

Why The Sycamore School?

The middle school years are a pivotal, predictive, and possibly life-altering stage of development.

- **We nurture creativity to spark a love of learning.** Conventional education is focused on standardized tests, rigid standards and acceleration that diminishes curiosity and the desire to learn.
- **We are equally focused on social-emotional and academic development and civic engagement.** Conventional education often creates excessive stress and can undermine individual development of character, connection to the community and compassion.
- **We develop independent problem solvers.** Traditional practices force students into one way of learning and thinking, producing a system of winners and losers. Our world needs strong leaders, thinkers, and feelers, not just survivors.



“The Sycamore School is a lot more project based [than my previous school] and the students get to make more of their own decisions.

-Sycamore Student

“Our child comes home excited (and talking!) about what she is learning in school.

-Sycamore Parent



Conventional Schools

Students can get lost, feel invisible and vulnerable in a large school setting

Large classes with teachers as focus

Standardized test- based curriculum

Common instruction for entire class

All teaching happens in the classroom



Sycamore School



Students feel safe in a nurturing, inclusive learning community

Small classes focusing on student-teacher collaboration. 1:10 teacher/student ratio.

Dynamic curriculum with real-world application

Students help shape individualized instruction

Learning happens everywhere— in the classroom and the community



THE SYCAMORE SCHOOL

Learning Rediscovered

5TH-12TH GRADE



The Arlington Center
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The Sycamore School

Personalized experiential learning.

OUR CURRICULUM

The Sycamore School integrates academic development, social emotional growth and civic engagement. Our curriculum encompasses elements of the following evidence-based educational models:

- Framework for 21st Century Learning
- Universal Design for Learning
- Common Core State Standards
- Mindful Schools
- Connected Math
- Next Generation Science

Teachers create a dynamic learning process by building relationships with students to personalize instruction.

- Students make choices based on interests and influence how content is learned and mastery is demonstrated.
- Students learn in a living classroom, making use of local resources through field studies and service learning opportunities.
- Our community embraces tolerance for diverse viewpoints and acceptance of differences; we encourage each student to find and use his or her unique voice.

The Sycamore School's 3 Roots

The Sycamore School integrates academic development, social emotional growth and civic engagement. We value all three core branches of personal growth and will use curricula to support a student's development as a whole person.

1. Academic Development

Helping students master the content knowledge, specific skills, and literacies needed to succeed in work and life in order to become critical thinkers who can make connections, solve problems, and communicate clearly. How? Through...

APPROACHES	OUTCOMES
Experiential & Project Based Learning	Students connect concepts across content areas and to the real world
Personalized Instruction with Student Choice	Students take ownership of their learning resulting in increased self-sufficiency and confidence
Integrated Curriculum	Mastery of 21st Century Literacies (e.g., Financial Literacy, Economic Literacy, Technology Literacy, Global Awareness)
Specialized Reading, Writing & Math Instruction	Content knowledge mastery



2. Social and Emotional Development

Helping each student develop mindfulness by increasing self, social, and cultural awareness to become productive, responsible leaders and collaborators. How? Through...

APPROACHES	OUTCOMES
Regular Mindfulness Practice	Self & Social Awareness
Improv & Theater Experiences	Creativity, Communication & Collaboration Skills
Advisory & Mentoring Groups	Responsible Decision Making
Cooperative Learning	Resiliency, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills

3. Civic Engagement

Helping students explore environmental, economic, and political systems in order to develop strengths and aptitudes to improve the quality of life in the community. How? Through...

APPROACHES	OUTCOMES
Living Classroom	Meaningful Learning Experiences
Field Studies	Career Exploration
Exploring Community Resources	Civic Literacy
Service Learning	Community Involvement

We provide the tools and opportunities to reignite your child's desire to learn.

We Believe

- Young people are curious, resilient, and capable of creating innovative solutions to real-world problems.
- Learning should be meaningful, challenging and engaging.
- Intelligence and ability are not fixed, but can be developed.
- Learning is messy, not linear. It's a process of trying, making changes, and moving forward.
- Learning requires a partnership between students, staff and parents.



Is The Sycamore School right for you?

Prospective Students

- Display curiosity
- Want to succeed
- Seek inspiration and engagement
- Feel uninspired or disengaged at school
- Do not want to be defined by standardized test scores
- Have dreams beyond college

Prospective Parents

- Focus on student growth versus grades
- Are willing to partner with staff to support a healthy learning community
- Want their child to succeed in life, not just school
- Are tired of struggling with child over attendance and homework
- Would welcome decreased homework and increased family and leisure time



2018–19 Admissions

Enrolling 5th-10th grades. Grades 11 and 12 will be added as students age up. Applications and school tour dates are available online.

thesycamoreschoolva.org