

Resources

For more information
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South View Middle School
at 952-848-3700

Or visit our website:
www.edina.k12.mn.us/southview

Edina Public Schools Service
Learning Office
952-848-3957

Association for Middle Level
Education
www.amle.org

National Youth Leadership
Council
www.nylc.org



**South View
Middle
School**

Student Development

Programming



**Educate.
Celebrate.
Serve.**

Our beliefs

What's best for middle schoolers?

South View Middle School is first and foremost an academic institution. Our primary goal is to prepare students to be successful as they continue through graduation and beyond. To that end, South View offers rigorous coursework in all subject areas. In addition, South View strives to provide programming that enhances the learning environment in our building. Our efforts in this vein stem from the work of the guiding national middle school body, the Association for Middle Level Education.

In addition to rigorous, meaningful coursework, the association asserts that “to become a fully functioning, self-actualized person,” young adolescents should:

- Develop their strengths, particular skills, talents or interests and have an emerging understanding of his or her potential contributions to society and to personal fulfillment.
- Recognize, articulate and make responsible, ethical decisions concerning their health and wellness needs.
- Respect and value the diverse ways people look, speak, think and act within the immediate community and around the world.
- Develop interpersonal and social skills needed to learn, work and play with others harmoniously and confidently.
- Assume responsibility for their actions and be cognizant of and ready to accept obligations for the welfare of others.
- Understand local, national and global civic responsibilities and demonstrate active citizenship through participation in endeavors that serve and benefit those larger communities.

“Successful middle schools recognize, articulate and celebrate students who make responsible, ethical decisions and help guide them through this process through an integration of their academic program.”

—*This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents*
Association for Middle Level Education

Educate

An anti-bullying curriculum is presented to all students. They experience lessons created to allow opportunities to learn, share and grow together as they all learn the impact of their words and actions on others. The key focus is on the “bystander” in these situations and the power that all students have to be leaders by either standing up or seeking help when they witness these types of actions. Classroom Connection takes this a step further by implementing ongoing activities and education around anti-bullying efforts and developing students with strong character overall.

Grade-level retreats engage students in discussion and team activities and develop a shared experience that includes learning and reflection. Often this is a space and time that creates a common language for staff members and students to use throughout the school year. Each grade level focuses on a theme of character development:



- **Sixth Grade - Courage** – Retreat activities focus on the courage necessary to transition into middle school by encouraging students to step outside their comfort zone and try new things and meet new people
- **Seventh Grade – Value** – Activities focus on how words, thoughts and actions value or devalue others based on personal differences. Students explore ways of creating a safe environment for all through their own courageous and kind deeds.
- **Eighth Grade – Power** – Students learn about the presence of power in different aspects of their lives and how it can be used to influence others and develop their sense of identity.
- **Ninth Grade – Respect** – The oldest students in our building are role models for others. At their retreat, ninth-graders learn about respect in three key areas: Respect for Self, Respect for Others and Standing Up for Respect.

Extracurricular and co-curricular activities support classroom activities or go beyond the classroom to enhance student skills. (Please see separate activities, clubs and athletics handout.)

Celebrate

All-school assemblies create a sense of community among all students and staff members and celebrate the special place and space needed to be a successful school for adolescents. We celebrate:

- The first week of school and developing the school culture
- Community through homecoming activities
- Student artistic achievement and talents—something rarely recognized in a large group setting

Grade-level assemblies educate larger groups of our students in a space where they all hear the same message and learn together. We educate about:

- Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy and the manifestation of his dream
- Cultural and racial diversity in our community
- Service learning

Spirit activities foster a sense of community among staff members and students by creating a feeling of belonging and by providing a safe, inviting environment for all.

All-school social events, like Fall Fest and Winterfest, bring our school together for a chance to fun with friends in a safe place. Students learn about preparation and follow through by helping plan these events.

Spirit of South View

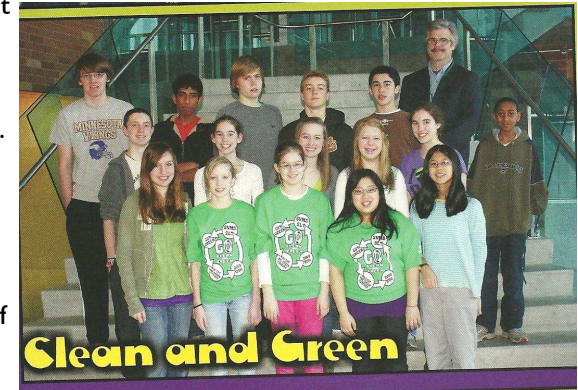
Once a quarter, advisors nominate students who have demonstrated the following characteristics of ethical behavior throughout the quarter:

- Integrity—doing the right thing
- Compassion—being kind to other students, staff and visitors
- Courage—confronting fear in the face of uncertainty
- Commitment—passion and leadership, particularly when you promise to do so
- Appreciation of diversity—showing respect for people and seeking understanding of differences

Serve

Student Leadership Development

Student leadership at South View uses a model that includes multiple types of learners and leaders. Students participate in leadership development and team-building activities that help meet the missions of the entire Student Leadership Team (SLT) and its



respective groups. That mission is to develop student leaders who are committed to community outreach, equity and inclusion, school spirit, student learning and personal health. They also work to include all South View students in school-wide activities and initiatives.

Students can apply to the following groups:

- *Student Ambassadors* provide community outreach and welcome new families, as well as prospective new families, and students.
- *Clean and Green* students work to educate our school community in making choices that are environmentally conscious and personally healthy.
- *Dare 2B Real* leaders help raise intercultural awareness and eliminate all forms of racism, while helping students understand their own racial and cultural identity.
- *Classroom Connection* leaders work to create a bully-free environment that encourages students to become lifelong learners with strong personal character.
- *Spirit* leaders develop a sense of school pride and an inclusive, positive environment at school.
- *W.E.B. (Where Everybody Belongs)* leaders mentor and help sixth-graders successfully transition into their new middle school environment.

Service learning

Service learning is a teaching method that weaves service into the curriculum. The difference between service learning and community service lies in the intent. With service learning, students address community issues, problems or needs as part of their academic studies or another intentional learning activity.

For example, picking up trash on the side of a road is service. Studying water samples under a microscope is learning. When science students collect and analyze water samples, document their results and present findings to a local pollution control agency, that is service learning.

Service learning is a teaching method that supports the work teachers do in the classroom. This teaching methodology offers important character development opportunities for students in tandem with the Edina school district's character code of values: courage, commitment, compassion, appreciation of diversity and responsibility.

One South View government class was asked to come up with a project involving an issue they were passionate about. Students independently made contact with organizations, wrote about their experiences and interviewed experts on their issue. Some created movies, blogs or Web sites; some did a combination of both. Projects included students volunteering in an English as a Second Language classroom, volunteering at Abbott Northwestern Hospital to learn about the General Assistance Medical Care program and a project dealing with homeless children and music.

The district's service learning program continues to grow. Teachers, parents and other community members are encouraged to look for ways to connect ongoing and established community service projects with the school curriculum.



Adult advocates

Advisory

Each day at South View starts with a connection between advisors and students, called Advisory. This time at the beginning of the school day allows advisors to complete regular academic checks and encourage literacy through personal reading and group read-alouds. Advisory activities also may include fun team-building activities. Advisors encourage direct communication with families to keep lines of communication open in support of student learning. Advisors also work together to provide exploratory learning opportunities for students throughout the year.

Students who are part of a student leadership team have an advisory with staff leaders. This allows advisors to support student leaders academically—as in other advisory classes—and offer a consistent time to develop leadership skills during the regular school day.

