

Characteristics of Middle School Students

- I am always right!
- You don't know anything!
- Don't worry...I know what I'm doing!
- Don't tell me who my friends should be!
- I'm doing what I want to do. I'm not listening to you!

These are typical adolescent responses. Does this sound like your adolescent child? Don't blame them...It's about brain development!



Picture Source: Hall, D., & Williams, C. (Directors). (2015). *Inside out* [Motion picture]. USA: Pixar Animation Studios.

The mission of the Wappingers Central School District is to empower all of our students with the competencies and confidence to challenge themselves, to pursue their passions, and to realize their potential while growing as responsible members of their community.

Scan the QR Code for more information about the
New York State Middle School Association



Life in the Middle

A review of the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of the young adolescent.

**Parent and Community
Workshop**

April 2, 2016



The Organizational Structure of Middle Schools

- Core or Major Subjects versus Encore or Exploratory Subjects
- Teams and Houses
- Teams broken down into math, English, Science, Social Studies and Health with each grade in their own distinct house or building location
- Teams have team events, such as field trips, field days, awards, etc.
- 125-150 students per team
- Teachers have common prep periods to plan instruction as units

Academic Excellence in a Middle School

- Honors Subjects
- Accelerated Subjects
- Regents Subjects
- Foreign Language- FL critical to a world economy
- Specials/Exploratory: Health (7 and 8), Art (7 and 8), Music (7 and 8), Technology (7 and 8: information systems, communication systems, construction systems), Physical Education (7 and 8), RM (8),
- Teachers highly skilled and trained adolescent behavior
- Innovation (Bloom's Taxonomy-Creating)
- Reading and writing across the content area
- Inquiry leading to small capstone project (Interdisciplinary projects)

Developmental Responsiveness

- Interdisciplinary and project-based units of study
- Slow approximations of readiness through the grade level
- Allowing students options for the completion of projects: Multiple intelligences multiple skills (people have unique skills and competencies)
- Allow choices
- Preserve dignity of students at all times
- Never confront or challenge: Allow children to save face
- Recognize children's diverse skills and talents
- Brain Research (readiness, reasoning)
- Active learning versus passive learning
 - Hands on learning
 - Co-operative learning using strategic grouping (Modeling)

Social Equity in Middle Schools

Definition: Equal Access to the Curriculum Leading to a Sound and Basic Public School Education

- Title IX for Athletic Programs.
- Intramurals
- Diverse club offerings: Griffin Stage, Lego-Robotics, Student Government (SGA), Jazz Band, Lighting Production, Sound production, Webmaster
- Band, orchestra, chorus, general music
- Various entry points for honors classes
- Unofficial Clubs: Chess, Ping Pong, Debate
- Dances/Activities/Award Ceremonies



Excellence in Leadership

- Excellent leaders recognize safety first
- Excellent leaders recognize that students learn best in positive classroom and school environments
- Excellent leaders maintain high expectation for students and staff and ensure that students achieve these expectations
- Excellent leaders keep current of new research and developments in the field of education and adolescent development
- Excellent leaders are transformational
- Excellent leaders add value to their organization
- Excellent leaders build trusting and lasting relationships with stakeholders in the organization