

The
Middle School
Curriculum

S|U|C|C|E|S|S
A|C|A|D|E|M|Y
C|H|A|R|T|E|R
S|C|H|O|O|L|S

Table of Contents

3	Mission
4	Our Unique K–12 School Design
6	Developing Autonomous, Self-Assured Thinkers
7	Parent Engagement
9	Middle School Curriculum
10	Humanities
10	English Language Arts (ELA)
11	Literature
13	Independent Reading
13	Writing
15	History
17	STEM
18	Math
20	Science
21	Science Symposium
23	Advisory
24	Academic Support and Sprint
25	English Language Learners
26	Scholar Mental Health
27	Scholar Interests and Talents
28	Music
30	Network Clubs
30	Selective Programs
32	Recess
33	Schedule
34	Welcome to Success!

Mission

Success Academy is redefining what's possible in public education. **Our dual mission is to:**

- build exceptional, world-class public schools that empower children from all backgrounds to succeed in college and life, and
- advocate to change public policies that prevent so many children from having access to opportunity.

Our Unique K–12 School Design

At Success Academy, we believe every year of a child's education is critical. That's why we fine tune each of the 13 years your child will be at SA. Starting in kindergarten and going through high school graduation, we map out each year to advance your child's intellectual development deliberately and holistically.

Each grade's learning goals are designed to lead your child on a journey of exploration that builds academic strength and personal confidence—and ensures they are fully ready for the next grade. This is especially true for middle school students.

At most NYC middle schools, the level of learning and preparation varies tremendously. Often students get placed with class-mates who have not learned the fundamental concepts for their grade. When half the classroom is behind, and the teacher has to help the struggling students catch up, those who are ready to advance get ignored. Learning moves at a painfully slow pace.

Success Academy is radically different in this respect. We ensure that scholars are well prepared to advance to the next grade.

The promise we make to families is that every Success Academy scholar has a guaranteed seat and an excellent, free public education for every leg of their 13-year educational journey. When they start middle school, they will be ready. When they enter high school, they will be well-prepared. When they graduate from high school, they can expect their hard work to pay off with admission to a great college or university and support in obtaining financial aid. Most importantly, your scholar will be well prepared to excel and graduate from college in four years.

Developing Autonomous, Self-Assured, and Sophisticated Thinkers

We believe that character development is an important part of schooling, and the middle school years are particularly vital. To be prepared for high school, and ultimately, college, scholars must be self-regulating, independent learners, who are confident in expressing their own ideas.

We continue to guide the development of strong character in all our scholars by upholding our ACTION Values and placing increasing emphasis on academic integrity and agency, a sense of responsibility both on and off school grounds, and an understanding of the consequences of breaching codes of conduct.

Parent Engagement

At Success Academy, we work hard to ensure that scholars are fully prepared as intellectual learners. We strive to have them achieve the highest levels of academic mastery and develop into confident, motivated scholars — but we can't do it alone. From ensuring that out of school learning (homework!) is done to emphasizing academic integrity to modeling effective time management, parents play an essential role in supporting scholars' academic progress. Your ongoing effort and oversight — and communication with teachers and leadership — are essential to helping your child excel.



Middle School Curriculum

Our rigorous middle school curriculum encourages our scholars to think critically, develop and debate ideas, and always support their ideas with evidence. Our classes are hands-on and collaborative; we strive for mastery and believe that inquiry-based learning best enables expertise. We teach the core knowledge, independence, and self-advocacy skills that scholars need to excel.

Our math, history, science, and English language arts (ELA) sequences include the New York State Regents exams in Algebra I, Global History & Geography, Living Environment, and English Language Arts, allowing scholars to enroll directly in a variety of compelling academic more once they enter high school.

Our middle schools also offer enriching electives to serve as critical outlets for creativity, self-awareness, independence, and experiential learning. Scholars can join teams in chess, debate, dance, and sports, and they can discover new interests through electives and clubs. We invest in developing their passion for learning so that they have an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and understanding.

Humanities

Each day, scholars have a humanities block consisting of two 70-minute sessions of back-to-back English language arts and History lessons.

English Language Arts (ELA)

Scholars who love to read — and who read exceptionally well — develop into lifelong independent learners. It's crucial that we teach scholars how to read closely, write cogently, and communicate clearly and confidently so that they can thrive as adults in a fast-paced, dynamic world. Our literacy instruction drives thoughtful engagement with meaningful texts of various genres.

Our middle school literacy curriculum emphasizes:

- reading and analyzing novels, short fiction, nonfiction, and poetry;
- engaging in rich discussions about the big ideas in texts;
- expressing ideas clearly, precisely, and authentically through creative, informative, and argumentative writing.

During each ELA unit, scholars spend two to three weeks studying literature, followed by two to three weeks studying writing.



Literature

In literature units, scholars delve into compelling works of fiction, poetry, and literary nonfiction from both the Western canon and contemporary culture. Helping scholars analyze and interpret the meaning of texts is our utmost priority — we prize critical thinking above all else and ask scholars to consider how authors express central ideas through character development and literary technique. Through discussion and debate, and in written responses at the end of each class, scholars learn to discern the author’s purpose, draw connections among big ideas in the text, and develop an appreciation for literary style.

Each literature unit focuses on a selected book, read by the entire class. We launch these units with shorter connected texts that are relevant to the book’s core themes; these pieces introduce background knowledge and key concepts that will guide scholars in identifying and analyzing the

book’s central themes. When our fifth graders dive into *The Watsons Go to Birmingham — 1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis, for example, they’ll have already read short works about desegregation and race relations during the 1960s, enabling them to more readily consider how history, culture, and symbolism relate to and are revealed through the text.

We conclude each literature unit with mastery text seminars, in which scholars analyze short texts (a poem, a fiction excerpt, or a nonfiction piece) unrelated to the prior unit’s central text. The purpose of mastery text seminars is for scholars to apply their analytical skills to unfamiliar texts and demonstrate their ability to use evidence to identify and explain central ideas and themes. By asking scholars to draw on these skills when they read unfamiliar texts, teachers are also able to assess their own success in developing scholars as critical thinkers.

[SEE BOOK LIST, PAGE 12 →](#)



LITERATURE BOOK LIST

GRADE

- 5
- The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*
by Christopher Paul Curtis
 - Heart of a Samurai* by Margi Preus
 - Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*
by Grace Lin
 - Home of the Brave*
by Katherine Applegate
 - Holes* by Louis Sachar
 - Collection of short stories

- 6
- The Giver* by Lois Lowry
 - The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank
 - Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson
 - Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*
by Phillip Hoose
 - Brown Girl Dreaming*
by Jacqueline Woodson
 - Collection of short stories

- 7
- The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
 - Night* by Elie Weisel
 - The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
 - Animal Farm* by George Orwell
 - A Midsummer Night’s Dream*
by William Shakespeare
 - Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury
 - Collection of short stories

- 8
- To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
 - In the Time of the Butterflies*
by Julia Alvarez
 - The Autobiography of Malcolm X*
as told to Alex Haley
 - Lord of the Flies* by William Golding
 - Romeo and Juliet*
by William Shakespeare
 - Collection of short stories

Independent Reading

We'd be hard-pressed to select one component of our curriculum that stands as the most essential, but we always come back to reading. Lifelong readers are lifelong learners, and for that reason, our middle schools are designed to cultivate and grow scholars' love of reading. Middle schoolers spend a block of time each day reading books of their choice to inculcate reading habits that will carry them into high school and pave the way for college success. Scholars can choose print books from carefully curated classroom libraries or e-books from Overdrive (Our subscription provides thousands of options.)

Writing

As growing writers, our scholars learn how to express ideas clearly and powerfully while upholding high standards of organization and grammar. Throughout the year, scholars write pieces in a variety of genres and strive for vibrant self-expression through ample practice and revision. Scholars give one another feedback and classes frequently end with a group discussion about a classmate's writing. Teachers provide scholars with targeted feedback in class and one-on-one meetings, giving them multiple opportunities to revise and strengthen their ideas, rhetoric, grammar, and vocabulary.

To be strong writers, scholars must learn how to compose sophisticated sentences, and sentence-level instruction is embedded in the literature and writing units. We devote the first 10 minutes of each ELA lesson to "art of the sentence" activities, which hone scholars' capacity to express ideas using clear, complex, and grammatically correct sentences. Art of the sentence activities are rooted in content from the whole-class book so that scholars can build their writing toolkit as they deepen their content knowledge.



SUMMER SOAR BOOKS

GRADE (RISING)

5 *The One and Only Ivan*
by Katherine Applegate

6 *Roller Girl* by Victoria Jamieson

7 *The Great Greene Heist*
by Varian Johnson

8 *The Crossover*
by Kwame Alexander

History

Our scholars experience history as the fascinating story of humankind, one that’s extraordinarily relevant to their modern lives. We don’t approach history as a comprehensive checklist of facts and figures. Rather, we lead scholars in investigations of the most pivotal ideas, events, and cultural interactions that transformed history and continue to resonate and shape our world.

In each history lesson, teachers present a question about the past and challenge scholars to draw upon a wide array of primary and secondary sources to answer this question, debating and evaluating the historical evidence presented by their peers. Scholars engage in this type of historical inquiry daily through classroom discussion, analytical writing assignments, and project-based learning, such as drafting political cartoons, painting cave art, and simulating major historical debates.

As they progress through the middle school history sequence, scholars build a strong foundation of historical knowledge, draw connections between the past and present, and develop a deep understanding of historical change and continuity. Starting with world history content acquisition in fifth grade, current seventh-grade scholars will be prepared to excel on the NYS Global History & Geography II Regents Exam. As a result, scholars will be set up to thrive in high school and college-level history courses.

[SEE TOPIC LIST, PAGE 16 →](#)



HISTORY TOPICS

GRADE

5 World History I: The Pre-Modern World. Scholars begin their formal history learning by exploring human history from its Paleolithic roots through the Renaissance. World History I is a thematic course with the purpose of ensuring that scholars have a strong conceptual and applied understanding of the themes of historical study. Each unit of the course focuses in depth on a single theme, using case studies from Pre-Modern history to illustrate the thematic development of human history before the Renaissance. Scholars will focus specifically on five global regions: East Asia, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, and Central and South America.

6 World History II: The Modern World. Scholars learn about the development of the “modern” world between the fall of the Mongol Empire and the outbreak of the World Wars. Scholars will have a precise understanding of Early Modern states and empires; the Age of Exploration; “first wave” imperialism, colonialism, and slavery; the Age of Revolutions; nationalism; modern economic systems and capitalism; and “second wave” formal imperialism in Africa and South Asia.

7 World History III: The Contemporary World. Scholars complete their study of world history by learning about contemporary world history. Scholars will begin the course with a review of the Age of Imperialism, this time from the perspective of a comparative exploration of China and Japan during the 1800s. Scholars will then focus in depth on the 20th century, learning about World War I, the Interwar Era including the Great Depression and the development of decolonization impulses in Afro-Asia, World War II, the Cold War, decolonization, and the post-Cold War world order. Scholars will end the year conducting group research projects on a range of contemporary world issues including climate change, globalization, and inequality.

8 Civics & Economics: Scholars engage in a study of economics and civics to round out their abilities to reason from an interdisciplinary perspective. This course serves as an introduction to the social, political, and economic systems in the United States, which will be an important foundation for scholars’ upcoming AP U.S. History course in high school. Scholars will study the basics of economics, including economic indicators, economic theories, and personal finance. When shifting to the civics-focused portion of the course, scholars will explore the structures and foundations of the U.S. government, the functions and purpose of the government, and the influence of local politics. A key outcome is that scholars are able to recognize their role as citizens and how they can use the avenues at their disposal to effect change.

STEM

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

From a science, math, and technology perspective, our scholars will likely encounter futures that we can't even imagine; scholars will need the skills to adjust to rapid-fire developments in these fields. Our STEM program empowers all of our scholars to think

flexibly and analytically and to systematically follow lines of insightful inquiry when faced with unfamiliar and challenging problems. The middle school science and math sequences culminate in the Regents exams in Living Environment and Algebra I.





Math

Our mathematics program develops scholars as confident mathematicians, powerful quantitative thinkers, and productive problem-solvers. Scholars gain a deep understanding of mathematical concepts through contextualized applications, ultimately building an understanding based on reasoning, not just calculation.

Each day, scholars participate in a mini-lesson to strengthen their capacity as flexible problem-solvers. After the mini-lesson, the real fun begins: Teachers present their classes with engaging problems to solve in small groups. Scholars hone their mathematical reasoning abilities as they learn to assess unfamiliar problems, think about what they

know and can assume about a problem, and identify the essential information they need to arrive at a solution.

They devise a plan of attack and learn to evaluate whether an answer seems reasonable based on their original estimations. They share their answers and strategies with the class and evaluate, critique, and refine these various approaches to problem-solving. In this way, scholars come to understand and use math as a vehicle for thinking critically and strategically about the world around them.

[SEE TOPIC LIST, PAGE 19 →](#)

MATH TOPICS

GRADE

5 **Extending the Number System**
In fifth grade, scholars establish a thorough understanding of how numbers work in decimal and fraction operations. We leverage visual models to help scholars understand and generalize number patterns and relationships. Scholars build on their foundation in geometry from elementary school, diving deeper into the shape classification of quadrilaterals and triangles and learning volume, which builds on their previous study of perimeter and area. They expand their understanding of unit conversions and data analysis — which they continue to do through high school, as data analysis is an essential life skill that enables scholars to “read” numbers and assess the story they tell.

6 **Introduction to Proportional Reasoning**
In sixth grade, scholars begin working with negative numbers, realizing that the number line extends to the left of zero. After considering the implications of the number system, we’re able to truly launch into expressions and equations, thus laying the groundwork for algebra I. Most critically, scholars take on rates, ratios, and percents, elevating their number sense to new levels of understanding. Scholars continue building their foundation in geometry, and their emerging mastery of data analysis from fifth grade is advanced in a statistics and probability unit.

7 **Constant Rates and Proportionality**
Seventh grade is an essential year in scholars’ development as advanced mathematical thinkers; by the end of the year, scholars know almost all the math that they’ll need for the SAT. Scholars learn to flexibly apply strategies to solve complex equations with decimals and fractions, and they work regularly with percentages. As they continue in-depth explorations of such subjects as ratios and proportions, relationships in the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, statistics, and probability, scholars transform into sophisticated mathematicians.

8 **Algebra I**
Eighth-grade scholars take on the challenges of algebra I, a course that extends and deepens their understanding of algebraic relationships. Scholars learn to create and reason with equations and inequalities and to interpret and build linear, quadratic, and exponential functions through real-world applications. For example, they apply their understanding of systems of equations to grapple with the impact that the current minimum wage has on the supply and demand of workers in the United States. At the end of the year, scholars demonstrate their mathematical understanding on the Algebra I Regents exam. Having completed algebra I, scholars are ready to take on algebra II in high school and will be ready to take calculus by the time they graduate.

Science

At Success Academy, we want all scholars to be truly excited about scientific discovery. Our science teachers are obsessed with sparking curiosity because when scholars experience the joy of discovery, they become better scientists and more observant, engaged citizens.

In middle school, we prioritize the development of scholar independence and leadership in scientific inquiry. Each day, science consists of:

- A launch, during which the teacher engages scholars in an interesting concept or task.
- An investigation or activity, during which scholars design and execute experiments, conduct research, and solve problems to explore and explain scientific phenomena, under the guidance of the teacher.
- Discourse, when scholars discuss and debate their findings and work together to create common takeaways based on that day’s investigation.

Thanks to daily inquiry-based science in Success Academy elementary schools, our entering fifth graders are already capable of thinking like scientists. They have a strong foundation of knowledge and are

adept at asking questions, observing, recording, and applying their knowledge to make predictions. In middle school, we push our scholars to dive deeper, and expose them to each of the major disciplines — Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Earth Science.

[SEE TOPIC LIST, PAGE 22 →](#)





Science Symposium

Science Symposium is Success Academy’s fresh take on the traditional science fair. For one month each year, all middle school scholars complete independent projects, constructing and testing experiments that they develop themselves. This unit drives authentic excitement in the application of scientific knowledge to real-world phenomena, allowing everyone to

stretch their wings by completing independent research. We also press scholars on the development of communication and presentation skills and on using technology effectively and creatively.

The Symposium culminates in a celebration of projects in front of parents and the school community.

SCIENCE TOPICS

GRADE

5 Foundations of Science I: Earth and Space Science, Physics, and Biology
Scholars build on their Elementary School explorations of earth science and begin their first introduction into foundational concepts in both physics and biology. Scholars will leave this course understanding earth’s major systems, the role of water in earth’s processes, weather and climate, natural hazards, global climate change, human impact, solar systems, gravitational force, wave properties, interdependent relationships in ecosystems, cycles of matter and energy transfer, and ecosystem dynamics. During this course, scholars will master skills in claim and hypothesis/question as it relates to experimental design, and engage in scientific argumentation and supporting their evidence with strong reasoning and applied scientific principles.

6 Foundations of Science II: Chemistry, Physics, and Biology
Scholars will begin this course with a formal introduction to chemistry and continue to develop their understanding of physics and biology. Scholars will leave this course understanding the structure and properties of matter, chemical reactions, forces and motion, the universe and its stars, evidence of common ancestry and diversity, natural selection, adaptation, growth and development of organisms, and energy flow at the organismal level. Scholars will leave having mastered strong skills in evidence, collecting data, and carrying out investigations, as they relate to experimental design, and write at a more sophisticated level.

7 Foundations of Science III: Chemistry, Physics, and Biology
Our seventh grade course focuses on developing understanding of more complex scientific concepts within Chemistry, Physics, and Biology. Scholars will leave this course understanding the periodic table, energy, electric and magnetic forces, gravitational forces, Newton’s laws of motion, momentum, energy transfer, and energy in chemical processes and everyday life. They will also further their understanding of ecosystem dynamics, functioning, and resilience. Scholars will leave with strong skills in reasoning, analyzing, and interpreting data, as they relate to experimental design, and will write at a more sophisticated level.

8 Foundations of Science IV: Chemistry, Physics, and Biology
Scholars complete their four years of the MS science sequence and are pushed to the next level in both rigor and out-of-class learning demand that meet the HS science program standards. Scholars will leave this course understanding chemical reactions at a deeper level, conservation of energy and energy transfer, body systems, motion energy, energy transfer, cell cycle, and genetics. After completing the course, scholars will have mastered strong skills in supporting a claim with data, as it relates to experimental design, and will have experience engaging in high school-level scientific writing skills. At the conclusion of this course, scholars take the Living Environment Regents exam. Having demonstrated their mastery of high-level concepts in biology, scholars head to high school prepared to take on the rigors of advanced scientific study.

Advisory

Our goal is to prepare scholars to enroll and graduate from a college or university within four years, and middle school is a critical time for establishing lifelong habits in time management, goal setting, and independent learning. Our advisory block addresses and supports these aspects of academic and personal development, providing

a dedicated time for scholars to discuss challenges and to develop close relationships with their advisors (who are also teachers). Advisors also bridge the gap between a scholar’s home and school life, serving as families’ point of contact throughout the year and regularly contacting parents about their child’s progress.





Academic Support and Sprint

At Success Academy, we believe educators are responsible for providing the highest quality teaching and learning to help our scholars achieve, including all necessary academic support. During Z Period from 3:30-5:00 p.m., our middle school teachers provide select scholars in small groups of 12-15 with academic support and additional practice to ensure that they are achieving their full potential.

“Sprint” is our program to support children with the highest educational

needs. Many of the techniques associated with supporting special education students—such as small-group instruction, the use of manipulatives, frequent assessments, and individualized learning goals—are standard for all of our scholars. We believe that the best way to support most children requiring special education services is not to offer a separate education, but to help them close in on the academic benchmarks we set for all children. We purposefully expand on our general model to help these scholars make academic progress.

All of our schools offer Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classes in grades K-12, and 12:1:1 classes in the grades that we believe to be most appropriate for those scholars requiring this

academic service; these may change over time. Each school has a dedicated Sprint specialist and/or associate who manages the entire Sprint process and works alongside parents, the Department of Education, and school.

Our approach enables scholars with special needs to thrive:

- On the 2019 state exams, 95% of our scholars with disabilities passed

math, and 77% passed English (compared with 18% and 16% citywide).

- In 2018, the NYC Department of Education surveyed parents, and 87% of Success Academy parent respondents who have children with disabilities strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: “My child’s school works to achieve the goals on my child’s Individualized Education Program.”

English Language Learners

English language learners (ELLs) at Success Academy are not assigned to a separate program or track; rather, they are fully immersed in the English language from day one, right alongside their English-speaking peers. ELL scholars receive a range of special supports, including one-on-one tutoring and small-group instruction as needed. Like all scholars, they are encouraged to present their ideas to their class and actively participate in discussions.

This approach — full immersion with support — allows scholars to quickly develop their English language skills and reach high levels of academic achievement.

- On the 2019 state exams, 97% of our English language learners passed math, and 86% passed English (compared with 19% and 9% citywide).
- At SA, most ELLs become proficient in English within two years — compared to five or more years at district schools.

Para obtener información en español y presentar una solicitud, visite es.SuccessAcademies.org



Scholar Mental Health

At SA, we believe that scholars' emotional health is as important as their academic success and the co-curricular development of their talents. We invest time and resources to ensure scholars have ample support when they are struggling in this area. All of our schools provide professional counseling services.

Additionally, teachers and leaders are trained to recognize signs of psychological trouble; address mild forms of sadness, anger, or other

disturbances; and help children develop healthy coping strategies. Whether helping our scholars manage anxiety, teaching healthy ways of managing difficult emotions, offering resources to parents, or providing time-management support, our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Specialists, teachers, and leaders are invested in their scholars' lives.

New this year, we have added Uwill, a safe, secure, and private online counseling service from licensed mental health professionals online. This free resource can help scholars develop the tools they need to handle stress and challenges, and to succeed now, and in the future.

Scholar Interests and Talents

Z Period, Electives, Clubs, and Selective Programs

At Success Academy, we are deeply invested in educating the whole child: We want our scholars to become well-rounded young adults who have interests and capabilities far beyond academics. We have designed our middle schools to give scholars ample opportunity to explore and discover talents and passions and to pursue them at a high level. Each semester, scholars choose an elective class, which they study five days a week for an hour each day, allowing for sustained immersion

Additionally, they can choose to join competitive teams or visual or performing arts clubs, which meet each day during Z Period (3:30 to 4:30 p.m.). Wednesday afternoons provide another optional opportunity to dive deep into an interest through after-school clubs. Our schools offer a performing art (music, theater, or



dance) and a visual arts program; other options may include yoga and/or debate. Sports club offerings are consistent across all middle schools and are offered throughout the year.

As part of the middle school placement process, scholars might also be chosen for participation in our selective soccer program or our highly competitive chess program.

Electives and
School-Based Clubs

Visual Arts

In our studios, scholars gain the tools they need to navigate the visual world while becoming careful observers and problem-solvers. As artists, they grow into passionate “meaning makers” by using art to explore and engage with their own ideas, their peers, and the world around them. Through independent and collaborative experimentation in various mediums — including clay, collage, construction, photography, painting, printmaking, and textiles — scholars gain technical skills and confidence in their ability to express themselves visually. Scholars also study the work of great artists and pivotal artistic movements, considering their effects on humanity and the progression of artistic expression as well as developing their understanding of these people and events as part of a global artists’ community. The scholar experience culminates in an art exhibition for selected scholars, hosted by a leading New York City art gallery.

Music

Music offers opportunities for scholars to develop their musicianship in a variety of ways. Scholars are given the opportunity to focus on collaboration, creativity, and performance through both vocal and instrumental exposure. All of our musicians are invited to participate in a variety of performances throughout the year. The experience



culminates in music performances and conferences for selected scholars.

Theater

In theater, scholars hone their craft as actors and theater artists, exploring a wide variety of units such as puppetry, mask work, Shakespeare, improv, introduction to acting techniques, and theater performance. Scholars also develop ensemble-building and creative-thinking skills, setting them up for success across the Success Academy curriculum. The experience culminates in theater performances and conferences for selected scholars.

Dance

Dance Club is a structured time for scholars to reach the next level in their dance skills through proper training in learning grooves, discipline, and stage etiquette. The experience culminates in dance performances and conferences for selected scholars.

Debate

Debate places agency in the hands of our scholars, allowing them to develop as active and engaged citizens both in school and in their communities. Scholars drive their own learning in these classes, developing and leveraging active listening skills, insightful articulation, and in-depth research techniques. Debate builds flexible and logical thinking by challenging scholars to defend both sides of any topic.

Scholars take on such topics as education and immigration reform,

voter fraud, global warming, and criminal justice, and they draw on a rich variety of sources and evidence to craft compelling arguments and demonstrate how these issues affect their communities. Scholars have accumulated numerous awards and honors in debate on the intramural, local, and national levels, including the top speaker award at a national competition. Through the Success Academy Debate League, now in its fifth year, students participate in local tournaments every month.

Athletics

In our athletics programs, our scholars hone agility and athletic skills, learn the rules of the game, and collaborate as a team. Almost all middle schools offer basketball throughout the school year.



Network Clubs

Our Network clubs are competitive and selective programs composed of scholars who try out from middle schools across the network. Mostly year-round commitments, these clubs participate in multiple levels of competition, including local, regional, and national. These opportunities provide vital outlets for creativity, self-expression, and leadership.

Basketball

Our middle school selective basketball program offers tiered levels of competitive play starting with representative school teams and progressing through more selective borough teams and into most selective network wide teams. Committed and talented young basketball players train year round, during and after school, and on weekends. Scholars play on gender-specific teams that compete intra-school, externally in local leagues, tournaments and Amateur Athletics Union (AAU) events. The most selective teams consist of the network’s best players and have the opportunity to represent Success Academy in both regional and national tournaments.

Selective Programs

Chess

Success Academy's chess program provides rigorous and engaging chess instruction that aims to inspire scholars to fall in love with sophisticated thinking. In each of our schools, teachers, scholars, school leaders, and families come together to form a chess culture informed by the pursuit of intellectual and creative excellence. Guided by teachers who are committed to continual growth as players and pedagogues, our scholars learn to think critically, control their impulses, make decisions, and compete in chess — and in life — with confidence. The competitive program at our selective chess schools provides additional instruction for our top players. The highest-ranking scholars at each school participate in internal tournaments and those who excel have the opportunity to travel to compete in tournaments against other top chess players in their age group from around the country.

All scholars in the selective chess program compete in chess tournaments throughout New York City, with the highest-ranking scholars at each school traveling to compete in Chess Nationals. As part of the middle school placement process, rising grade 5 scholars are selected on the basis of their United States Chess Federation (USCF) rating scores. We offer this specialized chess program at SA Bronx MS, SA Bed-Stuy MS, SA East Flatbush MS, SA Myrtle MS, SA Harlem West MS, SA Hudson Yards MS, SA Springfield Gardens, and SA Midtown West MS.



Soccer

Modeled on top European soccer academies, our middle school selective soccer program offers club-style training and competition that is unprecedented in New York City public schools. Committed and talented young soccer players train year round, during and after school, and on weekends. Middle schoolers receive personalized evaluations and coaching, and they participate in external league play and tournaments. Scholars are invited to participate in the middle school selective soccer program based on demonstrated skill and commitment in the SA elementary soccer program. Selective soccer is currently offered at SA Harlem North Central and SA Bed-Stuy middle schools.



Recess

We're old-fashioned in that we believe wholeheartedly in the importance of recess, even in middle school!

We don't compromise on this free time; just like math and science, recess is a critical part of a scholar's day — and it is not optional. Every day, scholars have 30 minutes outdoors to exercise or socialize with peers.



Schedule

Our middle school scholars and teachers enjoy the benefits of a block schedule format, which leverages extended periods of time to explore content areas in great detail.

Z Period: Z Period is a daily block of time before school that’s dedicated to study hall, academic intervention, or clubs or sports team practice. Families will be informed if their children are required to attend Z Period for additional academic support in math or reading. Otherwise, scholars can choose to join a club or sports team that meets daily.

Quarter: Our middle schools follow a semester schedule. There are two semesters and each semester has two quarters. Quarter one ends in early October, quarter two ends in mid-December, quarter three ends in mid-March, and quarter four ends in mid-to late-June.

Here is a sample schedule:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

TIME LENGTH(min)		CLASS
7:50-8:00 a.m.	10	Arrival
8:00-8:30 a.m.	30	Guided / Independent Reading
8:30-9:00 a.m.	30	Advisory
9:05-10:05 a.m.	60	ELA
10:10-11:10 a.m.	60	Math
11:15-12:05 p.m.	50	Lunch / Recess
12:10-1:10 p.m.	60	Science
1:15-2:15 p.m.	60	History
2:20-3:20 p.m.	60	Electives
3:20-3:30 p.m.	60	Dismissal / Transition
3:30-4:30 p.m.	60	Z Period / After School Clubs / Academic Support / Detention

Please note: This is a sample schedule. Daily schedules will vary by grade and school; however, the curriculum is the same across all schools.

Welcome to Success!

Success Academy's comprehensive middle school curriculum — developed, scrutinized, and refined over 10 years — is designed to ignite scholars' curiosity and love of learning while cultivating an analytical and investigative mindset. We aim for all scholars to take ownership of their learning and develop keen interests and passions. We look forward to working with you to support scholars on this exciting intellectual journey.

S|U|C|C|E|S|S
A|C|A|D|E|M|Y
C|H|A|R|T|E|R
S|C|H|O|O|L|S