



Brag About Your School: Indian Ridge Middle School

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NBC 6's Ari Odzer reports.

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Schools can't rest on their laurels anymore, there's too much competition out there. So even though Indian Ridge Middle School has been an "A" school since the state's grading system started 18 years ago, the home of the Jaguars is continuing to innovate and improve.

For example, the band has doubled in size, they added a chorus program and next year they're adding jazz band.

"Our goal is to educate every child and give them a great education so they can move on to any high school anywhere and be successful," said Ian Murray, the school's principal.

Speech and debate is a major point of emphasis here. The team is the reigning champion of Broward County. Students in the program debate real-life, current event topics.

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"They kind of tend to know more about stuff than we do because they've done all this research and they're debating it at competition," said debate coach Rosalia Manriquez. "Whereas the average American kind of hears it on the news but they're like hey, what's that? My kids know more than them."

The speech and debate program teaches kids to think on their feet, to communicate, and to express themselves if they're doing spoken-word poetry.

Most middle schools don't have full-time culinary programs, but Indian Ridge has a ton of electives to make things interesting.

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"And to me, the fun piece is what a lot of children come to school for," Murray said.

The goal of the culinary elective here is not to turn out master chefs.

“Not in the 6th grade, but everybody needs to have some life skills to make themselves lunch, breakfast, dinner, something,” said Sherry Hogg, the culinary teacher.

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Indian Ridge also has a unique club called CHOC, which stands for Children Helping Other Children. The students in the club recently raised \$34,000 to build a three-room school in Nigeria for orphans. So they’re working locally and acting globally.

The Jaguars are roaring in many ways.

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