

Why Choose a Preschool - 8th Grade School?

- 1. Numerous national studies show the advantages of Preschool-8 and K-8 schools for students at all grade levels.** The continuity of teachers, classmates, programs and expectations appears to enhance academic, social and emotional development for students leading to greater academic achievement and improved self-esteem and confidence. (Rand Study 2006 and National Middle School Association Study).
- 2. Carefully designed “buddy programs” between different grade levels have positive effects on both the younger and the older students.** Working as a team on community service projects and creating a personal connection between an older and younger student provides a positive role model for younger children while encouraging empathy in the older students.
- 3. Children don’t grow up too fast.** St. John's elementary and middle school environment allows students to experience age appropriate activities and events, without the influence and pressure of older students. Seventh and eighth graders are not “caught in the middle” but take on the leadership role of "seniors.” At the same time they can be themselves, often remaining “younger” a bit longer and not as directly influenced by social pressures. Furthermore, our emerging adolescents are given the nurturing and age-appropriate support they need for a healthy, confident transition to the high school years.
- 4. By eighth grade, you know your child better as a learner and a person.** In the elementary and middle years, your student’s academic strengths, interests, learning styles and gifts become defined and social-emotional strengths clearer. These individual characteristics become apparent during pre-adolescence. There are excellent high school choices – each with their own strengths and areas of focus. By the time your child is in eighth, the best “match” for high school is much easier to determine. It is very difficult to know what the best match is for a 14 year old when they are 10 or 11 years old.
- 5. Your child has many leadership and activity opportunities.** The oldest students at St. John’s assume the mantle of leadership and act as role models for the entire student body. Our middle school students rise to the challenge and serve on the Student Services Council, SOUL Group, STAARs and participate on St. John’s highest-level athletic teams. The positive achievements of early adolescents are recognized as culminating events and traditions at St. John's. Enjoying that privilege in the seventh and eighth grades better prepares students for those same opportunities in high school and beyond.
- 6. As an eighth grader, your child is more involved in choosing the high school that is right for him/her.** During the early childhood years, you, as parents, make the school decisions. A family choice, involving your eighth grader along with the support of the school, is a satisfying and personalized way to choose a high school. In turn, this experience better prepares students for making college choices.
- 7. High school choice is a team effort.** The Middle School teachers and Administration work in partnership with you and your student to find a high school “match” that honors your child’s unique gifts and achievements. St. John's teachers and administrators know the schools and know your student. St. John's students are sought after as high school freshman because they are well-prepared, self-assured, well-rounded and strong moral citizens.
- 8. A change at ninth is good.** Keeping children in a consistent and familiar educational environment through the elementary and middle school years is ideal, before allowing them the freedom of a change of venue, new friends and new challenges in high school. Because St. John's ends in eighth grade, all of our graduates leave together offering support to one another. At ninth grade, students are eager to experience new friendships and challenges that support their individual interests before college, and are well prepared to make a smooth and confident transition into high school.
- 9. Small class sizes.** St. John’s elementary and middle school students benefit from a small class size. The individual attention given to each student helps them succeed in our rigorous academic program that prepares them well for any high school they choose to attend.
- 10. The “St. John's Connection” lasts a lifetime.** Students experiencing St. John's throughout the middle school years have values and friendships that will define and benefit them throughout their lives.