



# SCHOOLS TO WATCH – ARKANSAS DIAMOND SCHOOL CABOT MIDDLE SCHOOL NORTH – VISITOR’S GUIDE

## Cabot Middle School North



Named School To Watch 2008 / Re-designated 2011 and 2014

### Re-Designated 2017

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• Webpage: <http://www.cabotschools.org/schools/cabot-middle-school-north> •

• <https://www.facebook.com/CabotPublicSchoolDistrict/> •

## 2016-2017 School Statistics

(Sources: 2017 Arkansas School Report Card)

Enrollment: 845

Grade Levels: 5-6

School Schedule: Modified Block

### Student Demographics

- 0.47% Hispanic
- 94.6% White
- 2.7% African American
- 1.8% Asian
- .47% Native American
- 38.7% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 1.5% English Learners

### Math Scores

2014: Benchmark 2015: PARCC 2016: ACT Aspire

Grade	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade			6 <sup>th</sup> Grade		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Combined	84.5%	26.3%	58.87%	91.2%	39.06%	70.75%
IEP	44.9%	16.28%	21.43%	63.5%	16.67%	28.95%
SES	77.5%	19.63%	46.10%	88.8%	25.83%	58.86%
Female	85.4%	29.81%	56.38%	94.9%	38.03%	74.77%
Male	83.6%	22.9%	61.41%	87.9%	40.35%	66.67%

### Literacy Scores

2014: Benchmark 2015: PARCC 2016: ACT Aspire

Grade	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade			6 <sup>th</sup> Grade		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Combined	87.9%	31.04%	53.76%	84.9%	44.79%	70.92%
IEP	38.8%	20.93%	21.43%	44.94%	13.89%	27.03%
SES	82.8%	26.38%	41.13%	80.9%	33.11%	57.32%
Female	92.9%	36.06%	57.98%	91.4%	53.52%	75.70%
Male	81.9%	26.17%	49.46%	79.3%	33.92%	66.03%

## **Schools to Watch – Arkansas Diamond School Cabot Middle School North – Cabot, Arkansas**

### **School Characteristics and Replicable Practices**

#### **Academic Excellence**

Cabot Middle School North continually strives for excellence by providing our students with rigorous academic standards, differentiated instruction, appropriate interventions, engaging activities, and frequent and challenging assessments. Our Zeros Aren't Possible (ZAP) policy sets students up for academic success by helping them understand that the expectation is assignments must be completed to the best ability of each learner. Students have multiple opportunities to benefit from differentiated instruction and support, including the following:

- Homework lab staffed by certified teachers before school
- A-Room staffed by certified teachers during Advisory
- R.O.A.R.S. VIP staffed by certified teachers after school
- Tutoring during lunch
- Progress Monitoring Committee that pairs students with mentors to address social or behavioral needs
- Response to Intervention Committee that pairs students with mentors to address academic needs and assess progress

Since CMSN believes that students work at their highest potential with strong support at home, all of these opportunities are communicated with families. Grade level teams inform parents of instruction and assignments through weekly newsletters, team websites, Facebook, Twitter, and the Remind app. Teams also frequently communicate with families about missing assignments, grades, and assignments that need to be re-done through phone calls or e-mails.

Professional learning communities meet weekly as teams and as content areas to analyze data, make decisions that drive instruction, discuss implementation of effective instructional methods, and evaluate student work. Departments work collaboratively to align the standards to ensure the curriculum is rigorous, non-repetitive, and moves forward. They implement a variety of instructional strategies that are engaging and clearly related to the standards, concepts, and skills being taught including direct instruction, cooperative learning, project-based learning, simulations, hands-on learning, and integrated technology. Literacy is integrated into all areas frequently through rigorous reading passages, challenging research projects, novels, note booking, presentations, etc. Teachers make connections across the disciplines to reinforce learning and assist students in thinking critically.

Teachers create interdisciplinary lessons to reinforce important concepts, reinforce skills, and address real-world problems. Whether it is through research papers written in science and revised and edited in literacy or calculating measurements of rock mass in math while students are engaged in the rock cycle unit in science, students are able to work on the same project in several different classes. Students work collaboratively, make informed choices, learn to resolve conflicts, and explore their own interests through interdisciplinary inquiry projects.

Students are assessed in a variety of ways including exit tickets, quizzes, tests, assignments, projects, and portfolios. Students are provided with rubrics to understand the skills and concepts being assessed. Teachers supply students with examples of high quality work that meet or exceed the performance standard, so they understand what high-quality work looks like. Students are also encouraged to revise and assess their own work based on frequent feedback in student/teacher conferences. Teachers use assessments to determine growth of each student in a variety of areas within their subject. Online resources are used to aide in gathering data such as Moby Max, No Red Ink, Cool Math, ABCya, ReadWorks, and many others. Teachers analyze the data from these sources as well as data from classroom instruction to differentiate lessons, assignments, and activities.

## Developmental Responsiveness

The faculty at CMSN works with all stakeholders to create an environment where everyone feels safe, valued, and free to learn. Students are directly connected with an advisory teacher who supports and guides the students through academic, emotional, behavioral, and social decision making processes. Teachers use cooperative learning activities to assist students in learning about themselves and how to relate to classmates. Each team meets together weekly to reflect on team issues and allow students and teachers to solve problems and make decisions together. Team meetings allow students to see how their advisory class plays a part of a bigger whole.

The school culture of CMSN has been positively affected by our new school brand, R.O.A.R.S., which stands for Responsibility, Outstanding Citizenship, Academics, Resilience, and Service. R.O.A.R.S. became our school brand after we became a Josten's Renaissance school in 2014-2015 school year. After attending a Renaissance conference, we decided to embrace and embody many of the things we learned at the conference. Renaissance has positively changed our school culture and climate because we have adopted a new way of improving academic performance, student engagement, and behavior by reinforcing character development both in and out of the classroom. Through the implementation of our R.O.A.R.S. program, celebrating students for their achievements has become a highlight in everyday happenings around the school. Josten's Renaissance and Mike Smith have collaborated to produce video programs called Harbor TV that address ethical and social development as well as highlighting the importance of mentorship, trust, healthy relationships, and emotional growth. These videos are watched and discussed during advisory on Mondays.

Cutie to Beauty and Man Cave are new programs that are socially significant and relevant to the personal and career interests of our students. Community members speak and facilitate discussions with students about issues in their lives, our community, and the world. They hold discussions about career paths, the importance of making good decisions, and learn conflict management skills. Students and staff participate in Red Ribbon Week to promote the anti-drug initiative. The curriculum is tailored for mid-level students and teachers are provided with resources and activities to effectively engage the learners.

CMSN provides leadership opportunities for students through Student Council, Builders Club, and Renaissance Team. Students apply for these positions and are chosen by staff based upon leadership abilities, as well as application completion. These students lead charitable collections, service learning activities, and fundraiser events. Students and their families play a vital role in our Veteran's Day program, Rockin' at the Hop, Someone Special Day, R.O.A.R.S. Bash, and Carnival. They are asked for input on various decisions made for our students. Families are encouraged to read with their students nightly through our One Book, One School program. Students and their families are given a copy of the book, a copy of the reading schedule, a description of advisory activities enabling families to be a part of developing better readers.

Clubs are one of the main attractions at CMSN. Co-curricular activities that cover a wide array of interests are offered. Student choice is an important part of middle school, so students choose a club according to their interests. Clubs give students the opportunity to explore topics and skills beyond the classroom and helps them build relationships with classmates who have similar interests. Examples are flag football, crochet, choir, drama, basketball, and paper mache, to name a few.

## Social Equity

To promote social equity, every teacher differentiates instruction to meet the needs of all learners. We strive to ensure that all students, including those who are English Language Learners, have disabilities, or are gifted and talented receive the best educational opportunities, support, and resources available. Students are pre-assessed to provide teachers with information about specific educational needs. Lessons are designed to provide interventions for students with similar needs and to challenge students who are high-achieving. Teachers give students learning style inventories to ensure that each student is successful. Teachers use the results of the learning style inventories to design activities and lessons that will allow each student to demonstrate mastery using the approach that is best for that particular student. Students often choose which product they will create to show their learning from a variety of choices. Teachers work to ensure that products that incorporate each type of learning style are represented on student choice menus. All students are required to complete assignments and to do their best work to ensure mastery.

The faculty is constantly seeking ways to improve programs, curriculum, and assessment to better meet student needs. Professional learning communities meet weekly to discuss student progress and adapt curriculum, instruction, assessment, and scheduling to meet every student's needs. Teachers participated in a book study of *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* by Carol Ann Tomlinson. The goal of the book study was to improve the ways in which curriculum is taught and the types of assessment to meet the needs of all students.

Many students are members of clubs that work with community members on charitable projects. Students help address the needs of the community by facilitating coat drives in the winter and food drives all year. Students collect items for and help clean the local animal shelter. Groups go to the local retirement home to play games and sing songs with residents. When an initiative to collect money for families struggling with illness or to help seniors afford the cost of graduation attire begins, students work with sponsors and community members to organize the details and promote the cause.

Students have multiple opportunities to learn about a variety of cultures. There are many materials in the media center that represent all of the cultures of the students. Students can access the materials in print and through audio books. Families are invited to come and share their traditions in beliefs during advisory. CMSN uses advisory time to teach the students about respecting diversity and appreciating their own culture as well as the culture of others. Our counselors have designed these advisory lessons to show the students that a variety of viewpoints should be encouraged and valued. CMSN also chose the book *Lions of Little Rock* to read for our One Book, One School initiative. This book teaches students to value diversity as well as the history of social justice issues in Arkansas. All students toured Central High School after CMSN was awarded a grant due to our One Book, One School initiative.

The faculty welcomes and encourages the active participation of all its families and makes sure that all families are an integral part of the school. Translation support is provided so that all families can participate in conferences, school events, and the One Book, One School initiative. CMSN is hosting a family night in which the gym will be open for children younger than the middle school age to have a supervised play time while their parents participate in the event. Snacks will also be available. Families in need of meals can also go to designated areas of the community during school breaks to eat at no cost.

## Organizational Support

Administrators at CMSN seek to build capacity in all faculty and staff to become school leaders. The leadership committee is a decision making body within the building that meets regularly to discuss a variety of school based concerns, praises, and logistical planning. The leadership committee is now comprised of one teacher from each of the grade level teams, an Essentials teacher, a special education teacher, a counselor, a paraprofessional, the media specialist, the lead teacher for each content area, the assistant principals, and the principal. In addition to the leadership committee, the Renaissance Team plays a vital role in making decisions that affect the culture of our school. CMSN has a student council that serves as a student leadership group. Students can also serve in a leadership role through the Student Renaissance Team and Builder's Club. Students in each of these groups collaborate with each other, their classmates, and staff to aid the school in continuous improvement.

During weekly professional learning community meetings, teachers reflect on instruction and student growth. PLC leads foster and support interdependent collaboration. A team agenda is provided at each of these meetings to guide group conversations. The overarching goal of each meeting is to continuously improve.

The Cabot Public School District plays an important part in supporting continued professional development of all faculty and staff members. The school district supports CMSN's faculty and staff by providing funding for professional development and by requiring that faculty and staff share new learning. Teachers who attended Josten's Renaissance National Conference in 2015 and 2016 brought back strategies for improving school climate and culture that were shared with the entire staff. A team of teachers and administrators presented at Josten's Renaissance National Conference in 2016 to faculty and staff from all over the United States. Our district also hosts an EdCamp every year in which teachers choose professional development sessions that are relevant to their needs. Several teachers from CMSN have presented at our district's EdCamp sessions.

Our embedded sessions are high quality, intensive, and focused on best practices. At each embedded session, administrators and staff members provide training on the school focus areas. Teachers were surveyed in regards to professional development sessions to ensure that they are relevant and innovative. Focus walks will be conducted once a semester. Teachers are trained to understand that focus walks are a time to observe, collaborate, and reflect on best practices. Teachers are encouraged to be autonomous and experiment with their craft.

Teams of teachers meet by grade level as well as with teachers from lower and higher grade levels to make the best decisions for supporting student achievement. Teachers have access to websites created by curriculum directions and teams of teachers so they can see the alignment of instruction. CPSD provides each building with interim assessments from ACT Aspire, materials, and data collection. The district also supports faculty at CMSN in using data to make decisions for providing interventions to students who have not mastered concepts.

CPSD supports the development of pre-service and novice teachers by training faculty and staff members to become AIMM certified. Teachers from CMSN attend summer training to be certified or recalibrated as an AIMM mentor. First year teachers at CMSN are supported by an AIMM mentor, observed three times by one of the administrators, and receive focused coaching through classroom observations, model lessons, and one-on-one conferences.