



What are the benefits of a K-8 school to the Middle School Student?

When assessing the viability of continuing on into the middle school years, here are some things to think about...

- K-8 schools enhance social capital creating greater opportunities at success by building relationships with staff and peers over a course of nine years.
- Parent involvement improves because parents are more likely to stay involved in the children's school lives longer as they are already comfortable with the school and its staff. They are also more likely to have more than one student enrolled in the same school.
- The early grade teachers know almost everyone in the building, middle grade teachers can speak with them regarding a student's history, learning style, and family dynamic. These connections mean that each September teachers and their families do not start from square one!
- Middle grades students in a K-8 school behave differently than in a middle school. They take on the role of protector and role model as opposed to having to establish new reputations upon entering middle school.
- School staff members feel more connected to the community. They are able to see their influence as the students grow from small children into young adults. Teacher collaboration and articulation within and across grades increases.
- Positive results were noted in a study done by Dr. Robert Offenber, of Philadelphia, when comparing the outcomes of students who attended K-8 schools versus the traditional 6-8 environment. SAT scores in reading, math, and science are significantly stronger in K-8 schools. Students from K-8 schools were 11% more likely to be enrolled in selective high school programs. Students from K-8 schools also demonstrated a higher GPA in 9th grade. Some of these results are also attributed to the fact that many K-8 schools also have smaller class sizes.

Information taken from the dissertation research regarding K-8 education by Keith Look, a researcher for the Philadelphia Education Fund as they looked at the benefits of transforming their school into a K-8 program.