

# **GARDEN CITY MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

## **BEST PRACTICES AT THE MIDDLE LEVEL**

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# What are the characteristics of an *Essential Elements: Schools-to-Watch* School?

- ▶ *Developmental Responsiveness*
- ▶ *Academic Excellence*
- ▶ *Social Equity*
- ▶ *Organization Structure and Process*

[http://www.nysmsa.org/?page\\_id=251](http://www.nysmsa.org/?page_id=251)

## **DEVELOPMENTAL RESPONSIVENESS.** The school is sensitive to the unique developmental challenges of early adolescence.

- The staff creates a personalized environment that supports each student's intellectual, ethical, social, and physical development.
- Teachers foster curiosity, creativity and the development of social skills in a structured and supportive environment.
- The curriculum is both socially significant and relevant to the personal and career interests of young adolescents.
- Teachers use an interdisciplinary approach to reinforce important concepts, skills, and address real-world problems.
- Students are provided multiple opportunities to explore a rich variety of topics and interests in order to develop their identity, learn about their strengths, discover and demonstrate their own competence, and plan for their future.
- The school provides age-appropriate, co-curricular activities to foster social skills and character, and to develop interests beyond the classroom environment.

# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE. The school is academically excellent. It challenges all students to use their minds well.

- ▶ All students are expected to meet high academic standards.
- ▶ Curriculum, instruction, assessment, and appropriate academic interventions are aligned with high standards.
- ▶ The curriculum emphasizes deep understanding of important concepts and the development of essential skills.
- ▶ Teachers use a variety of methods to assess and monitor the progress of student learning (e.g., tests, quizzes, assignments, exhibitions, projects, performance tasks, portfolios).
- ▶ The faculty and master schedule provide students time to meet rigorous academic standards.
- ▶ Students are provided the support they need to meet rigorous academic standards.

**SOCIAL EQUITY.** High performing schools with middle grades are socially equitable, democratic, and fair. They provide every student with high-quality teachers, resources, learning opportunities, and supports. They keep positive options open for all students.

- ▶ To the fullest extent possible, all students, including English learners, students with disabilities, gifted and honors students, participate in heterogeneous classes with high academic and behavioral expectations.
- ▶ Students are provided the opportunity to use many and varied approaches to achieve and demonstrate competence and mastery of standards.
- ▶ Teachers continually adapt curriculum, instruction, assessment, and scheduling to meet their students' diverse and changing needs.
- ▶ All students have equal access to valued knowledge in all school classes and activities.

[http://middlegradesforum.org/files/SOCIAL\\_EQUITY.pdf](http://middlegradesforum.org/files/SOCIAL_EQUITY.pdf)

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES.** The school is a learning organization that establishes norms, structures, and organizational arrangements to support and sustain their trajectory toward excellence.

- ▶ A shared vision of what a high-performing school is and does drives every facet of school change.
- ▶ The principal has the responsibility and authority to hold the school-improvement enterprise together, including day-to-day know-how, coordination, strategic planning, and communication.
- ▶ The school is a community of practice in which learning, experimentation, and time and opportunity for reflection are the norm.
- ▶ The school and district devote resources to content-rich professional development, which is connected to reaching and sustaining the school vision and increasing student achievement.
- ▶ The school is not an island unto itself; it is a part of a larger educational system, i.e., districts, networks and community partnerships.
- ▶ The school staff holds itself accountable for the students' success.

# How do we individualize our support programs to ensure student success?

- ▶ Team Support (General/Special Education)
- ▶ Push-In Reading Support
- ▶ Reading Support (period 0, scheduled)
- ▶ Special Education
  - Resource Room, Speech, Co-Teaching
- ▶ Subject Specific Support Classes (alternate day)
  - English, Math, Social Studies, Science, & Spanish
- ▶ Academic Intervention Services (AIS)
- ▶ Extra Help coordinated by Teamed Teachers
- ▶ Core Exam days coordinated by Teamed Teachers
- ▶ After-School Homework Center

# How does our blueprint support the structure of teaming?

- ▶ Teamed teachers have common meeting and planning periods
- ▶ Teams consist of content area teachers (English, math, social studies and science) and one special education teacher
- ▶ Students are teamed on each grade level
- ▶ Heterogeneous groupings on each team
- ▶ Acceleration in math and science in grade 7 and 8 in math and science



# What happens during a team meeting?

## Weekly Schedule: 4 Team Meetings, 1 Grade Level Department Meeting

The block schedule allows common planning time for all teams

- ▶ Parent meetings/conferences are held with the entire team
- ▶ Student progress is monitored (academic, social, emotional)
- ▶ Test Scheduling, Lesson Planning, etc. takes place
- ▶ Guidance and student support staff meet with the entire team
- ▶ Instructional Support Team Meetings take place across teams
- ▶ Parents and/or students may be invited to meet with their team teachers during planning time

# How are these programs made available through our master schedule?

Our blueprint utilizes a block scheduling model, as defined by **core (C)** and **encore (E)** classes.

Period	Time	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1	8:29-9:12 (43)	C	E (Team Meeting)	C
2	9:15-9:56 (41)	C	C	E (Team Meeting)
3	9:59-10:40 (41)	E (Team Meeting)	C	C
4	10:43-11:28 (45)	Lunch/Home Base	E (Teacher Lunch)	C
5	11:31-12:16 (45)	C	Lunch /Home Base	E (Teacher Lunch)
6	12:19-1:04 (45)	E (Teacher Lunch)	C	Lunch/Home Base
7	1:07-1:48 (41)	E	C	C
8	1:51-2:32 (41)	C	E	E
9	2:35-3:17 (42)	C	E	E

# How does the 9 period day support the academic, social and emotional needs of students?

- ▶ Daily Teacher Team Meeting Period
- ▶ Weekly Grade Level Department Meeting
- ▶ Home Base Advisory Program – i.e. character education and anti-bullying programs
- ▶ Schedule allows for pure teaming of school - Teaming fosters a sense of belonging by students and faculty
- ▶ Elective Program supports students' academic growth through subjects that interest them
- ▶ Instructional Support Team (IST)
  - ▶ Teacher Facilitated
- ▶ Student Response Teams (SRT)
  - ▶ Building Level Pupil Personnel Staff
- ▶ Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- ▶ Elective classes selected according to students' interest

# How does HB Advisory address the collective needs of our students?

**Goal:** Every child has a voice. New social opportunities provided. Strengthens the development of teacher-student relationships.

Home Base period is embedded in the school day immediately following lunch.

## ***Social Emotional Home Base Curriculum:***

- Anti-Bullying /Character Education
  - Weekly Quality Circles (CPR)
  - Environmental Awareness
    - Social Action
    - Community Awareness
- Study Skills and Time Management
  - Empathy and Courtesy
  - Loyalty, Integrity and Patriotism
  - Respect for the Rights of Others
- Striving for Academic Achievement
  - Cultural Tolerance



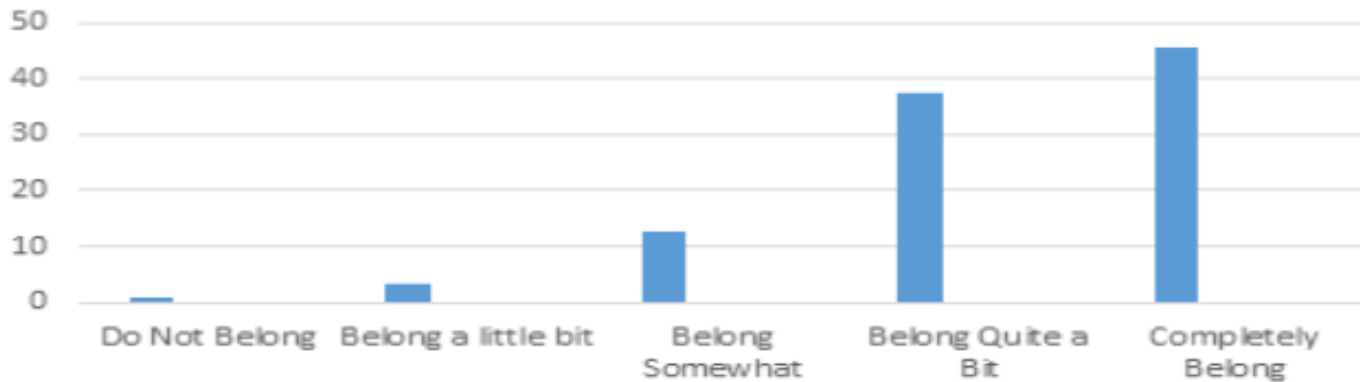
# Garden City Middle School - NYS Assessment School Ranking

<https://www.schooldigger.com/go/NY/schools/1176000941/school.aspx>

Year	Avg Standard Score	Statewide Rank	Total # Ranked Middle Schools	NY State Percentile
2006	92.35	25 <sup>th</sup>	1109	97.7%
2007	91.84	17 <sup>th</sup>	1136	98.5%
2008	88.30	36 <sup>th</sup>	1198	97.0%
2009	85.16	44 <sup>th</sup>	1242	96.5%
2010	93.08	17 <sup>th</sup>	1264	98.7%
2011	93.54	26 <sup>th</sup>	1320	98.0%
2012	94.33	16 <sup>th</sup>	1366	98.8%
2013	96.94	28 <sup>th</sup>	1404	98.0%
2014	96.77	27 <sup>th</sup>	1431	98.1%
2015	94.49	52 <sup>nd</sup>	1400	96.3%
2016	95.70	41 <sup>st</sup>	1420	97.1%

# Students sense of belonging in the Middle School

Overall, how much do you feel you belong at your school?



At your school, how accepted do you feel by the other students?

