



Maplewood Richmond Heights **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

School as Expedition

Students at MRH Middle School are immersed both inside and outside the classroom in a variety of experiences through the metaphor, “School as Expedition.”

Learning expeditions are in-depth studies of a topic that engage students through authentic projects, real-life studies, field work, and/or service. Expeditions occur within the school walls when the community is brought into the classroom through expert guest speakers and outside of the classroom, as a journey to conduct fieldwork.

Of the eight expeditionary units, half involve overnight journeys outside of the school. Shared studies involve approximately one week of instructional time in the four core disciplines, and may involve more time in the major discipline for the study.

Rigorous academic achievement, critical thinking, essential skills and habits, and character development are integral components of the learning expedition. Four stages of learning exist in the learning expedition:

- Immersion in an experience
- Skill development (including social development) and supervised work
- Independent challenge to apply and share learnings
- Celebration

Throughout a learning expedition a collaboration of teachers, administrators, and parents regularly assess, revise and improve the work, raising the standards each year the expedition is taught.



On expeditions students build amazing relationships with each other and with their teachers. Equally important, they learn about our world and their relationship to it.

Adults guide students in expeditions with care, compassion and respect for their diverse learning styles, backgrounds and needs. Addressing individual differences profoundly increases the potential for learning and creativity of each student.

A Laptop for Every Student

Project Headware is a program that combines a 1:1 laptop environment with high quality teacher professional development. The goal of Project Headware is to develop student skills in the areas of creative and critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and inquiry.

In 2005 Project Headware was developed by a committee of Board of Education members, teachers, administrators, and community members. Through a two-year state grant a 1:1 laptop environment was developed in the middle school. The following year the high school rolled out their computers.

During their middle school and high school years students will engage in a variety of high tech projects that challenge them to become a 21st century digital native. Working in teams or on their own, students will learn the value of teamwork, communication, and problem solving. These skills will help them succeed in high school, college, and beyond.



In addition to laptops, MRH Middle School students can utilize the new Tech Lab.

Throughout the year teachers participate in professional development opportunities they need to ensure the full implementation of technology into their instruction. All teachers, administrators, and faculty members will receive training on how to maximize the potential of a digital campus.

Professional Development at MRH Middle School

The teaching staff at MRH Middle takes part in a variety of professional development activities throughout the course of the year to improve and enhance their classroom teaching. The goals for MRH Middle professional development are:

- to develop pedagogical competence as outlined by the district in three areas: reading and writing in the content areas, critical thinking/self-regulating and Cooperative Learning,
- to implement best practices in Cooperative Learning, and
- to embed the application of technology in lesson planning with the objective of deepening understanding for students



MRH Middle School

7-8

Grades served

157

Student enrollment

10:1

Student to teacher ratio

11:1

Student to classroom teacher ratio

49.7

Percentage of teaching staff with a master's degree or higher

8.4

Average years of teaching experience for teaching staff

90.5

Percentage of teaching staff with full certification

93.4%

Student attendance rate