

U P P E R S C H O O L

Program Highlights 2023-2024



Through a unique arts-centered curriculum, the Upper School offers engaging courses that build the academic skills needed for college and career success, while simultaneously promoting organization, study, and test-taking skills.

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 students.

LAB STUDENTS LEARN TO:

- be problem solvers, collaborators, and creative thinkers.
- be self-aware and self-directed, take risks, confront challenges, and stretch themselves.
- know that we'll be there to support them.
- discover their strengths and passions and develop strategies to tackle what's challenging.

“My ADHD actually makes me feel very gifted because Lab School has taught me how to use it to my advantage. Sometimes I think I have a secret weapon that others don't have.”

— Lab School Student

OUR ARTS-CENTERED CURRICULUM

The arts — central to our students' experience at Lab — encourage students to tap into their creativity and stretch their imaginations. Students gain confidence and discover new ways to solve problems and express themselves, as they learn to think like artists and view the world in alternative ways.

Courses

Advanced Stagecraft	Digital Photography I, II	Geometry	Playmaking & Shakespeare
Algebra I	Drawing	Government	Principles of Engineering
Algebra II	Drawing, Painting, & Sculpture Intensive	Health	Probability/Statistics
American Sign Language I, II, III	Earth Science	History of People of Color of America	Rehearsal & Performance
Ancient World History	English 9 - Finding Our Voice	History vs. Hollywood	Rhetoric
Applied Math & Science Seminar	English 10 - Being Informed & Creating Change	Introduction to Stagecraft	Robotics
Biology	English 11 - American Literature	Jewelry Making/Metalsmithing	Shakespeare and Beyond
Calculus	English 12 - World Literature	Modern World History	Spanish I, II, III, IV
Chemistry	Environmental Science	Music Perspectives	Studio Art
Conditioning	Food, Identity & Culture	Music/Rock Band	Trigonometry/Pre-Calculus
Dance	Forensic Science	Musical Theatre	US History
DC History	Freshman Seminar	Physical Science	Yearbook
Digital Filmmaking		Physics	Class sizes range from 4 to 13 students.

Our myriad Upper School clubs, extra-curricular activities, and leadership opportunities offer students more ways — beyond the classroom — to explore their interests, take risks, develop new areas of interest, and master skills.

CLUBS, AFFINITY GROUPS, ACTIVITIES, AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Options include:

- Affinity Groups
 - Family Structure/Adoption, Race, Gender/Sexuality, Ethnicity, Religion
- Business/Stocks
- Chess
- Coding/Robotics
- Cooking/Baking
- Council for Equity and Social Justice
- Creative Writing
- Drama Club
- Philosophy
- Science and Art
- Student Advisory Council
- Sci-Fi/Anime



STANTEC ARCHITECTURE / TOM HOLDSWORTH PHOTOGRAPHY

GLOBAL STUDY

We develop life-long learners who engage with the world around them.

- In recent years, students have participated in an arts and historical tour of New York City, a cultural tour of Japan, and a civil rights tour in Alabama. This year, in addition to NYC and Alabama, students will travel to Costa Rica.
- International destinations — exploring history, culture, language, science, and economy — have included France, the Galapagos, South Africa, Italy, China, Ecuador, England, Cambodia, Vietnam, Spain, Morocco, Germany, and Poland.



SPORTS

The Upper School is a member of the Metro Independent School Athletic League and the Independent Small Schools Athletic Conference. Our teams are competitive, yet open to everyone. Athletes learn teamwork, sportsmanship, and self-discipline.

The 2023-2024 team sports include:

- Basketball
- Soccer
- Track
- Cross Country
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Golf

OUR STAFFULTY

Our teachers, more than 80 percent of whom have advanced degrees, inspire our students through innovation, commitment, passion, and caring.

BELONGING TIME

“Belonging Time” provides our students with a foundational understanding of the intersections of a person’s identity. Within this understanding, students cultivate a respect for and admiration of the differences among people. “Belonging Time” ensures that each student leaves embracing the multiplicity and fluidity of identity while being instilled with an inviolable self-pride.

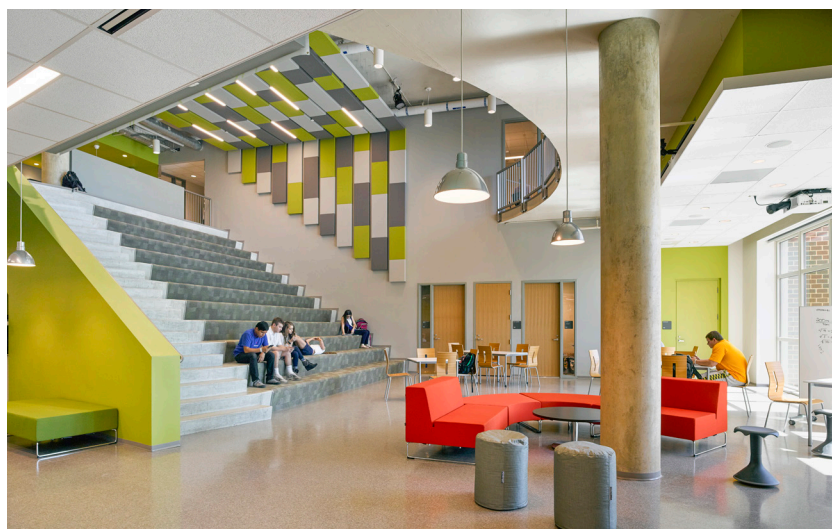
During “Belonging Time,” students work with age-level definitions of: diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, self-love, and identity – elucidating identity in the markers of: age, physical ability, appearance, race, sexual orientation, gender, geographic location, family structure, ethnicity, religion, communication style and thinking style.



TECHNOLOGY

Our one-to-one Chromebook program and online learning management system help students connect, engage, and create. Students will have the tools to become more effective, efficient, and independent learners. We use apps that support:

- organization
- reading
- note-taking
- writing
- researching
- study skills



PREPARING FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER

JUNIOR-YEAR INTERNSHIP

We value the learning and experiences that take place beyond the classroom walls. Our unique year-long internship is truly an experiential learning opportunity. Each student has a chance to intern in a structured, supportive environment — aligned with their interests — which can lead to avenues for further study.

Our internship placements are as varied as:

- GTM Architects
- American University Police Department
- National Child Research Center Preschool
- National Museum of American History
- The George Washington University's Medical Faculty Associates

SENIOR PROJECT

A culminating experience for each Lab School student is the Senior Project.

- Students pursue a line of inquiry that requires the blending of academic skills, such as research, writing, presentation, revision techniques, and editing, with professional skills, like goal setting, planning, time management, and collaboration.
- Choosing topics that align with their interests, students investigate their subjects throughout the first semester of English 12, develop their theses, and show the practical applications of what they've learned.
- Recently, senior projects included studies of cartography and human evolution; the gentrification of urban neighborhoods; a survey of gender bias in the art world using AI; and the impact on riding style when building surfboards out of alternative materials.

COLLEGE ADVISING

From the start of 9th grade, our College Advisor gets to know every Upper School student, developing an understanding of interests and goals, recommending summer programs and other pre-college activities of interest to the student, securing accommodations for the ACT test, and working with the student and family to determine the best postsecondary fit. Upperclassmen and their parents use Naviance, software that matches students with colleges and tracks application materials, to facilitate the college search process.