

# Hill Middle School

Hill is not one of the five Stapleton/Park Hill shared-boundary schools but is the boundary school for Lowry, Montclair, Mayfair, Hale and East Colfax.



School name/contact info	<b>Hill Middle School</b> 451 Clermont St. 720.423.9680 <a href="http://hill.dpsk12.org/">http://hill.dpsk12.org/</a>
Principal	Sean Kavanaugh
Type	Traditional Neighborhood School
Grades in 2014	grades 6 to 8
Estimated Enrollment in 2014	825
Music	Band, Orchestra, Choir
Arts	Visual Arts, Theater, Journalism
Foreign Language	Spanish
Tutoring	yes
STEM focus	yes
Project-based learning	no
Focus on values	4 Core values - Safety, Ownership, Achievement, Respect
SPF overall	Meets - Green
Academic growth	High Growth in Math, Reading and Writing
2013 TCAP Overall	High Achievement in Math, Reading and Writing
Free or reduced lunch	54%
Diversity	40% White, 28% Latino, 21% African American, 4% Asian
School day/school year	7:30 - 2:25
Homework per night	As needed
Avg # of kids per class	27-32
Technology	4 Mac labs
Engineering	Project Lead the Way
Math	yes
English Language Learner services	yes
Lunch	yes
Science	yes
Before school programming	no
After school programming	yes
Competitive sports teams	yes
PE	yes
College preparatory classes	yes
Service learning opportunities	yes



Sean Kavanaugh, Hill Middle School

### What do (will) you do to ease the transition from elementary to middle school?

We are looking to create a hybrid elementary/middle school model for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students that makes the transition more emotionally, socially and academically secure. An entire floor will be dedicated to our 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms and students will be scheduled into teams that will students

and teachers to build stronger relationships. In addition, the first day of school is dedicated to 6<sup>th</sup> grade students only. This day is dedicated to responsive transitions and a focus on new things (lockers, bell schedules, multiple teachers, etc.)

### What do (will) you do to accommodate students who move at a pace faster or slower than the group?

We will schedule to student strengths, making sure to meet their individual needs. The Hill Honors program is offered in all core areas (LA, math, science and social studies). We will combine curriculum compacting as well as acceleration to ensure all students in our Honors program are challenged and enriched. Intervention classes are offered in math and LA for students that are below grade level.

### How do (will) you deal with issues that go beyond what the teacher can handle in the classroom (homework, discipline, needs for extra personal support)?

Experienced, dedicated support staff members are committed to making sure teachers can do what they do best—TEACH! We have full spectrum of district supports and access to additional supports beyond the building.

### What is (will be) special about your school that makes it a place where kids learn, grow and thrive?

And is better than or. At Hill Campus of Arts & Sciences, we offer a well-rounded educational experience in both the arts and the sciences. Hill is an urban neighborhood middle school serving diverse students from across the Denver.

### Are there areas in which you expect change in the future (such as changes or additions to curriculum, resources, before and after school programming)?

Hill will be adding the STEM program next year, providing an elective option that focuses on the sciences. We will be the first, and only, traditional middle school to offer a STEM program through Project Lead the Way. We will also implement 360° Math – compelling alternative to the way math is taught.

### What is your philosophy on teaching your curriculum? What is the balance of teacher-directed and student-directed learning, project-based learning, or other approaches?

There is no perfect curriculum. The curriculum is a foundational starting point for teachers. Ultimately, our school leaders and teachers know our students best and will make instructional decisions to increase student achievement.

### Tell us about yourself.

I began teaching in 1995 and taught students in the content of science for 12 years. I have been in Denver Public Schools for 6 years as a teacher and school leader. Most recently I was an Assistant Principal at Martin Luther King, Jr. Early College. My wife teaches in Cherry Creek and I have two remarkable kids – my daughter is a freshman in high school and my son is in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. I enjoy traveling, cooking and working outdoors.

**A Typical Day at Hill Middle School**  
Students engage in literacy and math for 96 minutes every day. Students engage in science, social studies and electives for an average of 45 minutes per day. All students have the opportunity to take two electives throughout the day.