



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### THE NEIGHBORHOOD ACADEMY OPENING MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS IN FALL 2023

*The school is currently enrolling the inaugural class of 6<sup>th</sup> grade girls.*

PITTSBURGH, PA – October 24, 2022 – The Neighborhood Academy, an independent, college preparatory high school and middle school in Stanton Heights, will be opening a Middle School for Girls in fall 2023. The inaugural middle school girls will benefit from single-gender classes, an enhanced STEM curriculum, and female empowerment-centered programming. The Neighborhood Academy provides all students with an extended school year; 12:1 student-to-teacher ratio; academic, mental, and emotional support; and college and career exposure opportunities.

The Neighborhood Academy opened an all-male middle school in 2017 in response to a widespread academic underperformance amongst black boys.

“The decision to admit boys at an earlier age placed the young men on a path to successful careers both in college and the workforce. I’m proud to report that the inaugural 7<sup>th</sup> grade class are now seniors and will graduate in spring 2023,” said Dr. Anthony Williams, Head of School at The Neighborhood Academy.

The decision to open an all-female middle school is in response to Pittsburgh’s Gender and Equity Commission’s “Pittsburgh’s Inequality Across Gender & Race” report released in 2019. This report revealed severe local inequalities, confirming previous studies finding that Pittsburgh Black women and girls especially experience systemic oppression in terms of health, education, poverty, and employment.

The report stated that:

- Black women’s poverty in Pittsburgh is higher than 85 percent of similar cities
- Pittsburgh Black women are 5 times more likely to live in poverty than White adult men
- Pittsburgh has more Black women out of the labor force than 97 percent of cities
- Girls are less likely to be enrolled in middle school algebra despite being more likely to pass
- White residents are 3 times more likely to have a college degree than Black residents



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“There is a tremendous enthusiasm on all levels of our school community about admitting female students at an earlier entry point to the TNA program. The young ladies entering our middle school will experience a highly engaging curriculum interwoven with female representation and sisterhood themes throughout all subject areas,” said Brent Jernigan, Assistant Head of School for Academics.

“As a proud alumna, and Dean of Student Affairs at The Neighborhood Academy, I am ecstatic to finally welcome young ladies in middle school. I look forward to the long-term outcomes of earlier entry for our girls. Research has shown the day-to-day experience in schools for girls, especially Black girls, in the city of Pittsburgh is unfavorable and unfair, and I am glad that we are offering a positive experience to girls at a young age,” said Shannon Prentiss.

Recruitment for the Girls Middle School for fall 2023 has begun. For more information or to apply, visit [theneighborhoodacademy.org](https://theneighborhoodacademy.org) or contact Shannon Prentiss, Dean of Student Affairs, at 412-362-2006 or [shannon.prentiss@theneighborhoodacademy.org](mailto:shannon.prentiss@theneighborhoodacademy.org).

### **About The Neighborhood Academy:**

Established in 2001, The Neighborhood Academy is a faith-based, college preparatory, independent school whose mission is to break the cycle of generational poverty by empowering youth and preparing them for college and citizenship.

For over 21 years, 100 percent of The Neighborhood Academy’s seniors have been accepted to college, and an average of 75 percent graduate from college in five years or less.

The Neighborhood Academy exists to provide a holistic college-prep education for students in grades 6-12 whose families demonstrate financial need. The Neighborhood Academy is dedicated to developing the minds, bodies and spirits of our students so that they might become fully productive members of our society. By doing so, our students will break the cycle of generational poverty that has held them captive and deprived society of the full value of their lives.

For more information visit [theneighborhoodacademy.org](https://theneighborhoodacademy.org)

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