

# SCHOOLS TO WATCH- VIRGINIA

## ANDREW LEWIS MS-VISITORS GUIDE

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## Andrew Lewis Middle School

*School picture here*

### Designated in 2016

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## 2015-16 School Statistics

Community: Suburban

Enrollment: 915

Grade Levels: 6 - 8

School Schedule: 7 period day (approx. 55-65 minutes long)

### Student Demographics

11% African American

2% Asian or Pacific Isle

2% Hispanic

4% Other Races

81% White

32% Free/Reduced Lunch

1% English Learners

Fully accredited in 2015 by the VA DOE

English- 84%

Math- 90%

History- 90%

Science- 88%

## School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

### Academic Excellence

- Andrew Lewis Middle School is organized and structured to meet the needs of developing young adolescents. ALMS has been doing this since it was built as a high school in 1932 and turned into a middle school in 1983.
- A teaming approach in each grade level, for core subject instruction of English, Science, Social Studies, and Math allows for flexibility and an organizational network that is designed to maximize classroom instruction.
- All teachers and students comprising a team have classrooms in the same proximity of the building to create a sense of community for students and teachers.
- Common team planning time allows instructors to collaborate, schedule conferences with students and parents, meet with guidance counselors and administrators, and coordinate team activities.

- Students are assigned to teams heterogeneously with considerations for diversity in ethnicity, academic achievement, gender, socioeconomic background, and handicapped/special needs inclusion.
- Each class period is approximately 50 minutes in length during a 7 period day, with a 25 minute tutorial period in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade for reinforcement, remediation, and special projects time allowance.
- All classrooms are fully equipped with short throw projectors and Mimio hardware and software interactive boards. Computer carts, equipped with laptops and chrome books are available for daily and extended use in the classroom; a web based lab and resource scheduler allows for equipment reservation.
- Advanced math classes are available on each academic team in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Math is departmentalized in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and not part of a team to ensure that students are able to participate in the math level that allows for maximum growth: Algebra I, part 1 or 2; Algebra I, full year completion; or geometry. Math assistance for fluency development is offered to students in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade through elective algebra readiness classes. All students can access multi-level math labs, operating daily before school, with math teachers offering assistance with subject matter and homework. Elective pull out math remediation is utilized on an as needed basis through directed study hall periods in all grade levels. The math department sponsors the after school club, Mathcounts, a national middle school competitive and coaching program that promotes achievement in mathematics through fun and engaging math competitions and bees. Specialized non-inclusion math classes are available through the special education department.

## Developmental Responsiveness

- The faculty and staff at Andrew Lewis Middle School (ALMS) strive to provide a productive, supportive and safe learning environment that takes in to consideration the various developmental challenges of the students they serve.
- To accomplish this task, the faculty and staff develop instructional programs, support services and extra-curricular activities that align with the overall mission of Salem City Schools “*The mission of Salem City Schools is to provide a safe and nurturing environment where ALL STUDENTS acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to become successful and responsible citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global community.*”
- Meeting the individual needs of students is a priority at ALMS and numerous programs and services are offered to students that address their academic, social, physical, character, and career developmental needs.
- Emphasis on individual student growth is an underlying goal for all students at ALMS. Teachers emphasize and monitor individual student growth through utilizing various benchmark assessments throughout the year to help guide and individualize instruction as well as provide student ongoing feedback regarding their progress and development.
- Faculty and support staff also provides developmentally appropriate information to students through classroom discussions, individual/group counseling sessions, and grade level activities that provided current information related to topics such as bullying, character development and warning signs of teen suicide.

## Social Equity

- Andrew Lewis Middle School offers a variety of programs that are designed to meet the diverse interests and needs of the student population.
- The school has a high level of participation in extra-curricular activities, offering twelve activities with 291 students participating. There are several special interest clubs that meet before and after school including MathCounts, Chess Club, GIS (Geographic Information System) Club, and Friends of Rachel (FOR) Club. The FOR Club, sponsored by the Guidance Department, was created by students as a response to school-wide Rachel's Challenge assemblies that focused on positive relationships and anti-bullying. Academic structures and supports are incorporated at all three grade levels to meet the learning needs of all students.
- Grade-level principals and guidance counselors follow the same group of students as they progress through the grade levels to maximize relationship building and familiarity with students and parents throughout their three years at the school.
- Collaborative (co-taught) classes are offered in order to provide appropriate accommodations for students with IEP's or 504 plans or other academic needs. These classes are heterogeneously grouped with students from all ability levels. More intensive Integrated Reading and Algebra Readiness courses are offered to provide specialized instruction for students needing extra support in reading and math.
- Remediation opportunities are offered throughout the school year through a variety of different methods including scheduled Tutorial periods. Teachers flexibly use their planning periods to pull students during electives or physical education classes to offer individual tutoring as needed.
- Teams of teachers and administrators collaboratively identify at-risk students to work with during Directed Study periods focused on relationship building and academic support. Math and Language Arts labs are available for students every morning for an hour before the regular school day and several afternoons during the week as well.

## Organizational Support

- Andrew Lewis Middle School strives to create a positive academic environment that will provide students with the best public education in the Commonwealth of Virginia according to our mission statement for the school.
- The principal oversees our school improvement plan coordinating leadership throughout the building to lead subcommittees detailing various aspects of school improvement.
- Regular school improvement meetings are held so subcommittees can communicate their independent meetings and reflect on the school goals for improvement.
- Parents, central office staff, students, and teachers are all involved in this process. Feedback is given and received to support continuous improvement.

- In order to prepare our teachers for success in student achievement, various opportunities for staff development are offered throughout the year. This includes faculty meetings where teachers and administrators openly share new ideas, feedback from students in regard to lesson plans/activities, data on student achievement, and more.
- Teachers have the opportunity to give input towards topics they would like to have covered on the staff development day.
- Andrew Lewis Middle School is a true part of the community in Salem,VA and the City of Salem School System.

