

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 196
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools
Educating our students to reach their full potential

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Title Middle School Philosophy and Mission Statements

1. Philosophy

- 1.1 The mission of our middle schools is to nurture the development of responsible, thoughtful citizens for life in an increasingly interdependent global society by creating environments in which students are challenged to explore, to create, to make decisions and to actively participate in and be accountable for their learning.
- 1.2 The middle school provides an environment that allows transition for the students as they move from elementary into high school years. Middle school education build upon skills acquired in previous learning experiences and provides an opportunity to explore new areas of interest that will give direction for future choices.
- 1.3 Middle school students are emerging adolescents who are experiencing profound changes in the intellectual, physical, social and emotional areas of their lives. These changes call for unique learning environments where students can mature, achieve success and be challenged at their own developmental rate.
 - 1.3.1 Intellectually, middle school students are maturing in their thinking and need stimulating activities that develop their problem solving and critical thinking abilities.
 - 1.3.2 Physically, middle school students need to understand and to accept the changes in their bodies while assuming responsibility for their own well-being.
 - 1.3.3 Socially, middle school students must be provided an environment in which they can positively interact with peers and adults.
 - 1.3.4 Emotionally, middle school students are seeking their identity. Positive self-esteem, the need for recognition and the need for success in both academic and social situations are imperative.

2. Mission Statements

- 2.1 Instruction – Approaches to learning emphasize interdisciplinary instruction, exploration, practical application and cooperative learning. Learning opportunities are presented through a variety of instructional methods. Instruction in the middle school places emphasis on the continued acquisition of basic skills and higher order thinking skills and acknowledges the importance of out-of-school activities on classroom learning. Learning activities will begin in areas familiar to the learner and lead to new areas in interest.
- 2.2 Decision-Making – The school program is one in which students learn to accept responsibility for their actions as they grow and mature. Students receive instruction in the process of decision-making through experiences in

classroom, exploratory and cocurricular activities. Reinforcement, direction and guidance are provided through the practice of participatory decision-making.

- 2.3 Student Growth – The middle school emphasizes positive intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth experiences. The staff is committed to working with the early adolescent. A strong advisor/advisee program, enrichment and exploratory activity time, and a wide range of cocurricular activities are offered to enhance student growth. Achievement in all areas of development is encouraged and accomplishments are appropriately recognized.
- 2.4 Home/School Relations – It is understood that a home/school partnership exists among students, parents, staff and the community. Communication between home and school is necessary for each student's success and learning. Accountability for these expectations is accomplished through a variety of communication methods initiated by parents and staff.
- 2.5 Evaluation – Elements which comprise an effective middle school are assessed on a regular basis. Student academic and social progress is reported systematically. Evaluation examines the learning process and focuses on attainment of educational outcome.