



PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL

A Maritime Charter School for Providence Youth

Dear Prospective Families,

We are delighted that you are interested in Paul Cuffee School, a Rhode Island Charter school that provides a college preparatory K-12 academic program for students who live in Providence. Founded in 2001, Paul Cuffee School takes inspiration from its namesake, Paul Cuffee, a ship builder and a ship captain who lived on the Southeast coast of Massachusetts at the time of the American Revolution. An important civic leader committed to non-violence, he founded a school in Westport, Massachusetts that welcomed children of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Paul Cuffee's mother was a Wampanoag Indian and his father was a freed slave born in Ghana.

In keeping with Paul Cuffee's legacy, at the core of what we do is educate active, global citizens who are aware of their world, eager to improve it, and want to do something great with their lives. Drawing on the area's natural resource, the Narragansett Bay, our school gives emphasis to the ocean and environment. All subjects are rigorous and demanding, so students and families applying to the Paul Cuffee School need to keep in mind that we require about 2 hours of homework every night by the time our students reach middle school.

In the K-5 elementary school, we primarily focus on language arts (reading, phonics, spelling, writing), mathematics, social studies, and science. The arts program helps the students explore and integrate the many lessons they are learning in language arts and mathematics. Students in our 6-8 middle school develop critical thinking, communication, and complex-problem-solving skills in all areas of study. Our high school students deepen the important skills learned in the middle school and expand on them, learning how to think independently, speak persuasively, work collaboratively, act courageously, and serve humbly.

Our School requires a three-way partnership in which our teachers and staff, our students, and our parents are all working together to achieve the demanding academic goals we have for our students, and to create the kind of safe, caring, and inspiring academic community that all of us want. The work and expectations at Paul Cuffee School are demanding. Students who work hard and who want to learn, regardless of their reading, writing, and mathematics levels, succeed because of the care and attention our staff gives them and the reinforcement and support from parents at home. We use Origin's Responsive Classroom in the Elementary School and its Developmental Designs in our Middle and High Schools. These philosophies encourage our focusing not only on the intellectual and academic aspects of our students, but also, and equally important, they allow us to nurture and foster the social and emotional growth of our students.

Students whose parents (or in some cases, grandparents) work with them each day at home are successful at our school. Parents must review homework assignments, classroom activities, personal behavior, and school life each day with their children. Parents meet formally at least two times each year with the classroom teacher, and we expect parents to learn about our academic programs and our academic standards. Parental involvement in the student's life is the key to the student's success.

We also expect parents to take the time to understand the responsible behavior we require at the Paul Cuffee School and to support our efforts and the efforts of their children to behave respectfully, responsibly, non-violently, and thoughtfully in school and at home.

We believe that our academic programs are exciting and engaging, and we also believe that being a member of our community is enjoyable and rewarding. We hope that this brief description of Paul Cuffee School informs, inspires, and encourages you to think seriously whether it is the right place for your child to begin or continue his or her education. I look forward to exploring that question with you.

Sincerely,

Wendy Randle
Interim Head of School

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