

## WHO WE ARE

PS/MS 8 is a diverse learning community dedicated to creativity, intellectual curiosity, and student voice and agency, with the aim of developing life-long learners and engaged citizens. We are committed to the intellectual, artistic, social, emotional, ethical, and physical development of each child. Our middle school is a point of entry for a significant number of new students. All are challenged to reach their greatest potential through a culturally responsive program of study that includes three years of advisory and a curriculum that values the arts, foreign language, and physical education. We also offer the opportunity for 8th graders to take several Regents exams. Our Explorations give students several two-week interdisciplinary opportunities to deeply study one essential question, and use the resources of New York City and their community to create and present culminating projects. Our middle school plans to grow to hold about 330 students—four classes on each grade. This size allows us to foster and maintain a strong sense of community and provide a nurturing environment for our students, while also supporting a wide range of programs and activities to meet the needs of all learners.

## AFTER SCHOOL

We recognize the importance of a strong after school program to give students a fun and safe outlet for socializing outside of school hours. We strive to offer Sports Teams via CHAMPS programming. In the past, we have been able to offer Flag Football, Basketball, and Soccer. Another program—Community Counseling and Mediation For Youth Initiative—offers no-cost programming five days a week that includes homework help, STEM activities, arts, fashion design, screen writing, film making, and sports. Finally, the PTA-managed Kids Cre8 Program offers after school enrichment clubs based on student interest. In the past, these have included partnerships with the Brooklyn Ballet (Ballet and Hip Hop), St. Francis College and the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy (Marine Science), the Brooklyn Music School (Brooklyn Public Players—wind ensemble), and Math Olympiads (worldwide math competition).



### **MS8**

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# 8 GR8 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MS8

**1 Explorations.** Twice each year, students break from their regular academic routines to engage in a deep, two-week study of one essential question. Students do research, conduct field studies, interact with the community, and visit some of the many cultural, historical, and educational institutions of New York City in pursuit of their own understanding of the question at hand. At the conclusion of each two-week exploration, students complete and present a culminating project designed to showcase what they've learned in a way that is meaningful to them.

**2 Advisory.** Through a lower student-to-teacher ratio, our advisory program supports students with the organizational, academic, and social challenges of middle school by way of two to three meetings each week in which specific curriculum—designed to support students' social-emotional health and education—is followed. The relationships forged between and among peers and advisors support a school-wide culture of community and acceptance.

**3 Progressive, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.** Committed to the diversity of our student body, we ensure that all classrooms, curricula, and school-wide programs acknowledge, validate, and incorporate the cultural backgrounds of all our students. Additionally, we work hard to create an inclusive school culture and employ a practice of restorative justice that

emphasizes empathy, accountability, and amends to resolve any conflicts that may arise. English Language Arts and Social Studies classes, in particular, use culturally relevant texts and current events to help students make important links between the past, present, and future.

**4 Studio Art.** Thanks to a beautiful new art studio and a staff committed to supporting students' self-expression, students experience a hands-on studio art class multiple times per week, in which they have the opportunity to study and create art across various media. The class is run as a supportive community in which risk-taking and exploration are encouraged.

**5 Lab Sciences.** Our new, state-of-the-art science laboratory supports our commitment to hands-on learning and allows us to accommodate robust science programming. Students are exposed to increasingly sophisticated scientific concepts they are able to uncover through student-designed experiments and projects. Finally, students may take the Living Environment Regents exam in 8th Grade.

**6 Immersion Spanish.** Our goal is for all students in 7th and 8th grade to spend four periods per week studying Spanish in an engaging way, gaining exposure not just to the language, but also to the many cultures from which it is derived and through which it is celebrated. Set against a background of cultural

exploration and relevant content, our Spanish curriculum seeks to develop not just oral language skills, but to teach students to write in Spanish, and to read and analyze authentic literature. At the end of 8th Grade, students may take the New York State Foreign Language Proficiency exam.

**7 Growth Mindset Math.** Committed to a progressive approach to mathematics instruction that favors conceptual understanding over rote computational work, our math classes are conducted with the main objective of deep conceptual understanding achieved via hands-on projects that are engaging and empowering to all students. This method of instruction provides practical strategies and activities to show all children—even and especially those students who claim not to like math—that they can in fact enjoy and succeed in mathematics. At the end of 8th Grade, students may sit for the Algebra Regents exam.

**8 Strong High School Placement Record.** Historically, MS8's graduating classes have been admitted to some of the finest high schools in New York City. MS8 graduates currently attend Bard, Beacon, Brooklyn Latin, Brooklyn Tech, ICE, LaGuardia, Midwood, Millenium Brooklyn, Murrow, Nest+M, the NYC i-School, and Stuyvesant, among many other public and private schools across all five boroughs.