

Leadership at Middlesex School

The community life program at Middlesex School seeks to develop in each student an understanding of the values of honesty, kindness, gratitude, courage and respect that are at the heart of our community. From the time that students arrive at the School we begin to help them understand their individual responsibility to foster these values as they live their lives here.

Ninth Grade – Welcome to Middlesex!

Orientation and Opening of School chapel deans' meetings

- expectations of you as a MX student
- the rules, but more importantly, the spirit of the rules

Weekly meetings with advisor

- goal setting
- ongoing conversations about academic, athletic, extracurricular and social adjustment to school

Mentoring by proctors, peer supporter and diversity officers

- These peer leaders meet with our new students at times throughout the year to help them adjust to the expectations of MX School

“Choices” – five week course

- communication
- healthy living – nutrition, sleep, stress management
- friendship – intimacy, sexuality
- drugs and alcohol
- how to make good choices

Community Life Meetings

- Meetings scheduled throughout the year, sometimes by House and sometimes by Class, to make students aware in an intentional way of their individual and collective responsibilities to foster the values of Middlesex School.
- Ninth graders will focus on their responsibility to create the kind of class they want to be and how they will welcome new members to their class in the next year

Tenth Grade – the conversations continue

Sophomore Class Retreat

- Activities planned by 10th grade advisors to work on class bonding
- What do you want to accomplish as a sophomore class? What do you have to do individually and as a group to do so?

“Connections” – three week course

- All sophomores meet in small group sessions to discuss issues on wellness and how to be successful, contributing members of our community. Discussions take place in a fun and supportive environment.

Weekly meetings with advisors

- goal setting
- Ongoing conversations about academic, athletic, extracurricular and social issues as well as beginning the conversation about how each student is going to contribute to the life of the School.

Freedom from Chemical Dependency

- all sophomores meet in small group sessions to be educated about the effects of using illegal substances on the brain

Community Life Meetings

- Meetings scheduled throughout the year, sometimes by House and sometimes by Class, to make students aware in an intentional way of their individual and collective responsibilities to foster the values of Middlesex School.
- Tenth graders will focus on engagement – what each of them is going to do to contribute to the life of the School and make it a better community because of his/her presence in it.

Eleventh Grade – the formal leadership conversation begins

Weekly meeting with advisor

- goal setting
- Ongoing conversations about academic, athletic, extracurricular and social issues as well as beginning the conversation about how each student is going to contribute as a leader at the School.

Community Life Meetings

- Meetings scheduled throughout the year, sometimes by House and sometimes by Class, to make students aware in an intentional way of their individual and collective responsibilities to foster the values of Middlesex School.
- Eleventh graders will meet to discuss leadership. What is it? What is the difference between a leader and a good citizen? What should the School expect of seniors?

Junior Class March Meeting

- representatives from the various leadership groups present to the junior class explaining requirements and expectations
- students encouraged to think about where their strengths and interests lie as they decide what positions they would like to pursue

On-line Survey

- Each 11th grader will complete an on-line survey where s/he will write about interests, values, what contributions s/he has made thus far and how s/he wants to contribute as a senior leaders. Each student will indicate which positions s/he would like to receive and why s/he would be good at them.

Junior Interviews

- Each student will be interviewed by 2 faculty members, preferably who do not know the student well. This gives the student the opportunity to talk about what is important to him or her. The questions will allow the student to talk about:

1. him or herself (self-describe, what does he or she really care about, who does the student look up to and why)
2. the MX community (why is MX important to him or her, what has s/he done to improve the community, what does it mean to be a good person in our community, what is the biggest challenge for their class)
3. future goals (what is s/he excited about for next year, what qualities does s/he possess that will help as a leader, what will make leadership challenging, how can seniors relate effectively to younger students, how can seniors positively influence their peers, what does s/he want to be remembered for when s/he graduates)
4. any final thoughts

Leadership Positions

- Taking into account the students surveys, interviews and interests, a faculty committee assigns the juniors to leadership positions
- the adults who oversee each group communicate with the new group of officers to talk about expectations going forward

Twelfth Grade - the real work of leadership begins

Orientation for seniors –All seniors arrive before other students to begin their training as the leaders of the School. The initial training includes:

- an assessment that indicates areas of strengths and areas of challenge
- a discussion about what it means to be a senior leader
- recognizing the difference between a role model and a leader
- how to recognize and support the diversity in our community
- effective collaborative problem solving
- working in small group on case studies to decide how to react to specific situations
- a session with the Heads of Houses to work on expectations
- a session to help boys understand the girls' experience and vice versa
- goal setting for one's self, for the senior class and for the School
- preparation for welcoming the new students and helping with their orientation

Monthly Leadership meetings – Every 2 weeks half of the class meets with the deans and the school counselor to continue the leadership training. This training includes:

- How to take care of yourself during this busy and important year.
- How to take care of others.
- How to create and support a welcoming, inclusive community. What is the difference between civility and kindness? What is empathy? What is compassion?
- How and when to intervene on your fellow students' behavior.
- How to communicate effectively. How to listen actively.
- The importance of not only assuming responsibility for oneself, but also for stepping outside of oneself to assume responsibilities for others.

Meetings with leadership groups – the adult facilitators meet with:

- Alumni Ambassadors
- Captains of Sports' Teams
- Chapel Trustees
- Community Service Officers
- Equity and Inclusion Officers
- Editors of publications
- Heads of clubs and activities
- Head Tour Guides
- Library Trustees
- Mindfulness Ambassadors
- Peer Supporters
- Peer Tutors
- Proctors
- Student Activities Officers
- Sustainability Officers
- Wellness Ambassadors

Transitions and passing the torch – seniors meet to

- discuss how they will approach their last 2 months of high school
- think about the transition to college
- evaluate their experiences as senior leaders

Senior Exit Interviews

- Optional interviews with a faculty member to reflect upon one's experience at Middlesex.