

# Mizzentop Day School



## Admissions Information

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Mizzentop Day School is dedicated to creating a diverse community of learners. Our admissions process is a reflection of this commitment. We welcome and celebrate students of all ethnic, racial, religious and socio-economic backgrounds who can contribute to and benefit from our program. Students are selected for admission to the school on the basis of developmental readiness, individual strengths and talents, potential to thrive in our environment and the ability to contribute positively to the larger school community. We do give priority to siblings of current students.

### **Step One: Parent Visit**

Parents call the Admissions Office to arrange an appointment for a parent visit. Typically, visits are scheduled weekday mornings while school is in session. A parent visit generally includes a tour of the school and a discussion with the Director of Admissions about the program and usually lasts approximately one hour.

### **Step Two: Application Form and Fee**

Parents who decide to proceed with an application for their child must do the following:

- a. Complete the application form and return it with a \$45.00 application fee. This non-refundable fee covers the processing of the application, your child's visit and the admissions evaluation process.
- b. Applications for Kindergarten and above must include a completed Teacher Recommendation form. For Grades K-5, one (1) recommendation is required, and for Grades 6, 7 and 8, two (2) recommendations (English and Mathematics) must be completed. Parents of Senior Pre-Kindergarten applicants with prior pre-school or daycare experience will be asked to include one (1) recommendation from a pre-school teacher or day care provider.
- c. Submit the "Request for Release of Student Information" form to your child's present school (if applicable). This form requests several pieces of information such as report cards and all testing information. It is the parent's responsibility to stay in contact with your child's current school to be certain that the information is sent to MDS.

In order to be considered in the regular admission cycle, applications for fall admission are **due by February 15th**. *Applicants cannot be considered until all the required materials have been submitted.*

**Step Three: Student Visit**

Upon receipt of the completed application form, the teacher's recommendation and school records, the Director of Admissions will contact parents to schedule a visit for their child. *The Student Visit is required and completes the student application process.* The visit will include joining an appropriate class and participating in the regular class schedule for the day. This includes all academic and specials classes. Applicants may also take some individualized assessments to determine readiness, which contributes to the admissions process. We make every effort to create an experience that is enjoyable and stress-free for the visiting child.

**Step Four: Notification of Admission Decision**

Applications are reviewed by the Admissions Committee, composed of the Director of Admissions, Head of School and representative(s) from one or more grade level divisions as appropriate. Applications received after the February 15th submission deadline are accepted and considered as space is available. Applications for mid-year transfers are also accepted as space is available and are considered as received throughout the school year.

## **School Overview**

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### **Mission**

Mizzentop Day School, an independent, co-educational day school for students in Early Childhood through Grade 8, provides a stimulating and innovative educational program dedicated to instilling Living Values and a life-long love of learning in each student.

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### **Small Class Size**

Small instructional groups allow students to ask questions and receive the individualized attention and immediate feedback that reinforce learning. Small class size also allows the faculty to utilize a wide range of teaching approaches, thereby providing students with a variety of learning experiences. Nonacademic subjects and extracurricular activities conducted with whole groups or combined groups can offer the opportunity for greater social interaction.

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### **Flexible, Individualized Programs**

Mizzentop Day School believes students benefit from learning in an environment where a variety of abilities and learning styles are valued. Each grade level has a core curriculum that is adapted as necessary to meet the needs of individual students. For some students this means enrichment of the program beyond the grade level, while other students may require reinforcement to close a gap between intellectual potential and academic performance. Student progress is frequently and objectively assessed with a variety of methods and tools to ensure maximum growth for each student.

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### **Curriculum Integration and Continuum**

At Mizzentop Day School we believe that learning has more value when concepts and topics are taught in a related context rather than in isolation. A multi-disciplinary and integrated curriculum correlates subject matter and promotes higher levels of thinking. Early Childhood and Lower School themes tie classroom learning around a common topic or idea. Middle School classes work collaboratively to connect content and skills taught in both core and special area classes.

In addition to integration, curriculum is also developed as a continuum throughout the grade levels. Students use previous knowledge and experiences as a foundation for academic growth in each subject area each year.

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### **Building Self-Esteem and Caring for Others**

The positive environment at Mizzentop encourages children to set personal goals and achieve them, which reinforces each child's self-esteem. In the process of working for their own success, students gain respect for themselves as well as for the goals and efforts of others. By participating in the school community, they learn how to be compassionate and productive citizens of the larger world. The Living Values Education Program encourages all students to work as a community of learners.

Mizzentop aims to prepare students to face the future with confidence and to succeed in a changing world. This is done through dedication to supporting and facilitating each student's highest academic goals, respect for oneself and compassion for others. Our greatest successes occur when parents fully support the same principles and share the challenge and excitement of education.

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### **Living Values**

The experience of feeling safe, respected, appreciated, loved and understood is an experience every child in the world deserves. At Mizzentop Day School we accept the responsibility to be certain that our students grow up in such a warm environment. Further, it is also our mission to support our local and global communities through raising children who will provide this nurturing environment for others. We seek to reach these goals through our personal commitments as educators, as well as through implementing a world-wide program developed through the United Nations: the Living Values Educational Program.

Values are integrated into a student's experience in many ways. More than "teaching" values, the Living Values Program leads our school to "live" the values. Universal values such as **LOVE, PEACE, TOLERANCE, RESPONSIBILITY, HUMILITY, RESPECT, SIMPLICITY, UNITY, HONESTY, COOPERATION, HAPPINESS and FREEDOM** are integrated into a student's over-all education at MDS. Whether in class, in the hallway, at lunch, at a game, or anywhere we gather as a school, our faculty and staff are continually practicing traditional and innovative ways to create this reality. In the classroom, teachers may lead activities that are focused specifically on a value, but more so, values are uncovered in the curriculum in ways that are germane to the curricular theme. For example, math students may discover the value of simplicity while studying division; music students may explore cooperation through ensemble performance; drama students may experience freedom through improvisation.

Other ways the Living Values are woven through our school:

- Middle School small-group advisory program

- Student-run announcements with weekly reminders and visualizations
  - Value themes for concerts and plays
  - Ever-increasing community service programming
  - A respectful community fostered through the Systematic Training for Effective Teaching (STET) program
  - School-wide calendar to focus our school community together on one value each month
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### **Community Service**

At Mizzentop Day School community service is an integral part of our educational program. Through community service, students learn first hand that they can make a difference in the world. Each year, students and teachers are involved in a number of community-minded projects which emphasize several of our core values such as responsibility, respect, tolerance, love, peace and humility. Past community service projects include work for local organizations such as Guiding Eyes for the Blind, The Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, Dutchess Community Action Outreach, Midnight Run, Putnam Humane Society and The Ryan McElroy Foundation. The students have also collaborated on relief efforts in the face of natural disasters and assembled care packages for our troops abroad.

Annually, there are a few projects on which the school works together. At Thanksgiving, each class collects essential food items needed for a Thanksgiving dinner. These items are donated to the Pawling Community Resource Center for distribution in the community. During the holidays, students decorate a tree with mittens, hats and scarves, which are then donated to a local charity. A toy and coat drive is another expression of reaching out to families in need during the holidays.

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### **Effective Discipline**

At Mizzentop Day School we utilize several different means to help create the kind of environment in which children feel valued and loved, where children are able to learn at their greatest potential. To this end, we understand that good discipline is both a result and a cause of high self-esteem. The healthy growth of self-esteem allows each child to learn how to become a contributing member of the classroom and achieve the goal of effective discipline: self-discipline. Faculty and staff at Mizzentop Day School encourage self-discipline, guiding children to be responsible and cooperative of their own accord, by using an approach known as STET.

Systematic Training for Effective Teaching (STET) and Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) are programs that help teachers and parents create effective discipline by leading children and teens to develop good communication skills and form positive

relationships. Consistent with our Living Values Program, STET is based on the following values and beliefs:

- The principle of equality: that teachers and students are equal in terms of worth and dignity.
- The concept of mutual respect: both teachers and students deserve to be treated respectfully.
- Decision making skills are developed by being given the opportunity to make choices.
- Children can take responsibility for their decisions, thereby owning their own problems.
- Children are capable of growing into self-disciplined individuals.
- Children grow with encouragement.
- Everyone needs to have the courage to be imperfect.

Decision making is an important element in the program and is developed in two distinct ways:

1. Everyday behavior choices are made by students and they are held responsible for their choices. Teachers may respond to certain student choices with communication skills such as reflective listening, I-messages and class meetings. It is not unusual to hear “When I see running in the classroom, I worry that someone will get hurt. What can you do to help us all feel safe?” or “Are you using good body space? What do you need to do?” Teachers use special language to help the children focus on their choices and learn to make adjustments.

Consequences are given for choices that interfere with the rights of others. When children repeatedly make inappropriate choices, they need to take responsibility for those choices and experience the consequences of their actions.

2. Everyday decisions that indicate children are trying to cooperate or be contributing members of our class are strongly encouraged. You will hear, “You are working hard to show your friends you care about them” and “Listen to how quietly we are working. Everyone is respecting our need for quiet when we work.” Encouragement sends the message to the students that we have confidence in them, accept them, recognize their efforts and recognize and appreciate their contributions and assets.

**Every teacher, aide and administrator in the Mizzen-top Day School community receives formal STET training to ensure a consistent environment in which children can develop to their full potential as community members - both in and out of school.**

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## **Learning to Read and Write**

Mizzentop Day School emphasizes the following fundamental elements of traditional language instruction: phonetic analysis, reading comprehension, written expressive language, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, handwriting, oral language development and listening skills. Our faculty is trained in teaching these important language competencies, which bridge all academic areas and are necessary to understanding directions, organizing information, building a fund of general knowledge and expressing oneself with clarity and conviction.

Additionally, the MDS faculty recognizes and builds upon the rich language experiences that all children bring to school. These prior experiences lay the foundations for formal reading and writing instruction. We strive to provide children with extensive language opportunities that will develop life-long reading and writing behaviors. Our beliefs about reading and writing instruction stem from current research and from our experiences with and knowledge of how children learn to read and write. Instruction utilizes a variety of literature to create a balanced language arts program. Activities that encourage the use of critical thinking skills are an integral part of instruction. Teachers organize literacy instruction using multiple approaches depending on the purpose and the objective of a particular lesson.

Parents play a critical role in developing children's language/life experiences. Successful readers read for both meaning and enjoyment by using:

- knowledge cues (knowledge and past experiences)
- semantic cues (text and illustrations)
- syntactic cues (sentence structure and grammar)
- phonetic cues (letter-sound relationships)

Students will be immersed in a rich literature and language environment as he or she listens, talks, writes, and reads using whole meaningful texts throughout the school day. Through the use of teacher demonstrations, students will be taught how to use all cueing systems effectively: peer modeling, discussion, small group instruction and daily reading and writing opportunities. As a result of this multi-modality approach, children will be immersed in a "print-rich" classroom where reading and writing are integrated throughout the day.

The Pre-K and Kindergarten programs focus on early literacy activities that promote language development, vocabulary growth, listening comprehension and a beginning understanding of how print works (e.g. directionality of print, letter sound relationships, space between words, etc.). Pre-K and Kindergarten children become writers and authors as they express their ideas through drawing, dictating stories and experimenting with their own writing and spelling.

It is expected that Mizzentop Day School students read and/or are read to each day at school and at home. Students are also expected to write on a daily basis.

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## **Examples of Reading and Writing Instruction at Mizzentop Day School**

### **Guided reading/writing:**

This is the core of our instructional program. The teacher develops lessons based on the needs and interests of children. These lessons are used to teach reading/writing strategies and skills that will enable the children to read and write independently.

### **Reading aloud:**

A competent reader, usually the teacher and perhaps a Middle School student, reads aloud to the children, promoting story enjoyment and literature appreciation.

### **Shared reading/shared writing:**

In an enjoyable reading situation, the students follow the text and are invited to read along while observing the teacher reading. Similarly, the whole class generates a writing piece as the teacher records and contributes to their words/thoughts.

### **Independent reading/writing:**

Students select a book or topic to read, and then write about what they have learned in their writing journal. For young students, the writing journal may entail drawing pictures with phonetic writing in order to relay their thoughts. Reading and writing are skills that are best developed through continual practice.

Students take responsibility for daily reading, writing and record keeping. In every classroom, a well-organized collection of quality literature, a wide variety of picture and chapter books, fiction and non-fiction, poetry and other resources can be found. The literature collection is located in an attractive and inviting reading area that is accessible to all students.

## Pre-Kindergarten Academic Overview

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Our Pre-Kindergarten program is dedicated to providing a developmentally appropriate experience for three and four-year-old students. The primary goal of the program is to develop a love of learning. This is accomplished through play, multi-sensory activities and emergent reading and writing activities, all of which utilize a hands-on approach. The program includes:

- Accelerated learning made possible by using research-proven programs. Each class provides enrichment and reinforcement in all areas to meet the individual needs of a child.
- An optimal student-teacher ratio, which facilitates an individualized program that meets each child's emotional, social and academic needs. This creates an environment where the teacher is able to quickly answer a child's question, and also encourages the shy child to speak easily.
- Carefully selected, caring teachers and assistants who believe in the goodness and ability in every child. Teachers help nurture each child's belief in himself or herself, and always motivate learning in a positive way. Mizzentop Day School Pre-Kindergarten teachers hold college degrees and have both early childhood education training and extensive experience in the Pre-Kindergarten classroom. Frequent communication between teachers and parents is encouraged by the school to ensure each child's success.
- A focus on heightened student self-esteem. This is fostered as a result of the individualization possible in a small class. It is achieved through teacher encouragement, achievement in learning and the building of social skills to encourage friendships. Behavior management techniques (STET) are integrated throughout the day to bridge the gap between the social, emotional and academic areas of each child's day.
- Opportunities for our youngest students to grow socially, emotionally and academically in a fun and nurturing environment.

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## **Reading, Writing and Literature**

The primary goal in language arts is to instill a love of reading and writing. Our children, who are read to daily, are provided with an introduction to letters, sounds, and when appropriate, sight words. Great care is taken to choose high quality literature, which relates to the interests and themes of the class. When the instructional theme is "Spring," for example, children are exposed to books about seeds, plants and baby animals, which reinforce the concepts of growth. Students ready for more of a challenge will work on blending sounds, learning sight words and emergent reading skills using a multi-sensory approach. Children are encouraged to express themselves in journals. This expression begins with children drawing pictures and teachers scribing for them. As children gain knowledge of letters, they use "Kid Print" to write what they have drawn in sentence form. Journaling enables them to see their ideas as words and helps facilitate self-expression. The Pre-School version of the Handwriting Without Tears writing program is also used to develop the children's pre-writing/writing skills.

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## **Centers**

In order to encourage the development of skills and concepts taught in class, as well as a child's imagination, students explore theme-based centers during "center time." This time is either directed by the teacher or a "free" period during which children have opportunities both collectively and independently to choose a sustained activity. These activities may include housekeeping, places in the community, math and science, blocks, drawing, reading, card games, Legos, painting and/or puzzles. As the curriculum evolves throughout the year, so do the centers.

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## **Mathematics**

Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley is our Pre-Kindergarten math series. It is used to introduce children to the world of numbers, problem solving and critical thinking skills. Elements of this program include calendar, counting, matching, number recognition, estimating, sorting, comparing and contrasting, days of the week and grouping objects with similar characteristics. Fostering their natural curiosity, children use a variety of manipulatives and math-related literature to investigate math concepts and skills such as:

- Counting to ten/twenty
- Recognizing numbers to five/ten
- Sorting and classifying objects by color, size and shape
- Recognizing shapes and primary colors
- Patterning objects
- Creating sets of objects

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**Social Studies and Science**

An integrated approach using literature and hands-on activities make units such as trees, insects, family, community and space an exciting educational adventure. Hands-on projects and experiments will accompany basic concepts, which will be taught in each unit of study. Children will experience their community and the people who live and work there by going on field trips. The use of the outdoors as a backdrop for demonstrating scientific concepts allows student to make a real connection to the world around them.

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**Special Areas**

The students in the Junior Pre-K and Senior Pre-K are exposed to Spanish, Computer, Physical Education, Music and Library, depending on the days of the week they attend school.

## **K-8 Academic Curriculum Overview**

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### **Reading (K-2)**

At Mizzentop Day School, reading is taught in a structured sequence with a strong foundation of phonetic skills. Beginning with single letters and sounds, students progress to words, phrases and sentences. Phonetic skills are reinforced by a variety of motivating and challenging multi-sensory activities and games. Students learn necessary spelling rules and sight words as they progress at their own pace. Reading comprehension techniques are an integral part of the instruction, and a variety of multi-modality strategies, including kinesthetic, auditory and visual, are taught to insure that students understand what they are reading. Students progress beyond literal comprehension to inferential and evaluative comprehension, which enables them to draw conclusions and make judgments about what they read.

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### **Literature (3-8)**

Literature acquaints readers with the ideas of great thinkers, the beauty of language and the richness of the human condition. We encourage a love of books and reading in all students by introducing them to a wide variety of literature and genres appropriate for their age through a combination of assigned reading and the opportunity to read books of their own choosing. D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) time gives students the opportunity to individually enjoy reading in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere. Reading aloud by teachers exposes students to ideas and language that may be beyond their current reading level, but not beyond their ability to enjoy and comprehend. New vocabulary, character development, plot, theme and other literary concepts are discussed and written about by students.

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### **Writing (K-8)**

The objective of writing instruction at Mizzentop Day School is to teach students to express themselves in written form with clarity and purpose. Students practice both creative and analytical writing and learn that writing, in all its forms, is a process. In Middle School, students participate in a writing lab where they have guided instruction to assist them with assignments from all subject areas.

Students begin by learning to map ideas and to organize and develop each paragraph. They revise drafts with tighter organization, more accurate word choice and varied sentence structure. As students begin the editing process, student/teacher conferencing and peer conferencing are encouraged. They also learn to edit their own work for proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization and handwriting. Finally, students are encouraged to “publish” or share their finished work with classmates, the

school, larger community and family. This publishing process highlights the importance of the writer's audience as well as promoting pride in finished work.

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### **Speaking and Listening Skills (K-8)**

Effective speaking skills enable students to express themselves accurately and convincingly. Teachers use all subject areas to develop student speaking skills, and the ability to exchange ideas with peers, clarify misunderstandings, offer support and make constructive suggestions. There are frequent opportunities to make presentations before small and large groups. Good listeners are able to gather information, follow directions and understand others. Sharing time is a daily activity in the writing curriculum as students gain confidence in this ability to speak in front of a group. Listening to literature read aloud and correctly following oral instructions fosters listening skills. More formal public speaking instruction is integrated into Middle School English, History and Drama curricula, demonstrating our commitment to having students express themselves. Public speaking instruction culminates with each Eighth Grader presenting a speech on their graduation day.

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### **Study Skills (K-8)**

Good study skills help students tackle new situations and new information, enabling children to learn how they learn best. In addition to practicing organizational skills related to reading and writing, students learn to organize assignments and manage time. Teachers provide modeling and practice, with the goal of having students handle an increasing variety of assignments independently in the classroom and as homework. As students develop, they use assignment/planning books (required) and learn note taking, outlining, test-taking and research skills.

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### **Mathematics (K-8)**

Mathematics helps us describe and explain the world we live in, and Mizzentop Day School emphasizes the practical applications of math in order to motivate students to learn. Our program is designed to develop each student's computational ability, enhance logical thinking and unite these skills to increase the ability to apply mathematics in problem solving. New concepts are made concrete by the use of objects that students can see, feel and manipulate. Each concept builds sequentially on the previous one. The memorization of necessary facts and formulas is facilitated by a variety of multi-modality approaches. MDS uses an advanced grade level Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley Diamond Edition Math series through the fifth grade level. As mathematics begins to move from the concrete to the conceptual realm (Middle School), students are developmentally grouped based on their readiness for abstract mathematical thinking. Teaching groups are very small, typically ranging from 7-10 students. Depending on their readiness for abstract thinking, students will either

complete a full pre-algebra course or a typical 9th year algebra course by the time they graduate from Mizzentop in Eighth Grade.

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### **Science (K-8)**

The fundamentals of scientific inquiry and observation, analysis and the drawing of conclusions are skills with applicability to all aspects of life. The science program at Mizzentop Day School in Grades K through 4 blends Life Science, Physical Science and Earth Science each year. The program is designed to stimulate natural curiosity and interest in scientific investigation. Students have direct experiences that encourage them to observe, experiment (individually and in groups) and use their reading, writing and math skills to practice making rational and informed decisions about the natural world. Utilizing our greenhouse, students can be engaged in growing and maintaining plants. Beginning in Grade 5 through Grade 8, the sequence is Environmental Science, Life Science, Physical Science and Earth Science. The Middle School Science curriculum continues Mizzentop Day School's commitment to engaging, hands-on learning through daily lessons in our Science Lab. Weekly extended lab periods allow students the opportunity for more in-depth practice of the scientific method.

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### **Social Studies (K-4)**

The Lower School Social Studies curriculum is based upon an integrated thematic and hands-on approach. Kindergarten students are given a foundation of skills and concepts in their study of communities and geography. The First Grade builds on the study of communities by exploring rules and defining what makes a good citizen. The focus then turns toward the Journey of the Mayflower, Thanksgiving and other holidays. Students move on to study the History of Early American Explorers and the Westward Expansion of America, Immigration and Civil Rights. Each grade level curriculum is a continuum as it builds upon the previous year. Geography encompasses aspects of history and science: the physical processes that shape life, interactions between humans and their environment, and relationships between people, places and culture. Field trips to museums and historical sites enrich the curriculum.

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### **History (5-8)**

The History curriculum is based upon a highly enriched and motivating hands-on program. History is divided into instruction in World Civilization and American Civilization. The World Civilization curriculum fosters curiosity and understanding about the world beyond students' immediate locality, introducing varied civilizations and ways of life. The content spans early civilization in Greece, Rome, China and Europe during the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Reformation. Students in Grade 7 are fully engaged in a study of American History. In Grade 8 students study Twentieth Century History, including World War I, World War II and The Cold War.

## **K-8 Special Areas Curriculum**

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### **Art**

The Art program at Mizzentop Day School gives students a variety of opportunities to express themselves, build self-esteem and develop an appreciation for art in its many forms. Drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics and collage are just some of the media in which students may work. The creation of art helps students develop eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills, as well as the cognitive skills necessary for organizing thoughts and materials to follow a project through to completion. These projects, along with examples from art history, are frequently used to amplify concepts presented in other subjects, such as social studies, science and literature.

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### **Drama**

The Drama program is designed to build a variety of theatre skills including stage presence, expression, listening and following direction, improvisation, playwriting and public speaking, while coordinating with grade level curricular goals. These skills are taught through a variety of theatre games, projects and “mini performances” which are themed to relate to current classroom studies. Our goal is to give the students a wide variety of performance opportunities so that their dramatic experience will not be limited to a single Spring play with one lead actor.

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### **Music**

The Music program combines active musical expression with listening enjoyment and appreciation. Students sing, compose, play several musical instruments, and take part in movement and dance activities. Grade-level and small group performances give every child a chance to experience success, show support to fellow classmates and develop self-confidence. Students study the lives of the great composers and are introduced to a wide variety of music including folk, classical, world and musical theater. The Mizzentop Day School Music curriculum gives students the opportunity to develop listening and awareness as well as music creation and performance skills. Additionally, students learn to integrate material learned in previous music lessons as well as curricula from other subjects at MDS to enhance the relevancy of their multi-faceted education. Finally, students discover how music is and how it can further become a part of their lives.

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### **Physical Education**

Students are exposed to a variety of team sports and physical fitness activities. Exposure to different activities helps students discover their likes and talents.

All classes begin the year participating in cooperative games which allows them to feel comfortable within the group and work successfully together throughout the year. The program emphasizes good sportsmanship and three core values - respect, responsibility and safety. A main objective of this program is the development of sound skills and overall athletic ability. We do stress, however, that ability alone does not create a well-rounded athlete. The Physical Education Program helps students develop a strong sense of self-awareness and confidence.

Activities offered during the school year may include:

- Badminton
- Basketball
- Climbing Wall
- Cooperative and Group Games
- Dance
- Floor Hockey
- Lacrosse
- Soccer
- Track and Field
- Tumbling
- Volleyball

Interscholastic Teams (Grades 5-8):

Coed Sports

- Varsity Soccer (fall)
- Jr. Varsity Soccer (fall)
- Varsity Basketball (winter)
- Jr. Varsity Basketball (winter)

Girls Sports

- Field Hockey (fall)
- Lacrosse (spring)

Boys Sports

- Lacrosse (spring)

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## Health

The Health curriculum at Mizzentop covers a broad spectrum of information. Classes learn age-appropriate material from the following ten themes:

- Alcohol and Drugs
- Body Care and Awareness
- Community and Environmental Health

- Family Health
- Sexuality (Grades 5-8)
- Mental and Emotional Health
- Nutrition
- Personal and Consumer Health
- Physical Activity
- Safety - Home and Personal
- Tobacco

The objective of our program is to address the three characteristics of overall health - physical, mental and social. Each class, Kindergarten through Eighth Grade, learns information through a variety of formats which may include role-playing, skits, storybooks, projects and community resources.

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### **Technology**

**(K-4)** In Computer classes, students in Kindergarten through Third Grade learn the basic parts and proper use and care of a computer. By Third Grade students are introduced to formal keyboarding instruction. Lower School classes are primarily software-driven and support classroom curriculum in both Language Arts and Mathematics. Teachers collaborate to customize a program for individual classes. By Fourth Grade, in addition to touch typing, students are introduced to basic internet research, word processing and PowerPoint.

**(5-8)** Students in Fifth through Seventh Grade explore the history of computers and how they work. They also become skilled at the use of word processing programs, spreadsheets and PowerPoint. Additionally, students gain knowledge of safe, ethical and efficient methods for internet research. By the end of Eighth Grade, students have explored advanced units including: basic and advanced programming, Claymation and digital photography, podcasting, audio and video creation, website design and yearbook page design using Adobe Photoshop and Indesign. Skills are developed through project-oriented lessons which are integrated with core academic subjects.

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### **Foreign Language**

Studying a foreign language enhances a student's education, providing the foundation for further personal and scholastic achievement. Additionally, Foreign Language studies prepare our students to enter secondary school positioned for success.

The ability to communicate in a language other than one's own enables students to grow academically and personally. Competence in communicating in languages other than English enriches learning and creates a new foundation for intellectual growth.

In Pre-Kindergarten through Fourth Grade, our students study Spanish. Beginning in the Fifth Grade, students have a choice of Spanish or French.

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## **Library**

The goal of the Mizzentop Day School Library is to create an atmosphere in which our students will regard the library as a warm, inviting, friendly, fun and interesting place to visit where they will feel confident in choosing literature and conducting research. To help achieve this goal, our School Library has over 11,700 books for our students and teachers to enjoy -- all available by means of Follett's 'Destiny' online cataloging system, which is accessible on every classroom and library computer. Each class, Pre-K to 4, visits the library once a week for library and book skills instruction at a grade appropriate level, taught in a comprehensive and sequential program. In addition, grades Kindergarten to 4 have the opportunity to check-out books for their reading pleasure. Students spend their scheduled class time learning the basics of library online catalog use, knowledge of award winning books, authors/illustrators and book genres all in fiction and non-fiction works, as well the navigation of the Dewey Decimal System. Our students in grades 5 to 8 enjoy our library using their new found skills where they are welcome to check-out library materials independently.

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