



NOTRE DAME *Junior* ACADEMY

A Bold Academic Program for Girls Grades 7 & 8

THE FORGOTTEN MIDDLE

Ensuring that all Students are on Target for College and Career Readiness Before High School

The process of preparing students to make successful transitions from middle school to high school is just as important as the process of preparing them to make successful transitions from high school to post secondary education.

The following excerpts are from the Executive Summary of the above report prepared by ACT on College Readiness. ACT is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides a broad array of assessment, research, information, and program management solutions in the areas of education and workforce development. Each year ACT serves millions of people in high schools, colleges, professional associations, businesses, and government agencies – nationally and internationally.

- ◆ Today, college readiness also means career readiness. While not every high school graduate plans to attend college, the majority of the fastest-growing jobs that require a high school diploma, pay a salary above the poverty line for a family of four, and provide opportunities for career and advancement require knowledge and skills comparable to those expected of the first-year college student.
- ◆ ACT data shows that **fewer than two in ten eighth graders are on target to be ready for college- level work by the time they graduate from high school.** *This means that more than eight of ten eighth-grade students do not have the knowledge and skills they need to enter high school and succeed there.*
- ◆ So, although the gates of high school are technically open to all students for more than 80 percent of them, the door to their futures may already be closed.
- ◆ In the current educational environment, there is a critical defining point for students in the college and career readiness process.
- ◆ Education must focus on getting more students on target for college and career readiness by the end of eighth grade, so they are prepared to maximize the benefits of high school.
- ◆ **The level of academic achievement that students attain by eighth grade has a larger impact on their college and career readiness by the time they graduate from high school than anything that happens academically in high school.**
- ◆ If we want not merely to improve but to maximize the college and career readiness of U.S. students, we need to intervene not only during high school but before high school, in the upper elementary grades and in middle school.
- ◆ **Being on target for college and career readiness in eighth grade puts students on a trajectory for success.**
- ◆ Three academic behaviors impact future success: **academic discipline, orderly conduct, and having positive relationships with school personnel.** *Students who demonstrate those behaviors that enhance academic achievement are more likely to perform well academically in high school and be ready for college and career by the end of high school.*