



Kind. Confident. Prepared.



WASHINGTON
EPISCOPAL SCHOOL



Vision Statement

Washington Episcopal School students stride confidently into the world, delight in it, and contribute to it.

Mission Statement

Washington Episcopal School inspires academic and personal excellence within a joyful learning environment to develop students who are kind, confident, and prepared.

WELCOME!

Here at Washington Episcopal School we provide Nursery to Middle School students with balanced, formative learning experiences that lay a strong foundation for future academic growth. Instilling integrity and compassion, we nurture the personal development and positive wellbeing of each child as a person of individual gifts. Our students thrive as valued members of our inclusive community. Our graduates forge fulfilling lives of purpose and meaning.

We warmly invite you to learn more about the character, curriculum, and community of our school. The overview provided in this viewbook is a great place to start. We encourage you to continue your journey of exploration by scheduling a campus visit to better experience all that WES has to offer.





PORTRAIT OF A WES GRADUATE

KIND

WES graduates have a moral and ethical compass. They exhibit compassion and respect.

CONFIDENT

WES graduates know themselves as learners, are self-advocates, and are comfortable in their own skin. They take risks and exhibit grit, leadership, and citizenship.

PREPARED

WES graduates are balanced, have strong academic skills, and can think critically and creatively. They are global and responsible citizens who positively engage with their community.









KIND

The Case for Kindness

Nursery students greet one another by name at the start of each day. Fifth-graders and their first-grade buddies chat like old friends as they walk to Chapel together. Children in Grade 2 sing songs for residents of a home for the elderly. A third-grader holds the door for a faculty member. A Grade 8 Ambassador answers a question from a new family during Orientation Day in September.

Here at Washington Episcopal School, “Be Kind” is our motto, and kindness is real, palpable, and present in everyday life.

Why kindness? Because kindness builds community and creates a fruitful learning environment, one in which students know their ideas and actions are respected, one in which they feel comfortable tackling challenges and forging connections with others. Kindness adds value to learning experiences, shapes hearts and minds, and ensures our students are equipped to make the world a better place.

Instilling Shared Values

Independent but rooted in an **Episcopal worldview**, WES offers an education that cultivates character and guides students to build lives of purpose and meaning. Weekly Chapel gatherings and religion classes explore topics related to faith and instill key virtues such as kindness, patience, tolerance, thankfulness, and forgiveness. We welcome students of all faith traditions. Faith at WES isn't about convincing or persuading, it is about examining, understanding, and celebrating.

Developing Key Social Skills

WES's **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum** for students corresponds with our values, enhances academic learning, and promotes personal growth and the development of life skills. Our youngest learners explore friendships, self-control, and identifying and expressing their feelings. Elementary classes build on this foundation by developing anti-bullying and conflict resolution strategies, coping skills, and self-esteem. In Middle School, advisory groups delve deeper into topics such as healthy friendships, social media, diversity and justice, and self-advocacy.

Empowering Good Citizens

Community service is an essential element of the WES experience. Our students, faculty, and families put kindness and compassion into action on a regular basis through WES's community service program. From cleaning up and greening up the environment to sending cards and gifts to troops, our community members undertake numerous service activities during the year.

Fostering Meaningful Relationships

Cross-grade collaboration is a WES tradition that enhances our sense of community and fosters friendships that spur personal growth. Chapel Pals, Reading Buddies, and activities such as Field Day provide younger students with role models and mentors and give older students opportunities to practice kindness, empathy, and leadership skills.





Why Uniforms?

School uniforms emphasize our connection to each other and our common purpose as a community of learners. WES students do not distinguish themselves by what they're wearing but by their character, their individual accomplishments, and their contributions to school life.







CONFIDENT

The Advantage of Confidence

Two Nursery students lead their class in morning meeting, pointing out the date for others to see. Without missing a beat, a sixth-grader applies her classroom knowledge of rock and water cycles as her class observes the impact of weathering and erosion in Zion National Park. Three Grade 4 representatives of the Student Advisory Group consult with the Elementary School Director about a proposal they have. At a lectern in the auditorium, a seventh-grader addresses the crowd at an Admission Open House.

Confidence is what empowers students to take the risks that will help them grow, to share their gifts with others, and to accomplish their goals. WES provides a variety of learning experiences that help students develop confidence. In settings that feel supportive and safe, our students try new things, strengthen skills, practice public speaking, collaborate for a greater purpose, step up to lead, help others, advocate for their beliefs, and make an impact on their community and their world.

Inspiring Curious Risk-Takers

WES students are exposed to a variety of learning experiences and opportunities to develop their strengths and interests.

- **Athletics** are open to all who wish to participate, and the vast majority of our students in Grades 5-8 do. Teams include basketball, cross country, lacrosse, track & field, and soccer.
- Preparing for a global world means learning to communicate in more than one language. **Foreign language** study begins in Pre-Kindergarten. French and Spanish are offered. In Grade 6 Latin is added to the curriculum.
- The **visual and performing arts** are integrated into the curriculum and are part of every WES student's education. Fine arts opportunities include: assemblage, drawing, illustration, painting, printmaking, ceramics, sculpture, and more. Chorus, band, *a Capella*, and jazz band are among offerings in music. Public speaking and drama experiences give students confidence in presenting and performing.
- **STEM, innovation, and entrepreneurship** are incorporated into the curriculum at all grade levels, enabling students to practice creative and critical thinking and problem solving.

Cultivating Collaborators and Communicators

In a **co-ed and diverse** environment, WES students learn to appreciate the perspectives and talents of others and develop the skills to engage with people of different family backgrounds, socio-economic means, faith traditions, and geographic connections. Validated as individuals and confident of their place in our community, they are prepared to interact and collaborate with individuals and groups in a diverse, global world.





What's Special About Our Campus?

Kids feel at home on our 10-acre campus in Bethesda, Maryland. That's because our interior and exterior spaces are developmentally appropriate in scale, design, and sensibility. In this child-friendly place, students grow up feeling a sense of ownership and belonging.







PREPARED

Attributes of Prepared Students

Practicing their entrepreneurial skills, a first-grade class conceives of and develops a product—and a plan to sell their invention for charity. A sixth-grader struggles with a math concept and independently stays after school to attend Math Lab for clarification. Demonstrating their grit, teamwork, and openness to new experiences, Grade 4 students each pick up a band instrument for the first time and apply the music reading methods they have learned so far with recorders and Orff instruments. Elementary School students master specific strategies for breaking down stereotypes, identifying and standing up to bullying, and resolving conflicts.

At WES we know that preparing students for success and fulfillment in their future endeavors involves more than teaching concepts in algebra and parts of speech. Our students learn how to innovate, create, observe, explore, solve problems, and self-advocate. They have the mindset to ask, “How can I make a positive impact?” and the capacity to find an answer and enact it. Equipped with a solid academic background, a moral and ethical foundation, and a sense of confidence in themselves and their purpose, WES students and graduates are, above all, prepared and ready for the future.

Engaging Every Student

With an average class size of 14 and a student-to-faculty ratio of 7 to 1, WES is a place where every student is meaningfully engaged, each individual is known, and **every voice is heard**. Teachers provide continuous and constructive feedback on a range of assignments and projects, ensuring every child feels both challenged and nurtured.

Encouraging Active Learning

Beyond the classroom, WES provides students with spaces designed for active learning. On campus these include three science labs, two art studios, a music room, an indoor “discovery” play space for Early Childhood, an innovation lab and maker space, and an outdoor classroom. Field trips and experiential learning opportunities—from engaging with local businesses to international travel—give our students access to a variety of learning resources, exposure to real-world issues, and the benefits of learning by doing.

Experiencing a Dynamic Curriculum

WES provides a **multifaceted learning environment**, grounded in current research and best practices, that balances tradition and innovation. As new methodologies and opportunities develop, WES’s size and agility allow for thoughtful updates in the curriculum and program to ensure that students are receiving the instruction, tools, and resources to best support them in secondary school and beyond.

Learning from Transformative Educators

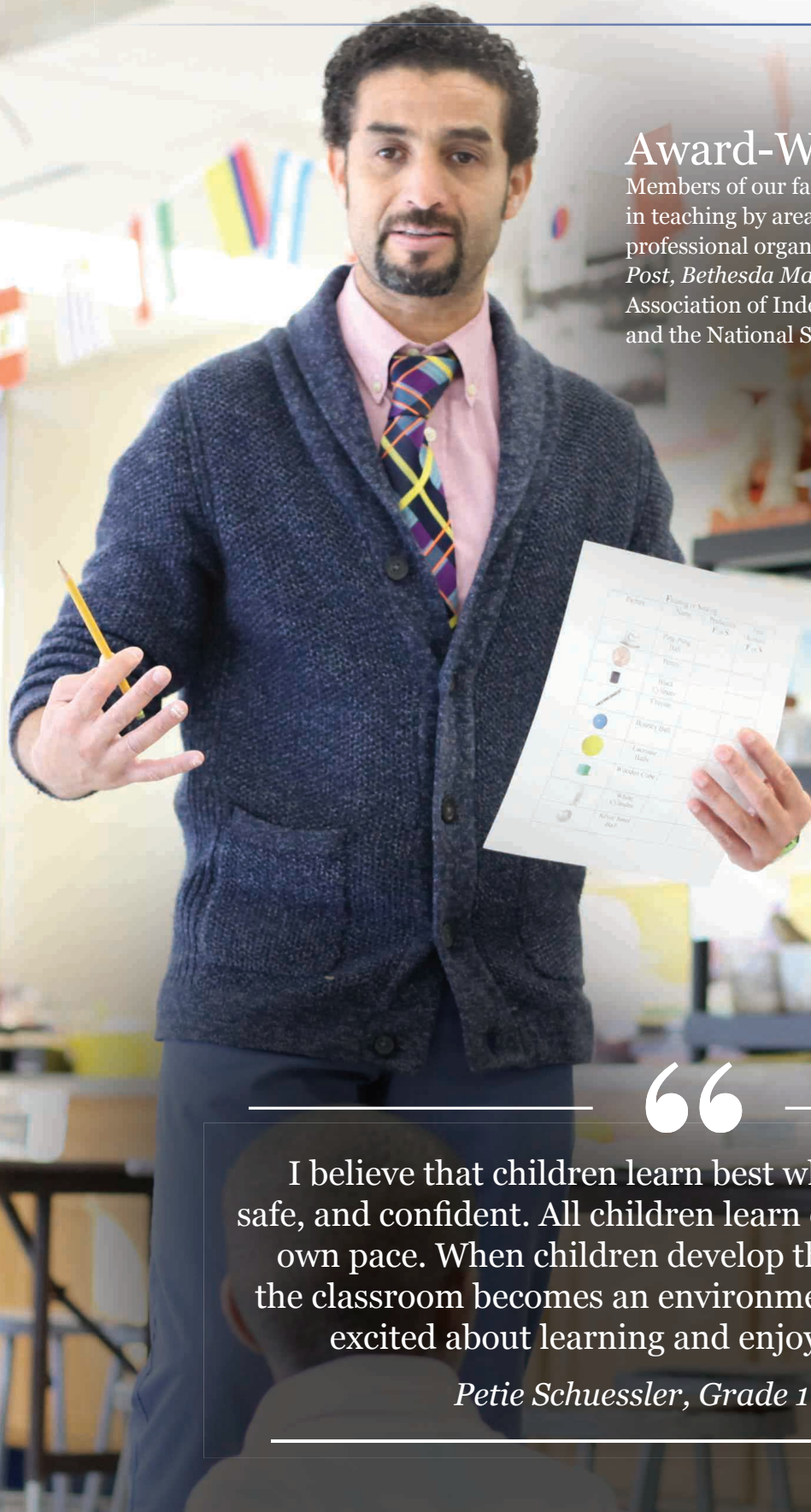
WES’s teachers are **dedicated educators** and lifelong learners. Passionate about their areas of expertise and committed to preparing students for future academic challenges, they also contribute to the vitality of the learning environment as athletic coaches, club advisors, community service enthusiasts, and advisors. More than 75 percent of teachers hold advanced degrees.





Award-Winning Teachers

Members of our faculty have been recognized for excellence in teaching by area news media and community and professional organizations, including *The Washington Post*, *Bethesda Magazine*, Maryland Humanities, Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington, and the National Science Teachers Association.



I believe that children learn best when they feel loved, safe, and confident. All children learn differently and at their own pace. When children develop their self-confidence, the classroom becomes an environment where they can be excited about learning and enjoy the experience.

Petie Schuessler, Grade 1 Teacher



No Better Preparation:

N-8 MODEL

Research has demonstrated that the most significant formative educational period for students is not high school or college but the early years, when fundamental skills are developed and attitudes are shaped. WES's Nursery-Grade 8 model imparts clear advantages. From grade to grade, as students make their way toward the challenges of high school academic work, our intentional curriculum provides breadth in scope and continuity in sequence, building the strongest possible academic foundation. The consistency of our school culture

over these important years makes for seamless transitions. As students move up to Middle School—a time of great change—they feel secure in their sense of belonging and rise to the expectations for leadership. Upon graduation from WES, they feel confident in both their academic preparation and social skills, transitioning to secondary school with enthusiasm and excitement. As Alumni they are grateful for being given the space and time to experience childhood throughout Middle School.





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WES N-8 MODEL: How We Nurture Strong Students and Active Learners

Early Childhood: Nursery to Grade 1

Educational Philosophy: The Whole Child

Early Childhood learning is noisy, active, and surprising. Our curriculum for these critical years provides the whole child with hands-on experience, exploration, fun, and adventure through play-based learning with an intentional scope and sequence connecting year to year. The bar is raised in Grade 1, and students meet the challenge. While the classroom sharpens the mind, the community strengthens character.

Highlights

- Experience three or more study trips to locations including the Kennedy Center, National Building Museum, and National Zoo
- Perform on stage at least two times per year
- Hand-raise chickens in the spring
- Taught in dedicated spaces and by specialized teachers
- Play and learn within a secure campus

Weekly Schedule: Grade 1

Language Arts (daily)
Mathematics (daily)
Social Studies (daily)
STEM & Innovation (2x/week)
Music (2x/week)
French or Spanish (2x/week)
Art (2x/week)
Religion (1x/week)
Physical Education (3x/week)
Library (1x/week)
Recess (2-3x/day)

School Day

Nursery (3s)

Monday–Friday School Day:

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Afternoons: Monday–Thursday

at 3:30 p.m. / Friday: 2:30 p.m.

Pre-K (4s)

Monday–Thursday: 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Friday: 2:30 p.m.

Kindergarten & Grade 1

Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Friday: 2:30 p.m.

Nursery & Pre-K students may arrive as early as 7:40 a.m. for free guided play at no additional fee. Extended Day available daily until 6:00 p.m.



Elementary School: Grades 2-5

Educational Philosophy: Growth Mindset

As articulated by the groundbreaking research of Carol S. Dweck: Abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.

Weekly Schedule: Grade 5

Language Arts (daily)
Mathematics (daily)
Social Studies (3x/week)
STM & Innovation (3x/week)
Band (2x/week)
Chorus (2x/week)
French or Spanish (2x/week)
Religion (1x/week)
Physical Education or Sports
(3-4x/week)
Library (1x/week)
Recess (2-3x/per day)

Highlights

- Adventure to locations like Baltimore Museum of Industry, Chesapeake Bay, Kennedy Center, and Washington National Cathedral
- Perform before an audience at least five times a year
- Experience first overnight study trip to Antietam Battlefield and Harpers Ferry
- Utilize technology including a variety of apps to reinforce classroom studies as well as learn programs like Google Docs and Powerpoint for group work and presentations

Leadership Opportunities

Student Advisory Group
Chapel Pals
Grade 5 & Kindergarten Reading Buddies
Safety Patrols
Admission Ambassadors
Grade 5 Sports (Soccer, Cross Country, Basketball, Track & Field, and Lacrosse)

School Day

Grades 2-5

Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. / 4:30 p.m.
Fridays: 2:30 p.m.

Extended Day available daily until 6:00 p.m.



Middle School: Grades 6-8

Educational Philosophy: Balance and Growth

The Middle School balances rigorous academics with an intimate atmosphere and nurturing community in which adolescents can thrive academically, grow socially, and establish relationships with peers across grade levels. Letting kids be kids, there is still time for recess and fun.

Highlights

- Play competitive sports including soccer, cross country, basketball, track & field, and lacrosse
- Meet weekly within Advisory groups comprised of Grade 6, 7, and 8 students
- Perform in front of an audience more than five times a year
- Take team-building trips to Calleva, Chesapeake Bay, and Shenandoah Mountains
- School dances
- Develop leadership skills through Student Government, Admission Ambassadors, and Chapel Pals

Life-Changing Study Trips

All WES Middle School students apply and further develop a range of content knowledge and social-emotional skills each year on these incredible, one-of-a-kind study trips. Trips are covered by the cost of tuition.

Grade 6 - Geology and History of the Desert Southwest

Grade 7 - History and Culture of Italy

Grade 8 – Culture and Language Student Exchange in France or Spain



Weekly Schedule: Grade 8

Language Arts (daily)
American History &
Government (daily)
Algebra 1 or Geometry (daily)
Physical Science (daily)
French or Spanish (daily)
Physical Education or Sports (3-4x/week)
Latin (2x/week)
Art (2x/week)
Band/Music (2x/week)
Speech and Drama (1x/week)
Religion (1x/week, half year)
Recess (2x/daily)

School Day

Grades 5-8

Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. /4:30 p.m.
and Fridays: 2:30 p.m.

Extended Day available daily until 6:00 p.m.





OUR GRADUATES

A WES education prepares young people to be successful at the next stage of their educational journey. WES graduates are accepted to a wide variety of secondary schools, including private, public, single-sex, religiously affiliated, and boarding schools. Our graduates distinguish themselves at top-tier schools as good citizens, leaders, and lifelong learners because of their experiences at WES. They have the confidence to explore their own unique paths.

Continuing Their Journey A Sample of the Outstanding Secondary Schools Our Graduates Have Attended in Recent Years

Academy of the Holy Cross
Barrie School
Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School
Bishop McNamara
Bullis School
Choate Rosemary Hall (CT)
Connelly School of the Holy Child
Deerfield Academy (MA)
Duke Ellington School of
the Arts (DC)
Edmund Burke School
Episcopal High School (VA)
The Field School
Forman School (CT)
Friends - Baltimore
Georgetown Day School
Georgetown Preparatory School

Georgetown Visitation
Preparatory School
Gonzaga College High School
The Heights School
The Hotchkiss School (CT)
Holton-Arms School
Landon School
The Madeira School
Maret School
Mercersburg Academy (PA)
Millbrook School (NY)
National Cathedral School
Our Lady of Good Counsel
Peddie School (NJ)
Phillips Exeter Academy (NH)
The Potomac School
Richard Montgomery High School
School without Walls DC

Sidwell Friends School
St. Albans School
St. Andrew's College (Canada)
St. Andrew's Episcopal School
St. Anselm's Abbey
St. James School (MD)
St. Johns College High School
St. Paul's School (NH)
Stone Ridge School of the
Sacred Heart
Thomas Wootton High School
Walter Johnson High School
Washington International School
Westminster School (CT)
Winston Churchill High School
Woodrow Wilson High School
Yorktown High School

“

“WES truly prepared me for the challenges of high school. Whether it was in algebra packets or in biology and chemistry labs, the WES curriculum helped me to excel in Honors and AP classes. Extracurricular clubs and activities at WES were great examples of the many new choices I discovered at high school. Even though my high school is much bigger in comparison, I was able to adapt and succeed.”

Aidan, Class of 2016





COME VISIT


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The best way to see how Washington Episcopal School students embody these qualities and flourish in a vibrant learning environment is to visit our campus. Our Admission Office staff welcomes your interest in WES and is ready to support you as you explore educational options for your child.

To learn more about the WES experience, register for an Open House, or schedule a visit, please see the admission pages on our website, w-e-s.org, or call the Admission Office at 301-652-7878.

Affording WES

WES is proud of its legacy of supporting deserving students and families. On average, 27% of WES families receive a Financial Aid award. Grants range from a few thousand dollars to nearly full aid. Schedule a Financial Aid consultation today!



Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Washington Episcopal School is a diverse community, where the uniqueness of each member of the school is celebrated. WES appreciates the differences in our ethnicities, cultures, learning styles, physical abilities, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status. WES is dedicated to the Episcopal Church's mission of social justice and strives to challenge prejudice, intolerance, racism, and oppression.



The community at WES is extraordinary: the students are kind and eager to learn; the parents are caring and supportive; and the faculty and staff are committed to providing each child with the best education possible. I cannot say enough about my outstanding colleagues. This is a very special place to be a teacher as well as a student, and I look forward to each new day at WES.

Caterina Earle, Science Teacher, Grades 7 & 8



WASHINGTON
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Nursery – Grade 8
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