open to everyone.

**“I am a focused player, and I think I am a focused and hard-working person off the field too. I push myself to get the results I want—in school and on the field.”**

— LAB SCHOOL ATHLETE











## Lab Students

### Explore Beyond Classes

Our students graduate uniquely prepared for the challenges and opportunities that await them in today's world. Each of our student's entire identity is seen and celebrated through affinity groups, Community and Belonging Days, SEL learning opportunities, and wellness events for students, families, and staff. Additionally, our community intentionally works to develop a broad and deep understanding of and connection to people of all cultures and backgrounds. Students begin to develop their cultural competency early and build upon that knowledge every year in experiences that include their coursework, community time, student focused conferences, and travel opportunities.

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#### **AROUND THE GLOBE AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

Our Upper School students have traveled to Costa Rica, France, Ecuador, South Africa, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Galapagos Islands, and China as well as Boston, San Francisco, New York City, and Selma, Alabama. Students engage their skills of observation, collaboration, and reflection in blogs, videos, journals, or photo essays of their experiences.

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## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES

- During the annual science trip to the Teton Science School in Jackson, Wyoming, 8th grade students dig snow pits, measure the temperature and density of snow crystals, and work with museum specimens to increase their environmental awareness.
- Students investigate their passions on stage and back stage, or take on leadership roles on Student Advisory Council, as Admissions Ambassadors, and in a variety of Middle & Upper School social shared interest clubs.
- Students explore the literary, social, political, and cultural aspects of a theme or time in history through immersion in original theater productions.
- During the Upper School Arts trip, students join our teaching artists in NYC to enjoy theater performances, visit museums and galleries, shadow artists in their spaces, and practice new techniques and processes.
- Lab School was chosen to be the first Washington, DC high school chapter of Eye to Eye—a national mentoring movement that pairs kids who have learning differences, like dyslexia and ADHD, with mentors who have been similarly labeled. Using arts-based projects, our students help their mentees to understand their learning differences and to build the self-esteem and skills they need to become self-advocates.















## Lab Students

### Discover Tools that Open Doors

At Lab, students come to understand their own learning profile; they learn to articulate their strengths and challenges and become experts at implementing what works best for them. They take ownership of the process to become strong self-advocates, take hold of opportunities, and commit to being lifelong learners.

Students acquire information through multi-sensory, interactive methods that help them develop conceptual understanding and increase their engagement with the material. Lab respects traditional hands-on activities and also embraces the digital tools, which allow students to move beyond the world of print to access information and express their knowledge.

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#### **EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY**

At all levels, students use age-appropriate tools to become more effective, efficient, and independent readers and writers. Our one-to-one Chromebook program and our online learning management system help students connect, engage, and create. Students use apps and software that support organization, reading, note-taking, writing, researching, and study skills, and gain experience with online learning platforms.

## Lab Students

### Create Pathways to Success

As students progress through The Lab School, they acquire a valuable college preparatory education and master the skills they will need to begin college and to go out into the world. Opportunities to explore internships in their junior year and to work on a thesis project of personal interest during the senior year help them shape their goals for life after Lab.

While most graduates attend college right away, some students follow different paths, such as taking a structured gap year program working for the National Park Service or enrolling in language immersion study in another country.

At Lab, we know that “different” is neither good nor bad, and we help students chart their own personal learning pathways. Your child will leave Lab with the confidence to aim high and a rich enthusiasm for the possibilities that lie ahead.

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#### OUTCOMES

Lab boasts **100%** college acceptance. Our college advisory team gets to know each student well, so that as they grow and focus on their strengths and interests, we are there to help them find that right college or post-secondary fit.

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## THE LAB SCHOOL IS:

- **Transformative**

“For the first time in our lives, my son is asking me to hurry up and get ready, instead of the other way around. He can’t wait to get to school! He is engaged and enthusiastic about his homework and the nightly stress has melted away.” – LAB SCHOOL PARENT

- **Creative**

“As teachers, we need to know when to teach and when to stand back. Letting kids figure out their own solutions can be incredibly instructive. It gives students the safety to fail and when they come back with something on their own, the learning process is far more valuable.”  
– LAB SCHOOL TEACHER

- **Caring**

“The love that teachers and staff have for our children is amazing. For them this is not a job. It’s a passion.” – LAB SCHOOL PARENT

- **Accepting**

“Being at Lab has made me an extrovert. I’m never afraid to speak my opinion and I feel like Lab is a very welcoming place for that.”  
– LAB SCHOOL STUDENT

- **Supportive**

“Lab is not only a school for our children, but also for us. At Lab, they understand our fears and anxieties. At Lab they make you feel normal again.” – LAB SCHOOL PARENT

## ABOUT THE LAB SCHOOL

### CAMPUSES AND DIVISIONS

Two campuses in Northwest, Washington, DC and our Global Campus.

#### FOXHALL CAMPUS

*1550 Foxhall Road, NW*

##### Lower School Division:

Ages 6 to 10, ungraded  
Student-teacher ratio 2:1-6:1

#### RESERVOIR CAMPUS

*4759 Reservoir Road, NW*

##### Middle School Division:

Grades 5 to 8  
Student-teacher ratio 2:1-9:1

##### Upper School School Division:

Grades 9 to 12  
Student-teacher ratio 5:1-13:1

#### GLOBAL CAMPUS

*Worldwide*

##### Global Division:

Ages 8 to 14  
Student-teacher ratio 1:4-1:6

##### Virtual Tutoring:

Ages 5 to adult  
Student-teacher ratio 1:1

#### AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Lab's After School Program is available for children ages 6 to 12. The program runs Monday-Friday, 3:30 pm-5:30 pm.

### RELATED SERVICES

Occupational Therapy, Speech-Language, and Psychological Services are provided in individual and small-group sessions and within the classroom.

### ACCREDITATION

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

### MEMBERSHIPS

- National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)
- Association of Independent Maryland and DC Schools (AIMS)
- Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington (AISGW)
- Metro Independent School Athletic League
- Independent Small Schools Athletic Conference
- International Dyslexia Association (IDA)
- Association of LD Schools (ALDS)
- Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education (CSEE)

### TRANSPORTATION

LABus provides shuttle service morning and afternoon to Metro stops and other locations in DC, Maryland, and Virginia.







“At The Lab School, you are no longer **that kid**—the one who struggles to read, or who has issues with spelling. In many ways, you’re just like everyone else. You can **succeed at Lab**. Believing in yourself—that you have the ability to go beyond what others expect of you—is the most important factor of success. Lab helped me do this, and it has **changed my life.**”

– LAB SCHOOL SENIOR

## SEE FOR YOURSELF

Founded in 1967 by Sally L. Smith, The Lab School is recognized worldwide as the leader in the field of learning differences education.

To learn more about Lab, come to our campus for a visit or check us out online at [www.labschool.org](http://www.labschool.org).

Design: Rutka Weadock Design, Baltimore, MD

Primary Photography: Bruce Weller

Photo pages 42-43: Stantec Architecture/Tom Holdsworth Photography

The Lab School's programs and policies are applied with equal consideration to all of its applicants and students. We do not discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, or any other status protected by applicable law.



**THE  
LAB  
SCHOOL**

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