



The New School

30 YEARS OF INSPIRED LEARNING



NEWSCHOOLVA.COM

FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

The New School is a **thoughtful community** where students feel intellectually excited and challenged, and appreciated as individuals by their teachers and peers. Such thoughtfulness of mind and heart makes for a rich and happy school environment.

We are committed to **small classes** where teachers and students co-create the learning, and where teachers engage students in supportive conversations about their work and growth. Through class participation and dialogue with their teachers, our students learn to advocate for themselves and understand themselves as successful learners.

Our students love school because they are **heard** and **appreciated** by their teachers, they are valued members of their classes and school community,

and there is a spirit of **openness** and **calm** that pervades our ethos.

Our curriculum focuses on applied learning and critical and creative thought, and is, we feel, an ideal preparation for college and life beyond. We know that giving students choices in the direction of their work fosters “ownership” – students feeling **invested** in their work, **positive** about themselves, and **inspired** to set higher expectations for their work.

In this brochure you will learn how these principles define and guide us.

It's all about the students.

Steve

Steve Roushakes, Head of School





QUESTIONS AND CRITICAL THINKING

A New School education is not about teaching to the test. We believe learning is best when classes are purposeful and students, working closely with their teachers, learn to think critically and create meaning from facts.

Our students love their classes because teachers focus on **big questions** that inspire their intellects and invite them to share ideas and solve problems. Such purposeful, “big” questions include:



What is a just society?
(Government)



How have diseases changed societies?
(Biology)



Why do people move?
(World Studies)



How may the laws of motion help us understand, and thus improve, energy efficiency in transportation?
(Physics)



How have writers changed the world?
(English /Social Studies)

This process of education – students **assembling** and **synthesizing facts** to answer a purposeful question, all the while working closely with their teachers – is what we mean by our mission to *help students learn to use their minds well*.

SMALL CLASSES & ESSENTIAL SKILLS

The hallmark of The New School is our thought-provoking classes; and with an average of **10 students per class**, every student is heard and engaged.

New School teachers focus on genuine understanding, *the whys and hows* within each subject, rather than rush through a textbook of facts. A New School classroom is a **dynamic** and

exploratory space, with students asking questions and teachers engaging them in **fascinating** conversations about class material and offering **supportive** feedback on their work.

Our students learn to engage with content critically and creatively in each subject, and develop essential skills of problem solving, writing, and public speaking across the disciplines.

COMMUNITY

The community life of The New School is largely created by the students.

Our student government meets weekly to discuss topics of student and community interest and plan events, from the prom to guest speakers to field day. Most tellingly we have an all-school meeting every day, which is led by a member of the student government, and which is an open forum where any member of the community may make an announcement. We care about **connectedness** and **student initiative**; we all know, respect, and listen to one another, and everyone has an equal voice and matters within the school community.

Most of our students play on one of our sports teams or participate in student-led clubs. For us extracurriculars are about **inclusion**, options, and **having fun**. And because clubs are student-created, the possibilities are limitless, from debate, to baking, to rocketry, to anime, to current events, to chorus.



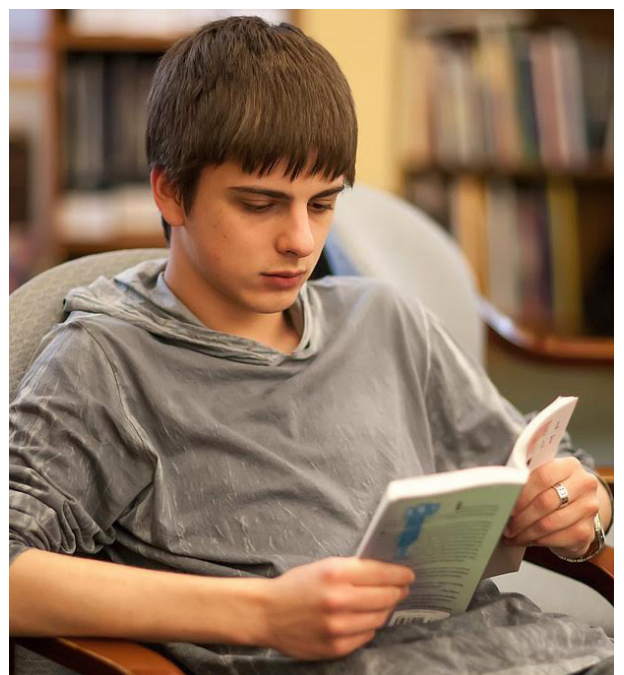


PROJECTS & TIME TO THINK

Good teachers know students are invested and truly learn when they are working toward a meaningful goal, using reason, knowledge, and creativity. This is the great value of student-driven projects, which represent an important method of learning at The New School.

Challenge for us about **depth of understanding**. Projects allow teachers and students to work “at eye level”: students have considerable say in the direction of their work, and teachers give students specific, encouraging feedback and challenge them to hone their skills and master content.

Growth is a process; we value giving students time to think and learn deeply, with choice and direction, rather than base learning on memorization and the quicker and quicker pace of instruction. The result is students setting **high, unanxious expectations** for themselves.



GREAT TEACHERS + GREAT CLASSES = THRIVING STUDENTS

We know that the #1 factor in a student's growth and happiness is the teacher. And when our students reflect on their New School experience, the first comment is always the same: *I love my teachers.*

New School teachers are **dedicated** to working with students. Our collaborative model encourages students to self-advocate, set higher standards for their work, and believe in themselves as successful learners.

Most of our teachers have been with us for over 12 years – some for over 20 years – and, like the students, they enjoy their days and share in our collective spirit of **good-humor, community, and intellectual excitement.**

We're a people school, and when people feel appreciated, trusted, and free to express themselves, they are at their best; they are thoughtful, open-minded, self-motivated, and kind.



INTERNATIONAL STUDIES & SERVICE

A core value of The New School is person-to-person respect and appreciating different perspectives, and it follows naturally for us that a 21st century education needs to be **globally-oriented**.

Each year we travel the world. Our trips provide students an important opportunity to apply their **foreign language skills** and **experience life on someone else's terms**.

Our students return from studies and service abroad appreciative and energized by the sense of many paths in life and possibilities in the world.

Past trips and their focuses include:



Austria –
Architecture and Design



Peru –
Community Service



Kenya –
Community Service



Costa Rica –
Marine Biology



Spain –
Language and Culture



Germany –
Film and Culture



England –
Shakespeare and the
Globe Theater



Ghana –
Technical Training and
Cultural Exchange



PORTRAIT OF THE GRADUATE

The New School is special for its unique academic program and sense of community, and for its spirit of inquiry, dialogue, and inclusiveness. Add to that list our collective good-humor, and you have a humane school that does not presuppose the individual, their answers to questions, the colleges and universities they attend, or the direction they ultimately take their lives.

A New School graduate is a **skilled** and **dynamic** learner prepared to solve new problems across the disciplines, from science and mathematics to the humanities and arts. And because we focus on reason, creativity, dialogue, and civility in a safe and non-judgmental space, our students emerge as **centered** individuals who are **comfortable with themselves** and **confident** in their ability to make a difference.

There is no greater gift than an education within a school culture that provides space for students to express their ideas, hone their academic skills, and grow into the people they wish to be.

