

# Bard DC 9th Grade Academy: “Fledgling to Flight”

## *Outline*

At Bard DC, we believe in not only providing a nurturing, and supportive journey for our students throughout the four-year Bard Early College experience, but also in providing a safe environment for our 9th graders, or *fledglings* (in bird speak, a young bird that is still dependent upon parental care and feeding is called a fledgling), to develop the capacity and muscle memory to learn how to take flight for themselves. Here, we call this process “*Fledgling to Flight*,” the guided journey our 9th grade students take from transitioning out of the middle school mentality to learning how to manage the expectations and responsibilities of becoming a young adult. In this year long journey, our young students will work closely with the Bard DC staff, faculty, administration, and local DC organizations to develop explicit competency in leadership & professional development, social & emotional awareness, and civic & community engagement. Bard DC will expect every *fledgling* to commit to developing themselves through this formal process of maturing into an early college student capable of handling the college program. Additionally, our *fledglings* will...

1. Begin the process of developing a community-centered mindset by committing to the completion of a minimum of **25 hours of community service** by the end of the academic year
2. Engage with one of the **community partnerships** established by the Bard DC administrative team
3. Attendance at each of our **once a month bazaars** (grade-wide assembly)
4. Submitting yourself to a meaningful **mentorship relationship** (with a peer, adult, or community member)

## What happens next?

Our fledglings are automatically “enrolled” in the “*Fledgling to Flight*” process. Each 9th grade student at Bard DC will be expected to demonstrate competency in the areas of:

- **Leadership & Professional Development**
  - Acquiring Knowledge of Leadership Theory and Practice
  - Developing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities that are Transferable to the World of Work
- **Social & Emotional Awareness**

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making
- **Civic & Community Engagement**
  - Community Service Participation
  - Engagement with Other Youth Across DC, the Nation, and/or the World

Competency will be measured in various ways including the submission of weekly community service hours and progress toward the required 25 hours for the year, regular engagement with our community partners, regular attendance at our monthly bazaars, and participation in our Big Sibs Mentorship Program or submitting to mentorship by a non-family member in the community. The Bard DC administrative team will inspect progress in these areas throughout the year through our Nest program (the Bard DC advisory group).