The mission of Rocky Hill School is to educate the whole child: mind, body, and spirit. As a school community, we encourage students to become good citizens and lifelong learners, guiding them as they strive for knowledge and self-awareness.
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COMMUNITY VALUES STATEMENT
Rocky Hill School considers responsible citizenship, dedicated scholarship, and good sportsmanship essential to strong character. Community members act with integrity, treat others with respect and kindness, and demonstrate a commitment to learning and personal growth.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT
Rocky Hill School respects and celebrates diversity. We embrace the opportunity to practice principles of civility that pertain to the human differences that constitute an individual’s identity, a school’s culture and a richer community.

It is the School's goal to provide an environment that is safe for and receptive to the sharing of ideas, experiences, and dialogue that will broaden the perspectives of different constituencies. To achieve this, the School continues to make an active, educated and collective commitment to work against forces of discrimination. As diversity enriches the quality of school life, it is the expectation that all members of the Rocky Hill School community will favorably impact their extended communities and bring new meaning to the School’s motto, Know Thyself.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION
Rocky Hill School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, handicap, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission, financial aid, employment, education policies or other school programs.
All-School Principles and Practices

TECHNOLOGY

Technology is an omnipresent element of 21st century living; consequently, Rocky Hill School creates learning experiences for students, preschool through grade 12, that teach them to use it judiciously and confidently. The National Educational Technology Standards for Students, created by the International Society for Technology in Education, serve Rocky Hill as guidelines for targeting appropriate skills for students at each grade level. Internet safety and the ethical use of technology are stressed in all applicable areas.

In the Lower School, a technology lab, iPads®, and classrooms equipped with Apple TV®, and flat screen televisions serve the curriculum. Teachers are equipped with laptops and iPads, as well. Web-based math (Symphony Math®) and reading (Lexia®) software, accessible by students from home and in the classroom, augment traditional teaching methods and enhance learning, support growth, and solidify important core skills. Students also use technology to conduct in-depth research on topics of interest, as well as for formal assessments. Preschool students enjoy exploring appropriate iPad applications, while kindergarten through grade two students are instructed in the basics of computer use, iPad use, and computer safety. Beginning in grade three, students receive instruction in keyboarding and are given access to Google Apps™ accounts for creating word processing documents, spreadsheets and presentations. These web-based files give students the freedom to store their work in the “Cloud” and share their files with others for collaborative work. The use of these tools is taught within the context of the academic and art curricula being delivered. Flipped classrooms and Blended Learning allow teachers to expand the learning experiences of students and parents. Imagine the impact of recording lessons and posting them on a class webpage for students to review as homework or for parents to see what their children are learning; or student-created podcasts that share classroom happenings while exploring the latest uses of technology. Students use technology to write, research, organize, communicate, collaborate and publish.

The Middle School’s 1:1 iPad program provides a platform for digital textbooks and tools to help students organize their coursework, while offering anytime/anywhere note taking and document access. Students use these devices throughout the day and at home to create documents, present information and collaborate with faculty and peers as well as to communicate. Students and teachers share information and collaborate on projects using Google Apps and email. In addition, several learning spaces are equipped with SMART
Board™ interactive whiteboards, allowing teachers and students to engage in energized cooperative learning.

Students in both the Middle and Upper Schools utilize Moodle™, a web-based content management system that give teachers an efficient way to give courses an online presence. Moodle connects students to their teachers and to other students, allowing them to find schedules, assignments, course documents and discussion boards.

Upper School students are required to have laptops, which provide them with instant access to Google Apps and Moodle and enable them to explore the extraordinary wealth of online educational resources. Teachers integrate the laptop into their lessons through online activities, research, note taking and writing. With laptops, both students and teachers can always respond to the “learning moment.” Combined with the Harkness method, laptop learning guarantees that each student has a front row seat in every class.

ACADEMIC CENTER FOR ENRICHMENT (ACE)
ACE provides a supportive environment, within the context of a college preparatory school, in order to help students reach their full learning potential. Through tutorial sessions, academic support, study skills, remedial techniques, and active student participation, ACE teachers strive to produce independent, confident learners who emerge as self-advocates in their learning.

ACE provides classes that meet one to five times a week, depending on individual need. The Tutorial Program strengthens basic skills such as reading, writing, grammar, comprehension, spelling, math, and reasoning. The purpose of these sessions is to allow the student to advance to grade-level proficiency in the skills in which he or she may be deficient. In the Academic Support Program, focused instruction of study and organizational skills, coupled with these relevant foundational skills and concepts, includes the use of assistive technology and provides students the “tools” needed to support their academic success in the classroom. SMART (specific, measurable, agreed on, realistic and time-based) Goals are established for each ACE student. The expectation is that students will engage in applying the skills to their course work while in ACE, and then continue to do so once they exit the program. Student progress is accomplished through regular communication with the classroom teacher and between the faculty, student and family.

In a newly implemented program, ACE staff help differentiate instruction in Language Arts directly in the kindergarten through grade five classrooms. Grouping and instructional methods are determined by student need and are dynamic and flexible. The rationale behind this program is to provide key instructional methods to meet the needs of all learners.
In addition to the core ACE tutorial and academic support programs, ACE teachers also facilitate a Literacy Class to one grade in the Middle School per year if students need additional reading support. This course occurs for students who have a language waiver, and takes place during the regular foreign language class time. The Read Naturally® and Lexia programs are implemented to improve students' ability to decode words for reading, build fluency, and comprehension. Pre- and post-testing occurs to verify growth.

GARDEN CLASSROOM
Our campus setting keeps us in close contact with our natural environment, and the 10,000 sf Garden Classroom provides hands-on experiential learning opportunities focused on science, environmental studies, health and nutrition, community service, sustainability, the arts, academics, and much more. Students in all grades take part in planting, cultivating, harvesting, and utilizing the resources the garden provides.

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Community service has always been an important aspect of Rocky Hill School life. Supported by our School’s statement of community values, to help others in need, serving others is another way in which our students fulfill the School motto, Know Thyself. The life skills gained through service to others provide valuable preparation for the future. In addition, there is a growing trend in some college admission and/or financial aid procedures to consider an applicant’s community service interests as an important credential.

Emanating from our Lower School's motto, “treat others as you want to be treated,” serving the community and reaching out to others in need takes on many different forms across all Divisions. Due to Rocky Hill's small size and preschool through grade 12 composition, on-campus volunteer opportunities abound. Students undertake a number of responsibilities that help our School operate effectively, including:

- Schoolyard and waterfront cleanups
- Managing the Lower School recycling program
- Reading to younger Lower School buddies
- Leading Morning Assembly or Class Meetings
- Tutoring peers and younger students
- Helping in the Preschool program
- Assisting Middle School coaches
- Volunteering for various school events
Each year, the Community Service Coordinator also organizes community service initiatives directly affecting the greater community. These are undertaken on a regular basis, usually through classroom or advisory projects.

A sampling of some community service projects are:

- Wrap-a-Friend Coat Drive
- Band-Aid collection for Hasbro Children’s Hospital
- Friendship Bags: toiletries and children's book collections for Crossroads RI
- Pet Food Drive for North Kingstown Animal Shelter
- Jump Rope for Heart—American Heart Association
- Walk-a-thon for Haiti
- Cranes for Japan
- 8th grade class visits to a local nursing home
- Assisting with Special Olympics events
- Annual Food Drive for East Greenwich food banks
- Habitat for Humanity
- Relay For Life
- Save the Bay

Upper School students are required to complete 40 hours of documented community service over the course of four years, prior to graduation. At least 30 hours must be completed with the same organization. The Community Service Coordinator will help freshmen identify an area of interest and connect them with an organization where they can perform service. Sophomores spend two days performing community service in May. The community service requirement is prorated for all students who enter Rocky Hill School after ninth grade.
The Lower School provides students in preschool through grade five a stimulating, nurturing, and safe environment in which to learn. Our student-centered focus educates the mind, body and spirit of young children and excites them about the process of learning. The small class sizes and endless opportunities to utilize our thriving waterfront campus as an extended classroom provide our students a unique learning environment. Through our strong, traditional, multisensory and community-oriented programs, our students:

- Develop into confident, independent learners.
- Build character and become responsible community members.
- Receive broad exposure to the visual and performing arts.
- Are physically fit and learn how to maintain healthy lifestyles.
- Are creative problem solvers.

Our strong partnership between home and school is essential to the development of purposeful and successful students and individuals. This partnership, as well as the value of consistency and common language, help ensure the healthy development of our students.

The Lower School incorporates Responsive Classroom® and Social Thinking® techniques that develop social skills and promote quality instruction and academic achievement. Morning Assembly is a time when the entire Lower School gathers as a community to discuss and promote our students’ sense of respect and responsibility towards themselves and the community, to foster awareness of important current events, and to practice public speaking skills. Rocky Hill's Community Values Statement serves as the cornerstone of teaching about our high standards of citizenship, scholarship, and sportsmanship. The Lower School motto, ‘Treat others as you want to be treated,’ is recited often and used to help students understand the essential qualities of compassion and respect.
Lower School teachers design and develop educational experiences that allow children to explore, experiment, and study individual interests in depth. The Lower School is a community of learners—students and teachers alike—who are constantly asking questions, sharing ideas and solutions, and evolving. This philosophy enables the Lower School to provide an organic and flexible program that can be modified and manipulated in order to meet the needs of a wide range of learners and provide richer, more authentic educational experiences for children.

In Lower School, the Harkness table is replicated during ‘circle times’ on the floor, as well as in small groups gathered around tables or clusters of desks. As is the case in the Middle and Upper Schools, this inquiry and discussion-based environment encourages and supports risk-taking, promotes independent and collaborative problem solving, and champions individuality and intellectual growth. These groups focus not only on academic subjects, but also address the socio-emotional growth of our young students. Students experiment with language and develop their receptive and expressive language skills through work with teachers and peers. Group learning provides students with time to develop empathy skills, which help them grow into compassionate, kind human beings who see the connection between personal responsibility and their impact on the larger community.

**LANGUAGE ARTS**
The Lower School is a language-rich environment where a love of reading and written expression thrives. The Language Arts program is designed to integrate the instruction of literacy skills throughout all subjects and stimulate growth according to the readiness and developed skill level of each student. Students receive direct instruction of reading and writing skills, and as a result, actively participate in those processes with a strong sense of accomplishment.

The multisensory approaches implemented throughout the Lower School make reaching all learners possible. The Orton-Gillingham approach provides a solid phonological foundation; Handwriting Without Tears® allows students to develop grapho-motor skills in a developmentally appropriate sequence; and the Project Read® Written Expression program teaches the structure of written language.

Each day, children listen to teachers read aloud from quality literature to model fluency and expression. Silent reading provides students the opportunity to practice their acquired skills. Phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are the ongoing focus of classroom lessons and independent learning activities. The web-based Lexia Reading program provides additional skills practice, as well as relevant information to track student progress.
Writing instruction follows the process approach. Students write every day across the disciplines, using journals to collect ideas and observations, writing reports, and practicing dictation. Structured spelling programs provide students with an explicit, integrated, and differentiated approach to the instruction of spelling. In the intermediate grades (3-5), vocabulary development, and all of its key components, are a primary focus. The editing process and use of explicit rubrics challenge students to extend their abilities and build upon existing skills.

**MATHEMATICS**

Math surrounds us, and our students are exposed to making real-world math connections on a regular basis. Discussing, representing, reading, and writing mathematics are vital tools in the development of mathematical reasoning skills. Using the Math in Focus® program, The Lower School presents mathematics through meaningful, multisensory, problem-solving activities. Math Challenges, a series of mathematical problem-solving exercises, are offered to all kindergarten through grade five students as a means of extending their mathematical experiences. Advanced studies in mathematics are available through flexible math groupings, and all students have the opportunity to participate in math enrichment within their classrooms.

**SCIENCE**

The Lower School science program develops students’ inherent curiosity about the natural and physical world. Students participate in a range of guided and open-ended activities. They explore scientific topics as they incorporate reading, research, math, and geography.

The program is theme-based and includes investigations in the areas of life science, earth science, and physical science within the classroom, along the waterfront, and in the wooded areas around campus.

**SOCIAL STUDIES**

The social studies curriculum develops our students’ sense of themselves, their community, and their place in the world. More importantly, emphasis is placed on the development of values, diversity, global awareness, citizenship, and the ability to make moral judgments. Our goal is to broaden students’ perspectives, opinions, and attitudes regarding the world and its people, helping them become aware of the problems and themes that we encounter as citizens of our school, state, nation, and world.
FOREIGN LANGUAGE
Spanish instruction begins in preschool and is taught in all grades through an interactive, multisensory approach. Students are familiarized with the sounds and concepts of the Spanish language, while learning basic communication skills. Exploring Spanish-speaking cultures enriches the study of the language and brings it to life.

LIBRARY
The Lower School library program fosters a lifelong love of reading and ensures that students are effective users of resources and information. The goals of the program are accomplished by providing intellectual and physical access to materials in all formats. Our librarian provides instruction to foster competence and stimulate interest in reading, viewing, and using information and ideas. In addition, the librarian works with other educators to design learning strategies to meet the needs of individual students and to assist with the infusion of technology into lessons, while advocating for materials and programs that will enhance the interest or ability of students in reading and information literacy. The program builds skills incrementally over the years, affording students the opportunity to use and enjoy library resources independently. While the ability to use the library independently is encouraged, support from the librarian is always available. Library instruction is based upon the AASL Standards for the 21st Century and the ISTE National Education Technology Standards.

VISUAL ART
For a child, art is primarily a means of self-expression. It is the language of a child’s thought. Art lessons are structured to help students develop flexibility in their thinking and imagination. Students develop an awareness of their environment when they are asked to observe in detail. They also develop motor coordination, which in turn helps their physical growth. When students create sculptures or mobiles, they develop an awareness of space. The main objective of art in the Lower School, which is interdisciplinary in nature, is to develop the freedom to explore and experiment with materials and with subject matter.

MUSIC
The philosophy of music education is based on the belief that musically-educated students are developing their aesthetic potential to the fullest while increasing their ability to derive satisfaction from music of all cultures. This is accomplished through fostering an increased awareness of the commonalities and differences which exist between musical styles and genres. Singing, listening to recorded music, dancing, and the playing of musical instruments are all a part of the Lower School music program.
Grade 5 Beginner Instrumental class is designed to introduce fifth grade students to wind instrument performance on flute, clarinet, trumpet, and trombone. The course begins with proper assembly and care of the instrument, and progresses through tone production, breath support, and fundamental note reading.

HEALTH
Knowing the importance of healthy bodies and healthy minds, the Lower School health education program is an essential part of our students’ total educational experience. Health education is a planned, sequential kindergarten through grade five curriculum designed to provide students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to maintain and improve health, prevent disease, and avoid or modify health risk behaviors.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION
The Lower School Physical Education program introduces students to the many possibilities of physical movement and motor skill development for recreational, individual and team competitive sports or games. Knowledge of rules that govern the activity they are participating in and tactical strategies are demonstrated by the students’ participation. Older grades have a self-assessment checklist for skills mastered and written description of general rules for each unit. Student lessons and opportunities actively address the philosophies of requirements for positive teamwork, leadership, and sportsmanship. Each unit of study is modified to be age appropriate for the expected capabilities and developmental level of the grade the students are in with regards to rules, student interaction, and skills introduced. Consecutive grades build upon the foundations established from the previous year’s sequential skills and lessons taught.

RECESS/SOCIAL INTERACTION & INSTRUCTION
Kindergarten through grade five students participate in a supervised social time for a 20-minute recess each morning and afternoon. Preschool students enjoy a longer daily recess period within their designated playground. Students go outdoors daily and have access to a wide variety of sports and playground equipment. The opportunity to build forts in a supervised area of the woods adjacent to our playground or maintain the smaller garden within the playground offer students a diverse range of outdoor activities and experiences. Teacher-facilitated games and activities provide instructional opportunities to further develop gross motor skills and athletic abilities.
WORLD CULTURES WEEK
A highlight of our academic year is a week devoted to immersing faculty and students in the study of a specific country and its culture. During this time, our traditional Lower School schedule is altered as teachers from all grades and disciplines collaborate to bring an interdisciplinary focus to a variety of topics. Within flexible groups (K-2 and Grades 3-5) and through multisensory learning experiences, the history, geography, music, arts, religion, food, people, games, architecture and literature of the particular country are studied. Guest speakers and performances, as well as a buffet lunch, further enhance the flavor of the country and culture.

LOWER SCHOOL TRADITIONS
The Lower School is rooted in tradition. These traditions are not only division-wide, but also occur within specific grades as well as disciplines. Some of the highlights include:

- Morning Handshake
- Morning Meetings & Assemblies
- Reading Buddies
- Parent Night in School
- Spirit Week
- Blue & White Soccer Classic
- Kite Day
- Math Night
- Healthy Haunted House
- Halloween Parade & Festivities
- Grandfriends' Day
- Choral & Instrumental Concerts
- Grade-level Musical Theatrical Performances
- Art Gone Wild
- Field Day
- Enviro Education (Grades 4 & 5)
- Poetry in the Park
- Community Sharing
- Classroom Visiting Day
- Moving Up Day Ceremony

EXTENDED DAY (3:15-5:30)
The Extended Day program provides an enriching and relaxing environment for preschool through grade five students who need to remain at school after normal school hours. We understand that students come to this program after a long and challenging school day and need a place to unwind, relax and enjoy a healthy snack. Students participate in a number of fun and enriching activities that encourage exploration in the creative arts and physical fitness. Unstructured indoor and outdoor playtime is provided each day, as well. It is our intent to provide an environment that closely simulates an afternoon at home.
ROCKY HILL ENRICHMENT ACADEMY (3:15-4:30)
Lower School students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of after-school enrichment classes such as soccer, model rocketry, film making, art classes, music lessons, Homework Club, and so on. These classes, which are also open to the neighboring communities, provide students with extracurricular experiences, while fostering collaboration and more specialized learning.
Rocky Hill’s Middle School embraces the uniqueness and diversity inherent in early adolescent students. Through rigorous academic courses, a commitment to the arts, competitive athletics, and an active and dynamic advisory program, the Middle School guides the development of the whole child. Small class sizes facilitate individualized instruction, helping students grow and mature to their potential, preparing them for a successful Upper School and college experience. The Middle School has recently incorporated the principles of Developmental Designs®, a program that continues the practices of the Lower School’s Responsive Classroom. “The Developmental Designs approach supports high academic achievement for middle-level students by integrating a social-emotional approach that meets their needs and academic instruction that truly engages them.”

(www.originsonline.org/developmentaldesigns)

CORE VALUES:
RESPECT, INTEGRITY, KINDNESS, AND RESPONSIBILITY
These four core values are a prominent aspect of the Middle School and are emphasized in the advisory program to help students recognize and internalize the qualities of good citizenship. By embracing the core values woven into the Middle School program, students are more cognizant of their interactions with their peers and are more likely to do what is right, an attribute which benefits everyone. Together with the core values, the Middle School education includes a focus on knowledge, problem-solving/critical thinking, and communication. A student who performs successfully in these areas will possess a powerful set of learning skills and communication techniques with which to enter the Upper School.

PHILOSOPHY & PRACTICE
Formal introduction to discussion-based learning takes place in the Middle School, where the Harkness method of learning builds confidence, instills respect, and forges independent thinking. An inquiry and discussion-based environment encourages and supports risk-taking, promotes independent and collaborative problem solving, and champions individuality and intellectual growth. At an age when students are focused on themselves, the Harkness environment helps students to listen to their peers as well as to develop their own voices, skills which carry over into many other aspects of life.
ADVISORY
Considered the backbone of the Middle School, the advisory program establishes an important relationship between a student and a faculty member. Small, grade-specific groups meet with an adviser at the beginning of the day, as well as for a full advisory period once a week. Incorporating the Developmental Designs philosophy and approach, the advisory period is used for small group and full grade activities that focus on discussing core values and various social issues, as well as for community-building and spirit-generating activities. This period also provides a time for an adviser to meet with individual advisees to discuss issues relevant to the student’s life, both at school and at home.

ENVIROWEEK
With the Potowomut River estuary, Narragansett Bay, and Mount Monadnock serving as classrooms, Middle School students venture outside of the school walls—conducting field surveys, experimenting, collecting and recording data, making observations, and learning about each of these environments from many different perspectives. In addition, students participate in a variety of activities that take advantage of time together to develop community and to communicate and work together to solve challenges.

The focus for the sixth grade encompasses the entire Potowomut watershed and salt marsh, whereas the seventh grade explores the bay with a focus on the human factors that effect the waterway’s health and well-being. There is also an overnight camping experience for sixth- and seventh-graders that takes place on campus. The eighth grade spends their first day of Enviroweek involved in an intensive group-building program and then heads to Mount Monadnock in Jaffrey, NH, where they camp out for two nights and summit the mountain.

WORLD CULTURES WEEK
Each March, the Middle School immerses itself in the study of a different world culture. Students and faculty learn about every aspect of the chosen culture, including its history, religion, environment and resources, festivals, art, language, music, food, and customs.
ATHLETICS
The Middle School athletic program is an interscholastic, developmental program open to any student who wishes to participate in competitive sports. During a season, teams play one game per week, on average. Proper sportsmanship and teamwork are an integral part of the School’s competitive sports philosophy. Teams meet Monday through Thursday from 2:30 until 3:30 p.m., with games taking place after school. Athletic offerings include:

- Basketball
- Dance
- Field Hockey
- Karate
- Lacrosse
- Lifetime Fitness
- Recreational Sailing
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Winter Recreation & Robotics

PHYSICAL EDUCATION
Physical Education classes meet two times each week with the goal of promoting physical fitness, individual skills and endurance, and healthy lifestyles. In the winter, the physical education curriculum also incorporates classroom lessons in health. Sixth-grade students explore the many changes that come with the onset of adolescence. Seventh-grade students learn about the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and substance abuse. In the eighth grade, students study human reproduction.

TRADITIONS & SPECIAL EVENTS
- Halloween activities
- Homecoming
- Veterans Day Ceremony
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Program
- Musicals
- Athletic Award Ceremonies
- Arts Week
- Dances
- Grade 8 Potluck Dinner
- End-of-year Trip
- Moving Up Day

GRADE SPECIFIC PROGRAMS
**Grade 6 — Skills Program**

The Library and Technology Skills classes help students to learn information literacy skills and to employ technology as an effective tool for lifelong learning. The classes not only teach the mechanics of using technology, but also the ethical, cultural, and societal issues related to the use of this technology and information. Instruction is integrated into all
curriculum areas. Specific technology topics covered include use of the Moodle management system, use of Google™ accounts, and internet safety. Technology instruction is based on the International Society for Technology in Education National Education Technology Standards. Information literacy skills are based on the AASL Standards for the 21st Century.

Grade 7 — Nature’s Classroom

Each winter the seventh-grade class spends three days and two nights at Nature’s Classroom in Charlton, Mass., with a focus on winter ecology. As a part of their environmental education, students look at ways in which organisms have adapted to the harsh conditions of a New England winter.

Grade 8 — Expositions

During his or her final year in the Middle School, each eighth-grade student delivers a multimedia presentation to the entire Middle School community. The students select a topic for their exposition at the start of the school year. They conduct research, which must include an interview with someone directly related to their topic, write an expository paper, develop their multimedia presentations throughout the fall, and rehearse their expositions in front of the faculty. They are instructed in effective research techniques, the proper way to conduct an interview, PowerPoint design and public speaking. Exposition presentations take place in January and February. Previous themes have included Rhode Island, Natural Phenomena and Environmental Issues, Decades, and People Who Have Made a Difference.

TYPICAL COURSE PROGRESSION

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<td>World Geography</td>
<td>American Government</td>
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<td>Earth Science</td>
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In the Upper School, we strive to create a dynamic learning environment where dedicated teachers challenge students to become lifelong learners, while preparing them to succeed at colleges and universities. Rocky Hill’s size, pedagogical philosophy and practices, and waterfront setting encourage students from diverse backgrounds to grow as creative intellectuals, as caring human beings, and as responsible citizens. Through curricular offerings and co-curricular activities unique to the Upper School, students continually reaffirm their self-knowledge in their commitment to each other, to their natural environment, and to their global neighbors.

PHILOSOPHY & PRACTICE
The Upper School educational philosophy combines inquiry-based dialogue, the Harkness method, and interactive digital media to create a unique synergy of people, principles and practices. Students and teachers assure its success through their initiative, creativity, collaboration, problem solving, and achievement. The Harkness methods allows students to develop proficiency in, among other skills, individual preparation, collaborative participation, freedom of expression, the creation of inter-textual, cross-topic, and interdisciplinary connections, the provision of supporting evidence, and reflection and self-evaluation. The connection between Harkness and technology allows students to leverage real-time access to synchronous and asynchronous technologies to enhance the Harkness exchange, becoming active and socially interactive learners. In the classroom and online, Rocky Hill’s academic philosophy encourages a 21st-century, global environment where both students and teachers have moved away from “schooling” towards ongoing “learning.”
E-LEARNING, INDEPENDENT STUDY, & CERTIFICATES OF DISTINCTION

Through online support and tutorial guidance, the School provides mentorship for Upper School students who are interested in expanding their course load, enhancing their study of a particular discipline, and/or selecting a field of independent study for personal academic enrichment. By providing opportunities for independent and online learning, the School encourages students to explore their talents and follow their interests and passions. Following the successful completion of an extended learning program, students may qualify for a Certificate of Distinction at Commencement. Further details of the program and are available at www.rockyhill.org/e-learning.

ADVISORY

Advisers serve as mentors and help students chart their academic and co-curricular courses through the Upper School. Regular meetings allow for the development of a strong working relationship, whereby faculty members serve as advocates for their advisees in all aspects of school life, guiding students to make healthy and appropriate choices. Other responsibilities include helping advisees choose courses; answering questions; assisting in resolving academic or personal difficulties; and communicating with parents/guardians.

Frequent, meaningful communication is the hallmark of an effective adviser-advisee relationship. All Upper School students meet with their advisers in groups at the start of each school day and one lunch period a week. Advisers use this time to together to socialize with one another as well as to discuss upcoming school events, issues, or topics that may affect the Rocky Hill community. Additionally, students and their advisers often arrange to meet individually at other times during the week. Advisers hold parent conferences in both the fall and spring to discuss each student’s progress toward their personal and academic goals. At the conclusion of each school year, advisers write personal letters to their individual advisee parents summarizing their child’s progress.

Beginning in grade 10, students work more closely with their advisers to identify the academic and co-curricular directions that both highlight the student’s strengths and address any areas of weakness in the academic profiles that they will eventually present to colleges. The adviser-advisee relationship takes on even greater significance in grade 11 as students begin the college application process: narrowing their college list, scheduling campus visits, and compiling data for their applications. While the responsibility for assembling these materials and testing lies with the student and the Director of College Counseling, the adviser helps by making sure that each advisee is on course to meet the requirements for graduation and acceptance into an appropriate post-secondary institution.
COLLEGE COUNSELING
The college admissions process is an ever changing one. The goal of Rocky Hill’s College Counseling Office is to assist students in identifying colleges and universities that match their academic abilities which will also offer success in a suitable environment for continuing intellectual development. Finding the right college or university is about “fit.” The Director of College Counseling helps students go through a self-assessment process to identify their academic and extracurricular strengths, career goals, accompanying major possibilities, and overall personal preferences. Students are empowered and encouraged to embrace the college process and to make informed decisions concerning their college choice based on comprehensive research.

While the college search begins in earnest during junior year with individualized tailored meetings, freshman and sophomores are welcomed to work with the Director of College Counseling around goal setting, academic motivation, and curriculum development.

ATHLETICS
Grade 9 students are required to participate on one competitive team for athletics. All Upper School students must participate in two of the three sports seasons per year. While the Upper School has several on-campus athletic options, students may petition the Athletic Director for an athletic waiver to pursue an off-campus sports option for one season. Students may also fulfill one of the season requirements by participating as an actor, musician, or technical assistant in a drama production.

The following athletic options are offered each year:

- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Fast Pitch Softball (Co-op)
- Field Hockey
- Golf
- Ice Hockey (Co-op)
- Karate*
- Lacrosse
- Lifetime Fitness*
- Recreational Sailing*
- Sailing
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Yoga*

*non-competitive offerings
CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Co-curricular activities afford students the opportunity to explore areas of interest in a less formal atmosphere than in a graded course, and may be scheduled into or after the academic day.

Offerings May Include:

- A Cappella & Classical Twist
- Asian Club
- Ceramics & Dinner Party Club
- Certamen Team & Latin Club
- Community Service Club
- Defenders Environmental Club
- Investment Club
- Math Team
- Multicultural Club
- National Honor Society
- Robotics
- Spanish
- Student Council
- Student Literary Magazine
- Polar Bear Club
- Yearbook

STUDENT LIFE PROGRAM

The key to a well-rounded student is to provide experiences that extend beyond the classroom setting. Senior prefects are selected by both the faculty and students as those able to provide student leadership for the entire Upper School community. Student Council elects representatives from each class and works as a group on student-based initiatives and social activities. The Student Life Program also provides an opportunity for students to learn from those outside our Rocky Hill community when we periodically invite outside experts to work with our students. Individual speakers vary, but the selection has included such topics as leadership, drinking and driving, diversity, self-awareness, money management, and peer pressure.
GRADE SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

Grade 9 — Freshman Studies

The required Freshman Studies course is divided into five units, which explore issues and values essential to successful navigation of adolescence. Taught mainly by the Director of Counseling & Wellness, this course is designed not only to provide freshmen with a solid foundation for their first year in Upper School, but also to serve as a guide for the decisions they will make during the next four years. The first unit focuses on community and transition, both academically and socially. The academic unit provides students with an understanding of Harkness learning, test-taking techniques, technology orientation, Moodle training, digital citizenship, and organizational skills. The second unit covers health topics including nutrition, stress management, and healthy decision-making. The third unit addresses issues of community, identity, and diversity, allowing students to explore who they are and how they fit into the Rocky Hill community and the world. The fourth topic draws on the students’ ability to identify strong leaders, and encourages them to view themselves as leaders in a variety of different settings. Finally, students are encouraged to use their leadership skills to better the community and the world. The last unit, taught by the environmental science teacher, takes advantage of the School’s unique location and asks students to examine their impact on the environment, the significance of conservation, and the fundamentals of sustainability and political action.

Grade 9 — The Berkshire Outdoor Center

Prior to the start of the school year, the freshman class spends three days at the Berkshire Outdoor Center in Becket, Mass. The purpose of the trip is to foster togetherness as a class while creating opportunities for personal challenge. Students return to campus more connected as a group and begin the school year with newly created friendships. With those important personal connections already underway, the adjustment to a new school environment becomes a more manageable experience.

Group activities include ropes courses, raft building, canoeing, archery and construction of a geodome. These activities are paired with team-building and problem-solving games designed to push group dynamics into the foreground while encouraging self-expression and building individual self-esteem. The highly trained camp staff assists students in processing their individual and collective experiences and observations in each activity by encouraging sharing and respect among each member of the group.
**Grade 10 — SAT prep: Critical Reading & Writing Skills**

This course is designed to provide sophomores with a firm foundation in the content areas covered in the critical reading and writing skills sections of the SAT, and, at the same time, to acquaint them with the procedures and strategies required to complete the test effectively. Vocabulary building is stressed as preparation for the sentence completion questions which remain an important component of the critical reading skills section. Time is also spent solidifying the grammatical concepts, which are at a premium on the writing segment. Students take practice tests periodically, under simulated exam conditions, in order to become accustomed to the standardized testing experience.

**Grade 11 — SAT Prep: Mathematics**

This course is designed to provide juniors with a firm foundation in the content areas covered in the mathematics section of the SAT, and to acquaint them with the procedures and strategies required to complete the test effectively. The course covers concepts from Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2, with an emphasis on the types of questions that are on the test. Students take practice tests periodically, under simulated test conditions, in order to become accustomed to the standardized testing experience.

**Grade 12 — Senior Seminar**

Established in 2001, this program promotes the free and open exchange of ideas; encourages media literacy as a critical component of responsible citizenship; introduces students to the college seminar and lecture experience; maximizes the learning and communications opportunities available through modern technology; engages students in critical analysis of a complex issue of contemporary relevance; and develops leadership that recognizes diversity and respects alternative views. Flexible enough in design to address a wide range of issues, Senior Seminar topics have included:

- Understanding the Nature of Terrorism
- Mapping the Nuclear World
- Iran and the United States: Culture, Conflict, and Policies
- The Enigma of Climate Change
- China and the United States: Challenges and Opportunities
Our current Senior Seminar topic, “Exciting Business: The Role for Young Entrepreneurs,” introduces seniors to the challenges of creating a business. Students work in groups to conceive, research, and plan a start-up business that is presented to a venture capital group to attract investment. Through this process, students are introduced to the complexities of contemporary entrepreneurship and the teamwork, collaboration, leadership, and global awareness that it requires. They are encouraged to explore opportunities created by modern technology including the ease with which businesses expand internationally. In addition to current markets and finance, seniors consider ethical, environmental, political, and legal issues that may factor into their endeavors.

**Grade 12 — Senior Internship**

The Senior Internship is a four-part project that spans the length of students’ senior year and is the culmination of their Rocky Hill experience. At the beginning of the selection process, students contact professionals in areas of interest and arrange a one-month internship commitment. The final choice may reflect possible career choices, a commitment to community service, or a unique one-time opportunity. A primary requirement is that students pursue a passion and organize a program that provides a significant learning opportunity.

Once an internship has been secured, students are responsible for managing all of the details of the schedule, setting objectives, initiating all communications necessary to ensure the success of the internship, and preparing a final presentation of the results of their internship. Students also engage in substantial research related to the field and the organization/business. The student’s adviser plays an important role in supporting the student throughout this process.