

EXPLORE

what is possible





AT THE BEGINNING of each school year, all students attend an Honor Code Assembly in which the Upper School student head of the Honor Council addresses the student body and reminds them of our code: "I will not lie. I will not cheat. I will not steal." Student signatures are on display all year as a reminder of their commitment to their community.

ROOTED IN THE JOY OF LEARNING. COMMITTED TO THE PURSUIT OF PROGRESS.

Welcome to North Cross School.

I began my journey as an educator here over 20 years ago. I know that you began deciding where to start your child's educational journey well before today. All of us here at North Cross appreciate your family giving our school a closer look, no matter where you are in this often challenging expedition.

To continue with this "education as a journey" metaphor, we believe a school should not be the captain of your child's experience, but instead, the navigator. We expect our teachers to guide your child while ultimately allowing them to make their own choices. We understand that children learn from their mistakes as much as they do from their successes.

While you conduct your search, allow me to offer a bit of sage advice: value the independence in an academic institution as much as you do it in your own child. Prioritize an education guided by what is proven, not by what is mandated, and doors will only open for your child. Here, they will find their way, with their own map. That is our pledge.



VICTOR LAMAS began his career as a teacher at North Cross in 1998. In addition to being the father of Joaquin '24, his other important duties at the school include directing the Lower School—a position he has held since 2017—and guiding the academic curriculum throughout the school as Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs. However, if you were to ask our students, you might hear that he is best known as the go-to guy for getting kickballs off of the Ellis Hall roof or for his notorious history rap assignments in his AP World History class.

"Value the independence in an academic institution as much as you do it in your own child. Prioritize an education guided by what is proven, not by what is mandated, and doors will only open for your child."

Throughout these pages, you will glimpse a journey through North Cross, a road that contains five key mile-markers, our "five C's": communication, collaboration, creativity, community, and commitment. When comparing us with other options, I encourage you to ask yourself these questions: Will my child's journey be led by experienced and passionate guides who want to discover what makes my child light the way? Will it be collaborative and promote my child's perspective and ideas? At North Cross we can answer all of these considerations with a resounding "Yes." I invite you to read on to find out more about why, and always feel free to reach out if you have questions or just want to talk.

Best of luck on your journey,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victor Lamas".

VICTOR LAMAS

ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL FOR ACADEMICS,
DIRECTOR OF LOWER SCHOOL

Nº1

COMMUNICATION

communication · collaboration · creativity · community · commitment

A LOWER SCHOOL STUDENT
WILL DELIVER

100+
presentations

both big and small, in front of a live audience
over their time in JK-3 through grade five.



THE NORTH CROSS LIBRARY is home to over

15,000 volumes

and second home to our beloved Ms. Holley.

Each week, students have a library time where they learn from her about literary concepts and, when they're older, how to discern legitimate reference sources from misinformation as well as research and presentation skills.

Connect the dots

RAISE YOUR VOICE

Most adults can remember the bone-freezing experience of speaking in front of a group of people for the first time. From a young age, our students learn that eager eyes are nothing to be afraid of and that what they have to say is not only expected, but valued and anticipated by their audience.

In no time, students are singing their hearts out to the alphabet, giving tours of the Amazon rain forest, taking the stage to describe a lemur's habitat and diet with their very own PowerPoint, and bringing a full audience along for the ride as they read their autobiographical story during an author's breakfast.

Not only do these annual exercises develop writing and research skills, but they help our students find comfort in their voice and develop the confidence and presentation skills they'll need to succeed in the classroom, and in life.



Good to know

Students who proceed through the Middle and Upper Schools after completing a North Cross Lower School education **average 100-120 points better on the SATs** than those of students who entered North Cross later in their education.

Every student in the Lower School is taught cursive. The practice improves literacy and the speed of writing—plus, it enables them to read cursive historical documents like the U.S. Constitution—or their great-grandmother's journal.



DEVELOPMENTALLY DRIVEN skills are introduced each year to give students the language skills they need to be efficient and effective writers. From cursive practice to Word Study to Reader's Theater, students build each year on their vocabulary and grammar skills, embellished with opportunities for students to express themselves creatively. Whether through an ad pitch for a recently recent book or at a news desk for an extreme weather report in science, our students learn that having an idea is one thing, but being able to express it thoughtfully and convincingly takes confidence, precision, and practice.



FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES: The Senior Buddy program is a beloved North Cross tradition. JK-4 students are paired with a senior in the Upper School and meet throughout the year, establishing a close bond through picnics and holiday events. The Fat Pencil Ceremony concludes their time together when the JK-4 students present to their graduating senior songs and a "fat pencil" similar to that which the seniors learned to write with when they were young.

Nº2

COLLABORATION

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ALL TOGETHER NOW

How does one teach something as intangible as empathy? Keeping our numbers small allows us to have a tight-knit community who learn from one another through differing perspectives, backgrounds, and histories. Donning a jersey or building a LEGO® robot with peers helps, too. Through skill-building athletic teams, after-school opportunities, and buddy programs that offer mentoring in a variety of subjects, younger students learn in many ways that their school is a place where lessons can be learned outside of the classroom from someone other than a teacher, that all ages should respect and care for one another, and that you are never too young to become a leader.



OUR LOWER SCHOOL'S PARTNERSHIP with a local non-profit offers multiple opportunities for our students to give back—books, coats, Thanksgiving meals, and holiday toy drives repeatedly emphasize the importance of community service and relating to those whose circumstances differ from their own. We also emphasize that kind gestures are appreciated at any age. Our students performed a Zoom holiday sing-along with a local nursing home during the pandemic when they normally would gather with them in person.

You can't spell TEAM without M-E!

In addition to a dedicated physical education period every day in the Lower School, students in grades kindergarten through five can join our after-school team soccer program Nitro Crush or our girls or boys lacrosse teams, the Pixies

and the Pirates, respectively. These opportunities give students a chance to exercise with their friends, build confidence and teamwork, and learn athletic skills immediately after the school day ends.

Nº3

CREATIVITY

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EXPRESS YOURSELF

American painter Edward Hopper said, “No amount of skillful invention can replace the essential element of imagination.” We believe that the seed of imagination can only grow where creativity is welcomed and exploration without fear of failure is encouraged. Through a rich curriculum that not only leaves spaces for creativity but prioritizes it, students throughout their Lower School career have ample opportunity to strengthen their creative muscle. Through music and theatre; computer coding and engineering; cooking, gardening, and studio arts, there are plenty of opportunities where students are encouraged to approach the world with an imaginative mind and a willingness to try new things.

Good to know

Throughout their Lower School career, North Cross students will complete **regular lessons in computer literacy.**

Using the code.org curriculum, students work in the dedicated Lower School computer lab to flex their logic skills and familiarize themselves with a whole other language.



READY PLAYER ONE: Computer coding is introduced in junior kindergarten and continued throughout the Lower School not because we think it's the “next big thing,” but because we understand that teaching logical approaches to problem solving and giving students multiple languages with which to express ideas allows them endless platforms for creative thinking and innovation. Their final project is unveiled at the annual Fifth Grade Coding Fair where students present games and artful masterpieces they have created using Blockly, a visual programming language, to parents and friends.



AN ARTFUL EYE

The arts are paramount at North Cross. Our JK students have art materials available to them every day. In the first through fifth grades, students travel to the sun-filled art studio for weekly studio art classes. Students also explore various instruments such as marimbas and ukuleles through their twice-weekly music class. There, students develop rhythm, voice, music notation, and ensemble skills. Once in fourth and fifth grades, students choose to participate in either band or chorus, which many continue in the Middle and Upper schools.



A photograph of students in costumes performing outdoors. In the foreground, a student in a brown hat and plaid coat is crouching. In the background, two students are kneeling on the grass, one in a cow costume and another in a blue and white striped shirt. A woman in a floral dress and red mask stands behind them. A large green and yellow backdrop is visible.

STUDENTS FIND MANY AVENUES TO EXPRESS THEIR IMAGINATIONS at North Cross. From studio art to computer coding, and everything in between. Recently, Lower School students joined the all-school cast of "Into the Woods Jr." The performance was staged outside for safety, but it worked magically given the subject. Fairy tales came to life, students learned from one another, and, perhaps, our youngest performers found a new passion.



THE LOWER SCHOOL GARDEN is a place where plants and community thrive. The third grade may plant heirloom seeds from their visit to Monticello, recreating a Colonial-era garden. Kindergartners plant radishes and lettuce to supplement the diet of their class guinea pig George. Fifth graders do more heavy lifting, moving earth, turning over beds, and tending to the compost bin. Some of the spoils even make it to the cafeteria salad bar!

Nº4

COMMUNITY

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TODOS LOS DIAS: Learning a second language gives a child much more than another way to converse, it has been proven to improve performance in a variety of cognitive areas. Students at every level in the Lower School receive daily Spanish instruction. That, coupled with creative projects in Hispanic culture, our annual International Day celebration, and participation in local diversity showcases, provide our students with a global perspective that celebrates difference and broadens their world view.

BEYOND THESE WALLS

The boundaries of a North Cross classroom expand beyond the buildings in which we teach. As an independent school, we have the freedom to design a curriculum that exceeds the Commonwealth's Standards of Learning and introduces students to a plethora of cultures, experiences and histories. The result is a community of global citizens who seek out what is unfamiliar, who enjoy the challenge presented by learning a second language, who believe in unearthing legitimate sources while weeding out false information, and a faculty who embraces the truth that not every child learns in the same way. Our curriculum is designed to support all of these goals, no matter where or how they are best achieved.



EACH MORNING BEGINS at drop-off with a handshake and hello from Mr. Lamas. At lunch, students may find a parent visitor at their table whose sole purpose is to help build conversation skills, fostering more confident and articulate students. These "soft skills" are emphasized in the Lower School and guided by our dedicated counselor who works with every grade to develop compassion, confidence, and respect through collaborative classwork and inter-grade partnerships, like the fifth-grade reading buddies who spend time with the kindergarten classes to foster literacy skills.



Good to know

The Annual International Day celebration gives students a taste of different cultures—literally!

The event, spearheaded by the Parents' Association, brings the extended families of our diverse student body to our campus where students can "tour" different countries and sample favorite delicacies from around the world.

Nº5

COMMITMENT

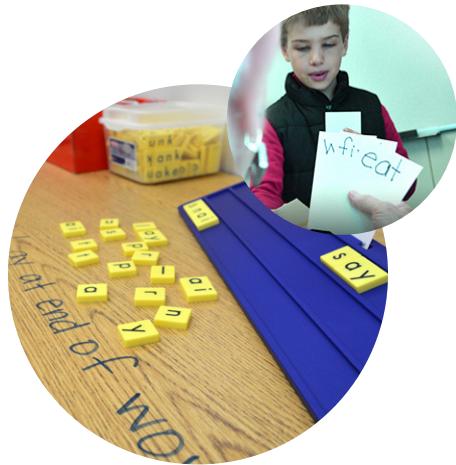
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AN INDEPENDENT SPIRIT

We expect a lot from our students. We expect a lot from our teachers. But mostly, we expect a lot from ourselves as an independent school. We take that charter seriously and employ it to the best of our ability to improve the field of education and the experience of our students. Mastery of material is the goal for our students, not passing a test.

The educators we attract are teachers by calling, not by occupation, which may be why for the past several years our faculty—and the school—has held the top spots in the *Roanoker Magazine's* "Best of Roanoke" educators and private school categories. We value continuing education for our teachers, we welcome new ideas of how best to educate our students, and we welcome learners who approach material differently.

All we ask of our community is a commitment to persevere, to be curious, and to treat others as they would want themselves treated.



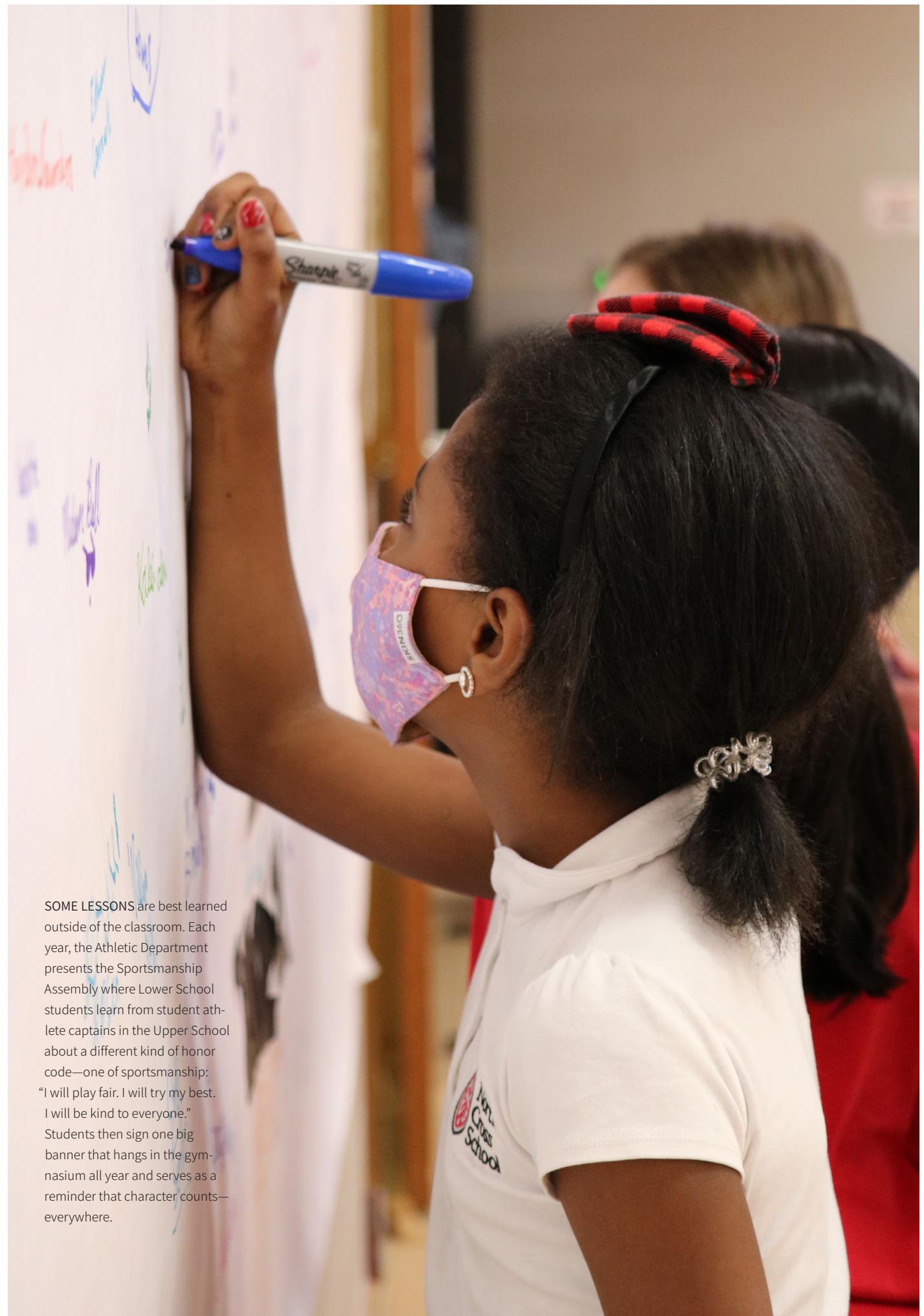
SUPPORT FOR ALL LEARNERS:

The CrossWalk Program at North Cross was established as a space where bright students who are diagnosed with language-based learning differences receive daily remediation from Orton-Gillingham certified instructors. Since its inception, CrossWalk has grown in number of students and instructors

and serves an average of 38 students annually. Enrolled students attend their CrossWalk classroom—a school within a school—during their classmates' daily Spanish period and also use the quiet space to take tests and get help with their homework.



READY, SET, GO! While many public schools are drastically reducing, if not eliminating, their physical education programs, we maintain **daily physical education** periods for all kindergarten through grade 5 students—in addition to the 1 to 2 recesses! This daily physical activity instills healthy choices as well as improving our students' focus inside the classroom. Beyond an introduction to team sports and fun games, students learn valuable insights not easily accomplished in a traditional classroom: teamwork, perseverance, and healthy lifestyle choices.



SOME LESSONS are best learned outside of the classroom. Each year, the Athletic Department presents the Sportsmanship Assembly where Lower School students learn from student athlete captains in the Upper School about a different kind of honor code—one of sportsmanship: “I will play fair. I will try my best. I will be kind to everyone.” Students then sign one big banner that hangs in the gymnasium all year and serves as a reminder that character counts—everywhere.

TAKE THE FIRST STEP



Scan to inquire.

A member of our Admissions team will be in touch when we receive your information.



ARE YOU READY TO EXPLORE MORE?

The admission process is straightforward. Though we operate on a rolling admissions policy, our limited capacity encourages families to apply early.

North Cross was built on the belief that every child should have the support in a cultivating environment that helps them reach their full potential. We've spent over 75 years creating spaces where knowledge inspires new questions and students become masters, and where individuals find a collective self inside a community that values difference yet strives to find common ground.

Consider joining generations of families who have made North Cross School the place where they prepared themselves for life—and for success.



Financial Assistance

Our tuition assistance program, Tailored Tuition, is an option for which any family currently applying to North Cross or enrolled at the school can apply. Families concerned about affording the full tuition rate at North Cross School should consider this program. The program takes into account each family's unique income and expense portfolio and adjusts tuition accordingly.

Good to know

25% of our families

receive tuition assistance through our Tailored Tuition program designed to work with each family's unique financial needs.



North Cross School At-A-Glance:

FOUNDED: 1944

STUDENT BODY: 569

Lower School: 270

Middle School: 107

Upper School: 192

Percent receiving Tailored Tuition: 28%

Black/African-American:

36 (19 girls, 17 boys)

Asian: 40 (19 girls, 21 boys)

Multi-Racial: 36 (16 girls, 20 boys)

Caucasian: 413 (191 girls, 222 boys)

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

BY STUDENTS:

Austria, China, Germany, India, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Romania, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam, Zimbabwe

STUDENT TO FACULTY RATIO: 8:1

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE: 13

CAMPUSES: 77 acres in Roanoke, Virginia with a down-town dormitory; two campuses for North Cross Shanghai (grades 8-12): the Jing'an campus (grades 11-12) and the Baoshan campus (grades 8-10)

ACCREDITATION: North Cross is accredited by the Virginia Association of Independent Schools.

North Cross School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status in the administration of its educational, admission, financial aid or employment policies, or any other programs administered by the School.



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