



# THE R.E.A.L. SCHOOL

RACINE ENGINEERING, ARTS & LEADERSHIP

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What is the most important thing I need to know about the REAL School?** The REAL School is a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math school. We place a lot of emphasis and devote significant class time to math. Our school is a specialty school for this purpose. If your child hates math or is math avoidant, s/he may experience more stress and not enjoy attending The R.E.A.L. School.

The middle school is an advanced math middle school preparing students for engineering related college course work in high school. Home work is required in all subject areas. All middle school students are required to take math application and pre-engineering courses in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup> grade, algebra in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. All high school students are required to participate in our early college, Gateway engineering and advanced manufacturing pocket pathways and take the minimum course work required for eligibility to a college university. For example, all 9<sup>th</sup> graders take Spanish 1 and all 10<sup>th</sup> take Spanish 2.

REAL is a smaller school, but being “small” should not be the reason for attending. The REAL School middle school prepares students for the high school pocket pathways. REAL is an ideal school for students who love the challenge of math, science, engineering, robotics, and generally are interested in how things work, especially with advanced computer technology running machines and robots. Middle and high school students do get homework daily.

**How can we learn more?** Visit our website at [rusd.org/real](http://rusd.org/real) and our Facebook page – The Real School.

**Can our student visit?** Due to the pandemic shut down we are not hosting in-person orientations, tours or shadow dates at this time.

**It says “Arts” in your name. What type of Arts program do you have?** Our school offers middle school and high school art classes as well as band. We do not offer a specialized arts program and students are not guaranteed to be able to take all art classes. The “Arts” portion of our school is to encourage creative thinking and to provide balance to an engineering, math and science focus that is important for problem solving.

**How many incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders will be accepted?** 90.

**What are your class sizes?** Our classes usually have 27-30 students.

**How many students will apply?** Changes from year to year, but typically between 250 and 350.

**Do you have openings in other grades?** We usually have 5-10 openings per grade. Those seats are filled by the lottery.

**How often are the middle and high school mixed?** They are not mixed for any classes. But they do cross paths in the school. Students are not allowed to congregate or hang out in an area designated for the other grade levels. High school students must be okay with attending a school with younger students around.

**How do you support your students?** All of our students have a home group teacher throughout their years at REAL School. This teacher helps maintain contact with parents/guardians and provides daily support and advocacy for their home group students.

**Do students keep their home group guidance teacher each year or do they get a new one?** Middle school students have the same home group guidance teacher for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Once in high school students start with a new home group guidance teacher who is a high school teacher and they will have that teacher for their four years of high school.

**How culturally diverse is the current student body?** REAL School’s minority rate is currently 45%.

**Is the REAL School a “Charter School?”** No. The REAL School is no longer a charter.

**What are the school’s hours?** 7:15 – 2:45. REAL School is considered a high school.

**What time do the doors open?** 6:45am for drop off.

**Is there a lottery every year?** Yes. Each year a lottery is used to determine who can enroll at REAL for the following year's open seats. Once a student is a REAL School student s/he does NOT have to re-enter the lottery. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are automatically enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> grade – unless they choose to attend a different school for high school.

**Is there transportation to and from school?** 100% of our students receive bussing, regardless of where they live in the district.

**Do you offer sibling preference?** Yes. Students entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade who have a sibling at REAL receive preference in the lottery. Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade who have a sibling at REAL receive preference for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade waiting list only.

**Do you have PTA, PTO, or PTSA?** REAL has a PTSA.

**Does REAL offer foreign language classes?** Spanish is the only foreign language offered at REAL. All 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to take Spanish 1 and all 10<sup>th</sup> grade students are required take Spanish 2. 11<sup>th</sup> grade students have the option to take Spanish 3. All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students take middle school Spanish.

**Do 8<sup>th</sup> grade students have to reapply to enter 9<sup>th</sup> at REAL?** No, ours is a 7 year program. 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students automatically become 9<sup>th</sup> graders at REAL.

**What kind of schedule do you use?** An A/B block schedule is used for all grades. Students have 4 classes on A days and 4 different classes on B days. So students have their classes every other day. Students have home group every day.

**Do all students call their teachers by their first name?** Yes. We believe in a lateral relationship of engaging students where students and teachers are partners in education. The first way we introduce our students to this is through the "first name basis." This is a philosophical difference in how we teach students to feel comfortable speaking with and working with adults.

**Does REAL offer AP or other advanced credits or college credits?** REAL does NOT offer AP classes. Through its partnership with Gateway and the iMET center students take actual college classes in STEM related courses.

**When will we find out if our child is accepted?** The application sign up for the lottery closes on January 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm. The lottery will occur sometime after. Parents will be notified around the end of March from the Racine Unified School District. The REAL School does NOT conduct the lottery. Please do NOT call the REAL School to inquire about the lottery results.

**What do the students do for sports?** The middle school participates with all other middle school sports. Currently high school students can participate in all of their home school sports and extra-curricular activities. Currently we do not offer transportation to the other schools after school. Students must arrange for their own transportation.

**What is the biggest difference between REAL and Walden?** Both have similar philosophies about student social-emotional and academic development, a school culture emphasizing family, and an advocacy-based home-group program. Walden offers AP classes, is a liberal arts program, is a little larger than REAL and is located in the former McKinley Middle School building. REAL requires classes at Gateway and is specifically focused on STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math and is located in Sturtevant. Both schools are great.

**For the band can a student play harmonica?** Our band is all-inclusive. Dan will incorporate every student's musical interest into the band. All students are expected to learn how to read music, however Dan works with students wherever their current level of learning is.

Thank you for taking interest in The R.E.A.L. School. Our school is a specialty school intended for students who have an interest and aptitude in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. Students receive significant, high level opportunities in this area and our school maintains high expectations of students so they may have success in a demanding, but rewarding area of education.

