

SAN FRANCISCO WALDORF GRADE SCHOOL



THE MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS (6-8): *Join In and Be Inspired*

At San Francisco Waldorf School, experiential, integrated, and developmentally appropriate education comes alive. Combine the unique curriculum with exceptional teachers and a supportive community, and Waldorf students thrive.

The Waldorf Difference: Like all middle schools, we teach math and science and history. But the similarities end there. Here, you will build an electric motor in physics class. You will study geology in the Sierras and sleep under the stars. You will write the journal of a young Medieval apprentice. You will perform Shakespeare in your class play and a Mozart symphony with your class orchestra. You will study Ancient Roman law and create your own classroom laws. You will construct the five platonic solids in geometry class. At San Francisco Waldorf School, you will be engaged, inspired, and supported. You will leave well-prepared and excited to meet the challenges of high school and beyond.

Exceptional Teachers: A Class Teacher stays with students through the grades, providing continuity and instilling confidence. Specialty Teachers, experts in their fields, lead specific instruction in mathematics, foreign languages (Spanish and Mandarin), outdoor education, eurythmy (movement education), music, games and gym, and handwork and woodwork.

Engaged Students: Each day begins with a two-hour Main Lesson, a period of intensive exploration of a core academic subject. The lesson is designed to meet the students at their stage of development, bringing to life the subject matter for the quickly changing young adolescent. Students, parents, and teachers stay in close communication about academic progress. One national standardized test, the Terra Nova, is administered at the end of 7th grade. SFWS student test results averaged 91st percentile since 2009.

Smooth Transitions: New students are warmly welcomed into the SFWS community, quickly becoming integral to their class. After Grade 8, students continue to San Francisco Waldorf High School, joining graduates of other Bay Area independent, parochial, and public middle school, or attend other area high schools such as University, Lowell, Lick-Wilmerding, Asawa School of the Arts (SOTA), Drew School, The Bay School, and Urban School. Whatever direction they choose, students are prepared to meet the challenges of a rigorous, college preparatory high school environment.

MAIN LESSON CURRICULUM

Language Arts: The study of language arts permeates the school day, as students read literature, compose poetry, and perform in class plays. Historical fiction and biographies of the world's great figures weave the study of language arts with the social studies curriculum. Students work to deepen creative expression and grammatical foundation of their writing.

Mathematics: Ready for more abstract mathematical challenges, the middle school curriculum provides strong foundations in geometry and algebra. Sixth grade students tackle percentages, graphing, and business math. Algebra is introduced in grade seven and continues intensively into grade eight. The study of geometry progresses through the grades.

Science: The process of direct scientific experience, keenly observed and precisely described, allows students to reach their own conclusions -- the young scientist in action. Sciences are comprehensively covered during these years, with blocks on physics, acoustics, optics, heat, magnetism, electricity, astronomy, geology, chemistry, and anatomy and physiology.

Social Studies: Sixth grade history begins with the study of Ancient Greece and travels through Ancient Rome to the Middle Ages in Europe and Asia. Seventh graders study the Renaissance and the Age of Exploration, while eighth grade traces the development of modern nations. World geography is explored throughout the grades.

Outdoor Classroom: The study of geology, astronomy and physics are enhanced by class field trips across California; adventures include backpacking and sailing, as well as community building activities.

TRACK CLASSES

World Languages: Concentrating on Spanish or Mandarin, middle school students strive for greater written and oral foreign language proficiency, as teachers provide dynamic instruction in the language's culture of origin.

Music: In addition to daily vocal music integrated into the classroom, each class practices then performs a variety of challenging orchestral pieces before community audiences. All levels of ability are accommodated.

Eurythmy: Eurythmy is movement education that incorporates music and speech. The practice supports the middle school student's social awareness, spatial orientation, and coordination.

Painting: Students learn the art of veil painting and wet-on-wet methods; explore color, light, and perspective; and study art history.

Practical Arts: In middle school, complex handwork projects call upon skills in math, patterning, sequencing, and geometry. In woodwork, they carve simple propellers, bowls, and other inventive and practical objects.

Games and Gym: Middle school games and gym classes help students gain mastery over their growing bodies and provide an opportunity to engage in cooperative and competitive play.

Middle School Math: In addition to the Main Lesson, math is a track class, challenging students and ensuring high school math readiness.

EXTRA OFFERINGS

Eager to explore beyond the school day, Waldorf students enjoy an array of school-sponsored extracurricular and enrichment activities such as:

- Athletics
- Mandarin Study Hall
- Math Club

