



SACRED HEART GREENWICH

Middle School Grades Five–Eight

*Grounded in
tradition...*

*Building for
the future...*



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DEAR PROSPECTIVE SACRED HEART GREENWICH FAMILY,

The Middle School years are an exciting period of great personal and academic change and maturation. At Sacred Heart Greenwich, our Catholic faith provides the energy for our students to grow in their faith, develop a moral compass, gain a global perspective and ultimately understand that they have an active role in bettering the world. Our all-girls environment provides a supportive setting, which allows the girls to be challenged academically, while also inspiring the girls to grow in their confidence, gain their voice and develop into leaders.

At Sacred Heart, we believe in student-centered education and understand that people learn best through active engagement in the learning process. Thus, our curriculum and teaching pedagogy puts our students in the center of each class as they become artists, historians, mathematicians, readers, scientists, writers and speakers of other languages. In addition, Sacred Heart's academic and social emotional curriculum is designed for the girls to learn, practice and master essential skills that will ensure future success as students and as citizens of the world. The academic content of each discipline serves as the vehicle for our students to experience both challenge and success as they master skills such as communication, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, leadership, ethical decision making and risk-taking.

The Middle School curriculum features a rigorous STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts & mathematics) program to prepare our students to become global leaders. This is especially important in an all-girls school as women are underrepresented in these fields. Middle School students in each grade attend science, technology, art and math classes and learn computer programming through a variety of disciplines. In addition, our science and technology classes feature many engineering units as the girls complete "design challenges" such as designing and building a scale lunar rover, a functioning wind-turbine and a robot capable of completing various tasks. We also have a robust coding and robotics curriculum based on the Lego Mindstorms EV3 equipment. Girls who are especially interested in coding and engineering also have the option of joining one of our multiple after-school robotics teams.

We know that feeling safe, known and respected are essential for school success, especially during the middle school years. We put a great deal of effort into enacting our proactive curriculum to build community through our advisory program and through various grade level and school-wide initiatives. Sacred Heart also has a deep commitment to wellness and developing well-rounded young women. Our advisory program and health curriculum help the girls understand their physical and emotional needs as they develop healthy habits that are essential in our fast-paced world.

Our Catholicism shapes our social justice and service program, which provides numerous opportunities for our students to learn about the root causes of issues and to serve those in need. Our service program culminates with the year-long eighth-grade capstone project, which requires the girls to identify and research a social justice cause of interest, and to address the issue through direct service. We offer an impressive array of co-curricular opportunities outside the classroom to help the girls find a passion. We have a strong athletics program that all can participate in and as well as many additional offerings including campus ministry, student government, music, theater, singing, dancing, robotics, writing, journalism, speech and debate, service, diversity and an eighth-grade Sacred Heart Network domestic exchange program.

The Middle School Curriculum Guide provides specifics on our academic program. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like to learn more about Sacred Heart Greenwich.

Sincerely,

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Convent of the Sacred Heart, Greenwich, founded in 1848, is an independent Catholic, college preparatory school for young women from kindergarten through grade 12, with a coed preschool and prekindergarten.

Sacred Heart, steeped in a solid academic tradition, educates women to have independence of judgment, personal freedom, and strength of character so that they can become leaders with broad intellectual and spiritual horizons.

The school welcomes students of all races, socioeconomic backgrounds, and religious beliefs. True to its international heritage, the school provides students with experiences of diversity.

Cultivating prophetic leaders is a compelling commitment of our education, and the entire school community, as a member of the Sacred Heart Network of Schools, is dedicated to the *Goals and Criteria*:

- ◆ A personal and active faith in God;
- ◆ A deep respect for intellectual values;
- ◆ A social awareness which impels to action;
- ◆ The building of community as a Christian value;
- ◆ Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.

Approved by the Board of Trustees – September 29, 2014

The School's educational philosophy emanates from its spiritual and educational heritage as well as its commitment to meet the challenges of a changing world. The educational goals of Sacred Heart Greenwich direct the development of each student's potential in five areas: spiritual, intellectual, creative, social and moral. Every student, regardless of religion, is encouraged to recognize the spiritual dimension of one's personality and to grow in a personal and active faith in God that is relevant in today's world.

Each division focuses its academic instruction on the quality of its instruction and the level of student engagement in the learning process. Lesson plans drive conceptual understanding over factual knowledge, in order to teach students how to apply understanding to real-world challenges. Students take ownership over their learning, and classrooms are focused on the process of learning, not just the end product. As a School, we focus on continually adapting to meet the needs of our students and the current society in which they live. Deeper learning in classrooms creates motivated and challenged students who can see how their classwork relates to life beyond our campus. Students graduate from Sacred Heart with a mastery of core academic content, critical thinking and problem solving skills, collaborative and effective communication, self-directed learning and an academic mindset.

The program emphasizes serious study, education for social responsibility and the development of a strong faith. The curriculum is constructed to provide continuity from the Lower School and builds toward full participation in the Upper School course of studies. The focus fosters the growth in knowledge and skills and the attitude of learning as a lifetime process. Since a student's growth varies during these years, the Middle School program is flexible enough to accommodate varied rates of development and broad enough to encompass a diversity of learning experiences. Through individual and class instruction, demonstration, group problem-solving, projects and field trips, a student grows in her ability to think more abstractly, to solve problems resourcefully and to communicate effectively in speech and writing.

There are many opportunities for the student to develop leadership abilities and a sense of belonging to a group. They include the homeroom program, Student Council, Committee of Games, community service, drama productions, liturgies, chapel, concerts and gatherings.

Interwoven throughout the Middle School experience are times for reflection and the opportunity to grow strong in faith through prayer and communal worship. The student is directed toward developing a deeper understanding of the beliefs and traditions of her faith and educated to formulate personal values and standards of behavior in view of Christian principles. Furthermore, she is encouraged to develop the skills and knowledge to effect change in a world that will need her concern and involvement.

English

The fifth-grade English program concentrates on the language skills a student must master if she is to do competent work in the Middle School and beyond. The literature program consists of the study and analysis of several literary genres, including short stories, non-fiction, and novels. Much of the reading and instruction take place in the context of reading workshop, an ongoing program in which students independently choose their own books to read (with teacher guidance as appropriate). The goal for reading workshop is for students to become skilled, critical readers and to develop an individual personal taste through habitual reading for pleasure. In addition to literature studied in class, students must complete at least one independent reading book each trimester.

In writing workshop, students learn the craft of writing through a variety of genres including narrative, expository, poetry and responses to literature. With emphasis placed on revision and editing skills, students learn a wide array of strategies in each step of the writing process to help them use writing as a process and to become more competent writers.

Mathematics

In fifth grade, number fluency and accurate computational skills are emphasized, as students learn various math strategies using number bonds and bar models. A major focus on problem-solving and critical thinking skill development includes a progression through concrete, pictorial and abstract representations. This dual emphasis on both number fluency and advanced reasoning skills is further developed by encouraging students to explore multiple strategies to given problems. Topics covered include the four operations with whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percents, ratios and proportions, data analysis, perimeter, area, volume, geometric shapes and angles.

History

Students learn about the people and events that ushered in the dawn of major Western and non-Western civilizations. In studying the ancient world, students

come to appreciate the significance of geographic place in the development of the human story. They acquire a sense of the everyday life of the ancient peoples, by studying their respective religions, governments, accomplishments and relationships with other civilizations. Students learn about the tools and technology that early people developed and the art and architecture that were created. Students gain a sense of how ancient people explained natural phenomena and study the ideas that helped transform the ancient world. The role of women and the issue of slavery are discussed. Emphasis is placed on the major contributions, achievements and belief systems that have endured across the centuries to the present day. Hands-on activities and research projects enrich the students' studies. The regular inclusion of current events helps the girls understand the connections between the ancient world and the world in which they live.

Science

The year begins with a unit on Engineering Design. Students work with partners to define the criteria and constraints of a design problem. They generate and compare multiple solutions to a problem and carry out fair tests identifying ways their solutions, generally prototypes or models, can be improved upon. Problem solving, critical thinking and collaboration skills are practiced and honed with each design challenge. Engineering Design is followed by a unit on the Solar System. In this unit students' research skills are developed as they research and report on planets. New computer programs are introduced as each student works to create a presentation to be shared with classmates. The effects of the Earth's orbit around the Sun and Moon's orbit around the Earth are considered. The engineering design process is re-visited as students work in teams to design, construct and test lunar rovers and landing pods. During this unit, students have the opportunity to visit the on-campus observatory and work with our staff astronomer. As Spring arrives, the focus of fifth grade turns to the garden where the girls learn the value of being "stewards of the earth's resources" as stated in *Goal III* in the *Goals and Criteria*. Seeds are started and cared for by students in the classroom. As the weather

Grade Five

warms, the school garden becomes central to the unit. Beds are prepared and vegetable crops are planted. The students learn the parts of a flower, and the concepts of pollination and photosynthesis are covered. The bee is studied closely and composting is introduced.

Technology/MakerSpace

Fifth grade marks the beginning of the School's laptop program. Students will learn best practices about Internet safety and information management through regularly scheduled classes, as well as through ongoing instruction throughout the curriculum. Students will learn how to use technology ethically and responsibly, as they engage in discussions and activities related to digital citizenship. They will receive instruction in the care and use of their laptop, and learn to use Gmail and a variety of other communication tools. In conjunction with classroom projects and assignments, students will learn the Mac operating system, file management, and network navigation and resources. They will explore the fundamentals of coding, using Scratch and other visual-based programs. Students will begin to investigate the concept of physical computing using microprocessors. In addition to their regular computer class, they will use the MakerSpace with teachers and the Middle School technology coordinator to work on academic projects.

World Languages

French, Spanish and Chinese

Fifth-grade students have a choice to learn French, Spanish or Chinese. This is the first of a four-year program in which the students will follow a sequence that is completed at the end of eighth grade. Students develop the ability to communicate about themselves and their immediate environment using simple sentences containing basic language structures. This communication is evidenced in all four-language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, with an emphasis on the ability to communicate orally and in writing. The World Languages Program explores thematic and cultural topics that provide the students with authentic opportunities to communicate about themselves and others and to make cultural comparisons and connections. A textbook is introduced in fifth grade to provide

the framework for many of the thematic units, as well as to support the formal introduction of grammar at this level. Classes are conducted in the target language and formal and informal assessments are ongoing throughout the year.

The World Language Department recommends that a student study the same language K-12 to achieve the maximum benefit. Changes in the choice of a language may be requested when a student enters Middle School.

Theology

All Sacred Heart Greenwich students study theology as an academic discipline. Rooted in the vision of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, the spirituality of the Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) and the Catholic Church, the program embraces the *Goals and Criteria*. In addition to classroom learning, students are given many opportunities to deepen their faith. Celebrating Sacred Heart feasts, daily prayer, chapel services, monthly liturgies, yearly retreats, along with community service, all contribute to helping students grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Fifth-grade students are introduced to the Bible and learn how to use it effectively. Beginning with the Judeo-Christian "Creation Story," mysteries of the Catholic faith are explored and discussed. The role that the Church plays in continuing the message of Jesus and the furthering of the Kingdom of God is continually emphasized. Students begin to understand the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church and their significance to living out the Gospel message of Jesus in day-to-day life. While exploring different types of prayer, students are given opportunities to prepare and lead prayer. In addition, they will deepen their knowledge of feasts and traditions specific to Sacred Heart as they prepare to celebrate them throughout the school year.

Social Justice and Service

Rooted in Sacred Heart tradition and practice, community service is part of the fabric of each student's life. Service projects focus on protecting the environment, serving the elderly and homeless, and assisting children

and families in need. We emphasize Catholic teaching on social justice and moral issues through service learning. We cultivate an awareness that leads to advocacy.

Chapel

To support an active experience of *Goal I*, fostering the student's personal relationship with God, special attention is given to daily prayer and reflection. Woven into the regular routine are celebrations of Mary as Mater Admirabilis, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, St. Philippine Duchesne and other Sacred Heart traditions.

In addition to their work in the theology classes, Middle School students take responsibility for the prayer life of the School by planning and leading regular liturgical celebrations. Chapel times help build community and are part of the weekly program. Gathering for chapel gives the girls an opportunity to focus on global concerns and pray for the world. Masses are scheduled throughout the year. All our liturgies provide the students with opportunities to share their gifts through prayer, song, written word, dance, drama or personal reflections.

Campus Ministry

The Middle School campus minister works in conjunction with the classroom teachers to support an active experience of *Goal I*, fostering the student's personal relationship with God. Students participate in regular chapel services, liturgies and a one-day retreat. Themes that have been explored in the classroom, contemporary social justice and moral issues and RSCJ feast days are developed in these celebrations. These celebrations develop themes that have been explored in the classroom.

The Arts

Music

The Middle School music curriculum allows each student to experience music in many aspects. The curriculum is performance-based and emphasizes choral music and vocal art in the general classroom program. The students are taught history, music fundamentals, and

sight singing. Students are encouraged to perform for their fellow classmates during liturgies, chapels, gatherings, and in the classroom. The Madeleines are a Middle School chorus made up of fifth- and sixth-graders. This group rehearses during recess. They perform at school functions. In addition, an after-school instrumental program (violin, cello, flute, clarinet, guitar, voice, piano, etc.) is offered for those interested in private lessons. Our Middle School handbell choir rehearses before school and has many opportunities to perform throughout the year at school events, as well as at the Hudson Valley Handbell Festival each spring.

Dance

Sacred Heart Greenwich collaborates with a local dance studio to provide Middle School students quality dance instruction in a workshop setting. The focus will be on ballet and jazz. The dance program is designed to inspire a passion for dance, while nurturing creativity and confidence. Instructors will teach students to develop strong dance technique, artistic ability and self-confidence.

Drama

The Middle School drama curriculum encourages students to think creatively and work collaboratively, while developing foundational theater skills. Students explore theater history, including the dramatic traditions of Ancient Greece, and the theatre of various world cultures, such as Japan's Kabuki Theatre. Participating in hands-on projects, students have the opportunity to express themselves artistically and gain practical understanding of the theatre. In-class exercises and improvisational activities are aimed at encouraging quick-thinking, fostering effective teamwork, and building confidence.

Fifth-grade drama hones basic theatre skills including, but not limited to characterization, movement, and body/vocal awareness as it applies to stage performance. Devised theatre is developed as a means of inspiration for scripted material. Theatrical make-up workshops are introduced. These skills are applied to the study of Japan's Kabuki Theatre. Class critiques offer insight, as well as sharpening observation skills.

Visual Art

The fifth-grade curriculum introduces students to the elements of arts and principles of design, and they create artwork that reflects their basic understanding of these. Students make art using a variety of materials and techniques in selected areas such as drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, printmaking and ceramics. They are encouraged to explore the properties of materials and to discover ways to use them to communicate their personal ideas and to tell visual stories from the imagination and from observation.

All units include an art history component, which enables students to engage in art appreciation by responding to art and analyzing visual imagery. Students begin to understand the connections between art and social, cultural and historical contexts. The curriculum includes interdisciplinary projects that connect art making to English, History and Science and support the learning of skills across disciplines, such as problem solving, observation and making inferences.

Physical Education

The fifth-grade physical education program introduces students to individual and team sports. These units include basketball, field hockey, indoor field hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, squash, swimming, volleyball, and tennis. The program emphasizes the skills necessary for these team sports and provides an understanding of the rules. All units culminate with modified team games for each class. During the swimming unit, the girls are introduced to water safety skills while continuing to build on their technique in all four strokes (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly). Students develop an awareness of the importance of physical activity that leads to a healthy lifestyle.

Health

Fifth-grade girls are involved in a sequential health education course that stresses the incorporation of values into the decision-making process. A “no use” message (in terms of drugs, alcohol and tobacco) is

emphasized and strategies for dealing with personal and peer pressures are introduced. Because friendship skills are essential at the fifth-grade level, understanding one’s own feelings, as well as the feelings of others, is a focus of the course. Self-concept, peer pressure, bullying and the power of the bystander, Internet safety, puberty, hygiene, menstruation, the female reproductive anatomy, are discussed. The course emphasizes that it is the responsibility of each individual to evaluate relationships and review choices in view of the student’s values.

Study Skills

This course will provide students with tools and techniques for success in Middle School. Fifth grade is a year of transitions, when students begin to recognize the importance of actively learning and how to spend their time wisely. We assist with the transition with a course fostering a positive self-image while focusing on study skills. Coursework begins with the navigation of Middle School life, emphasizing the importance of practice with the organization of time, space and materials. Students learn strategies for homework success. They learn how to manage the day-to-day requirements of their classes. The next unit focuses on how to use textbooks and when and how to summarize material to master the content in all of their classes. Additional units focus on note-taking methods, test-taking strategies, and research skills.

Homeroom Program

Students in fifth grade, under the direction of their homeroom advisors, work together in positive ways to acquire new skills in leadership and group participation. Opportunities are created for engaging in activities that promote self-esteem, cooperation and a sense of community. Activities enable students to develop a sense of their own power to bring about change for their own and the School’s benefit. They are encouraged to engage in responsible behavior toward one another, the community and their families. The homeroom program includes community service projects.

Library Skills

Fifth-grade students are introduced to resources available in the library, including reference materials, fiction, biographies and computers. Library skills are correlated with individual research projects.

The Elective Program

In addition to the regular curriculum, all fifth-grade students are eligible to participate in an after-school activity. These activities enable students to pursue their interests in an atmosphere that promotes friend-

ships with other Middle School students. Electives are held before, during and after school, and are determined by student interest, time and the availability of instructors. Girls may choose to join clubs or groups that focus on a particular area of interest. These might include exploring math and/or science, writing poetry, producing a student literary magazine, studying the environment or engaging in community service. Electives in the arts, such as art, dance, chorus, instrumental music, bell choir and drama become available if enough students show interest.

English

The English curriculum in grade 6 continues to emphasize the development of reading and writing skills, encouraging students to elevate their thinking from the concrete to the abstract. Literature is the core of the curriculum, with a focus on short stories, novels, and poems. Through writing responses and in-class discussion, students explore themes of family, friendship, belonging and growth with an emphasis on empathy for others. Writing may include personal essay, literary analysis, short creative assignments and realistic stories. Grammar and vocabulary are woven into the writing curriculum with an emphasis on the writing process. Reader's Workshop gives students the freedom to choose their own books, with the intent to instill a love of reading through habitual in-class practice. All class reads, chosen by the instructor, may include contemporary texts such as *End of the Wild*, *Hello, Universe*, and *The Girl That Drank The Moon*.

Mathematics

The sixth-grade math program is designed to develop and strengthen fundamental math skills including fractions, percents, ratios and proportions. A major focus on problem-solving and critical thinking skill development includes a progression through concrete, pictorial and abstract representations. Topics that are introduced and developed include the use of integers, geometric patterns, algebraic expressions, simple algebraic equations, exponents and probability. Reasoning skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making are emphasized through the use of various word problems and materials including projects, manipulatives, calculators and computers. Students are continually encouraged to discover mathematical meaning and make connections to real-world situations.

History

Sixth grade history examines political, social, and economic changes in different civilizations around the world from the fifth century to the fifteenth century. Students will trace the history of Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire through the early Renaissance, study the rise of Islam and medieval Arabian empires, and explore the dynasties of Medieval East Asia. In addition to studying each culture individually, students

will discover the impact these civilizations have on one another by considering the connections and relationships between them. Throughout the study of content, sixth grade history emphasizes reading critically, paragraph writing, note-taking, research, oral presentations, and the interpretation of primary sources. Students will connect themes present in the medieval period around the world to current events.

Science

The sixth-grade science curriculum begins by harvesting produce in the school garden that the girls planted in the spring of fifth grade while they were studying botany. The produce is then used to host a farmer's market for the school community.

During the rest of the school year, the curriculum focuses on the investigation of the human body. Student investigations are completed online and through hands-on lab experiments. Inquiries occur within a collaborative and cooperative framework. These exploratory activities incorporate critical thinking and problem solving.

The students begin with the study of cells and DNA. They develop a solid understanding of the cell; they explore the differences between plant and animal cells, they acquire an understanding that DNA is the hereditary material and they are introduced to the topic of Natural Selection. The girls then study the nervous system, the digestive system, the anatomy of the respiratory system, cellular respiration, the circulatory system and the musculoskeletal system.

Technology/MakerSpace

Students will continue to learn best practices about Internet safety and information management through regularly scheduled classes, as well as instruction throughout the curriculum. They will receive instruction in the care and use of their laptop, and learn to use Gmail and a variety of other communication tools. In conjunction with classroom projects and assignments, students will use Google Apps, including document, spreadsheet and presentation programs. Students will learn how to use technology ethically and responsibly, as they engage in discussions and activities related to digital

citizenship. Students will build upon coding knowledge, as they learn sophisticated applications, including games and app development. They will learn programming using robotics. In addition to regular computer classes, students will use the MakerSpace and their laptops with their classroom teachers and the Middle School technology coordinator to work on academic projects.

World Languages

French, Spanish and Chinese

Students continue the formal study of French, Spanish or Chinese within a sequential structure. They build proficiency in all four-language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – with emphasis on the ability to communicate orally and in writing. The thematic units that are explored in sixth grade give the students daily opportunities to show they can function in real-life situations applying the vocabulary and language structures learned at this level. Students continue to explore cultures that reflect their language of study and learn to appreciate the similarities and differences between the products, practice and perspectives of different cultures. Students are assessed throughout the year with tests, quizzes, projects and performance tasks, all of which demonstrate what students can do with the language. Classes are taught in the target language. Formal and informal assessments are ongoing throughout the year.

The World Language Department recommends that a student study the same language K-12 to achieve the maximum benefit.

Theology

All Sacred Heart Greenwich students study theology as an academic discipline. Rooted in the vision of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat and the spirituality of the Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ), as well as the Catholic Church, the theology program embraces the *Goals and Criteria*. In addition to classroom learning, students are given many opportunities to deepen their faith. Celebrating Sacred Heart feasts, daily prayer, regular chapel services, monthly liturgies, yearly retreats, along with community service, all contribute to helping students grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Sixth-graders continue to deepen their knowledge of the Bible with a specific emphasis on the Old Testament, also known as the Hebrew Scriptures. The course focuses on the Creation stories, the Exodus, the Exile and the Return to the Promised Land and the major figures in our family of faith, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, David and the Prophets. It delves into important concepts such as Covenant, Divine Providence and reconciliation. Students learn to see the Bible as the inspired word of God. Emphasis is placed on applying biblical teachings to the students' daily lives through classroom discussions and the ramifications of the Covenant for all of us today. In addition, students continue to deepen their knowledge of feasts and traditions specific to Sacred Heart.

Social Justice and Service

Rooted in Sacred Heart tradition and practice, community service is part of the fabric of each student's life. Community service projects include protecting the environment, serving the homeless, and assisting children and families in need. We emphasize Catholic teaching on social justice and moral issues through service learning and by cultivating an awareness that leads to advocacy.

Chapel

To support an active experience of *Goal 1*, fostering the student's personal relationship with God, special attention is given to daily prayer and reflection. Woven into the regular routine are celebrations of Mary as Mater Admirabilis, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, St. Philippine Duchesne and Sacred Heart traditions.

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Campus Ministry

The Middle School campus minister works in conjunction with the classroom teachers to support an active experience of *Goal 1*, fostering the student's personal relationship with God. Students participate in regular chapel services, liturgies and a one-day retreat. Themes that have been explored in the classroom, contemporary social justice and moral issues and RSCJ feast days are developed in these celebrations. These celebrations develop themes that have been explored in the classroom.

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Music

The Middle School music curriculum allows each student to experience music in many aspects. The curriculum is performance-based and emphasizes choral music and vocal art in the general classroom program. The students are taught history, music fundamentals, and sight singing. Students are encouraged to perform for classmates during liturgies, chapels, gatherings, and in the classroom. The Madeleines are a Middle School chorus composed of fifth- and sixth-graders. They rehearse during recess and perform at many School functions. In addition, an after-school instrumental program (violin, cello, flute, clarinet, guitar, voice, piano, etc.) is offered for those interested in private lessons. Our Middle School handbell choir rehearses before school and performs throughout the year at School events, as well as at the Hudson Valley Handbell Festival each spring.

Dance

Sacred Heart Greenwich collaborates with a local dance studio to provide Middle School students quality dance instruction in a workshop setting. The workshops will focus on contemporary and modern dance. The dance program is designed to inspire a passion for dance, while nurturing creativity and confidence. Instructors will teach students to develop strong dance technique, artistic ability and self-confidence.

Drama

The Middle School drama curriculum encourages students to think creatively and work collaboratively,

while developing foundational theater skills. Students explore theater history, including the dramatic traditions of Ancient Greece, and the theatre of various world cultures, such as Japan's Kabuki Theatre. Participating in hands-on projects, students have the opportunity to express themselves artistically and gain practical understanding of the theatre. In-class exercises and improvisational activities are aimed at encouraging quick-thinking, fostering effective teamwork, and building confidence.

In sixth grade drama, students build upon the skills learnt in the previous year. Study delves more deeply into character work and relationships. Simple scene study is introduced. Stage make-up workshops continue with more diverse materials/tools. Class critiques continue to offer constructive criticism and insight.

Visual Art

The sixth-grade curriculum continues to expand on the elements of art and principles of design. Students work in a variety of 2-D and 3-D media, including drawing and painting, printmaking, collage and ceramics. Continued emphasis is placed on the process of creating art and developing problem solving and visual thinking skills. Sixth-graders begin to take a more reflective view of the world and the curriculum challenges them to consider how people live around the world and what they value and how images influence ideas and emotions. All units include art history to explore themes in art making and to learn to apply criteria to evaluate art. The curriculum includes interdisciplinary projects that connect art making to other subjects and support the learning of skills across disciplines.

Study Skills

Study skills are integrated into academic classes to help students acquire a thorough knowledge of methods for developing effective study, time management, and test-taking strategies. The program incorporates the acquisition of note-taking skills and active reading strategies and provides students with effective research skills and techniques.

Library Skills

Sixth-grade students use the resources available in the library, including reference materials, fiction, biographies and computers. Library skills are correlated with individual research projects.

Physical Education

The sixth-grade physical education program continues to introduce students to individual and team sports. These units include basketball, field hockey, indoor field hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, squash, swimming, volleyball, and tennis. The program emphasizes the skills necessary for these team sports and provides an understanding of the rules. All units culminate with intra-class scrimmages for each sport. The swimming unit continues to build students endurance and water safety skills.

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

Evidence-based research published by the Women's Sports Foundation indicates that involvement in regular physical activity and sports builds the necessary foundation for girls and women to lead healthy, strong and fulfilled lives.

Team sports offer a natural environment where participants can build a strong sense of self to feel connected and accepted by others while learning how to interact as a team to achieve a common goal.

Participation in the after-school interscholastic program is voluntary and open to students in grades six through eight. Sacred Heart's philosophy is "Athletics for All" (anyone who wants to play, can). Practice and competition takes place three days (typically, Monday through Wednesday) during the school week from 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Season-by-Season Team Sport Opportunities:

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Cross Country	Basketball	Lacrosse
Field Hockey	Squash	Softball
Soccer	Swimming	Track and Field
Tennis		Water Polo
Volleyball		

Health

Sixth-grade girls are involved in a continuing health education course that stresses the incorporation of values into the decision-making process. A "no use" message (in terms of drugs, alcohol and tobacco) is emphasized and strategies for dealing with personal and peer pressures are continued. The sixth-grade curriculum also includes such topics as self-concept and self-awareness, friendship, peer pressure, bullying and the power of the bystander, Internet safety, puberty and menstruation, hygiene, the female reproductive system, and body image and the media.

Homeroom Program

Students in grade six, under the direction of their homeroom advisors, work together in positive ways to acquire new skills in leadership and group participation. Opportunities are created for engaging in activities that promote self-esteem, cooperation and a sense of community. Activities enable students to develop a sense of their own power to bring about change for their own and the School's benefit. They are encouraged to engage in responsible behavior toward one another, the community and their families. The homeroom program includes community service projects.

The Elective Program

In addition to the regular curriculum, all sixth-grade students are eligible to participate in an after-school activity. These activities enable students to pursue their interests in an atmosphere that promotes friendships with other Middle School students.

Electives are held before, during and after school, and are determined by student interest, time and the availability of instructors. Girls may choose to join clubs or groups that focus on a particular area of interest. These might include exploring math and/or science, writing poetry, producing a student literary magazine or newspaper, studying the environment or engaging in community service. Electives in the arts, such as art, dance, chorus, instrumental music, bell choir and drama, become available if enough students show interest.

English

The seventh-grade English program uses a workshop model for teaching reading and writing, with the overall goal of fostering critical thinking across all skill areas. This process relies on modeling skills through “mini lessons” and then tasking students with applying the knowledge to their own work.

In reading workshop, common books, stories, poems, and speeches serve as mentor texts, designed to teach strategies for reading deeply and closely. Students practice questioning character motivation, evaluating character development, searching for deeper meanings, and recognizing author’s choices and craft. Most reading takes place in the context of reading workshop, an ongoing program in which students independently choose their own books to read (with teacher guidance as appropriate). The expectation is that students will read at least five books each trimester and complete a year-long genre study designed to broaden their literary prospects. The goal for reading workshop is for students to develop an intrinsic appreciation of reading, to interact with the texts they read, and to make connections to life and the world around them.

Students also develop their writing skills as part of a workshop format. Writing workshop encourages students to choose their topics as they work through the writing process of generating ideas, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. Writing workshop consists of an introduction to a writing genre, followed by daily mini lessons and multiple writing conferences. While a great deal of support is given, students are increasingly guided to take ownership of their growth as an author and are asked to reflect often on their work. Different genres and styles of writing are introduced throughout the year, such as short stories, literary analysis, and research-based persuasive speeches. Each unit builds on the application of knowledge from previous lessons. Students will continue developing their writing craft by strengthening their ability to organize and elaborate their ideas convincingly and compellingly. Grammar and vocabulary concepts are embedded within reading and writing workshop.

Mathematics

Pre-Algebra

The seventh-grade pre-algebra program expands student understanding and appreciation for introductory algebraic and geometric concepts. Topics of study include integers, expressions, equations and inequalities, number theory, decimals and rational numbers, ratios, proportions and percents, graphs in the coordinate plane, geometric figures, and measurement. Emphasis is placed on problem-solving skills and their significance in real life. Practical math applications are reinforced through utilization of real-life applications and computer technology.

Pre-Algebra Foundations

Pre-Algebra Foundations is a more deliberately paced pre-algebra program designed to support and reinforce student growth. While students are exposed to a variety of problem-solving scenarios, this curriculum is designed to help solidify students’ core understanding of fundamental concepts of our pre-algebra program. Topics of study include integers, expressions, equations and inequalities, number theory, decimals and rational numbers, ratios, proportions and percents, geometric figures, and measurement.

MATHCOUNTS®

MATHCOUNTS® is a national competitive program designed to promote an interest in mathematics. Sacred Heart Greenwich students interested in the program meet weekly to learn more mathematics and to prepare for the competitions.

History

Seventh-grade students study United States history and geography as part of a two-year sequence that will be completed in eighth grade. The year begins with an overview of events leading to the founding of the original 13 colonies. Students explore the factors that contributed to the American Revolution, followed by the struggle to form a new republic and create a Constitution. They also engage in an analysis of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Moving sequentially, the course covers units on the early Presidents, Industry

and Growth during the First Industrial Revolution, the Age of Jackson, Westward Expansion, Reform, Slavery, and the divergent paths of northern and southern societies as catalysts for the Civil War. The course concludes with an in-depth study of the Civil War as a defining event in U.S. history.

Throughout the year, writing, research, and note-taking skills are emphasized. Students answer historical questions by developing reading strategies such as sourcing, corroborating, and contextualizing documents. Students are required to prepare a number of short research projects, essays and oral presentations. The regular study of current events helps the girls be aware of the world in which they live while they also consider connections to past events.

With their laptop computers, students are able to organize their notes, complete homework assignments, undertake research and prepare presentations in a variety of formats.

Science

Utilizing active, inquiry-based approach to guide students' learning, this course aims to explore and explain the physical world around us. The interactive activities combined with class discussions provide many opportunities to delve into core principles and to practice essential problem solving and critical thinking skills. By focusing on the iterative process rather than the final product during engineering challenges, the girls learn that failure can be highly enlightening and that collaboration and persistence are necessary components to a successful redesign. Exploring all aspects of our home planet – from core to the outer reaches of the atmosphere – the girls learn fundamental concepts in fields ranging from ecology and geology to meteorology and physics. In the second half of the year, the focus shifts towards energy, light, sound, electricity, magnetism, and robotics. The year culminates in a final project that requires students to apply both the skills and knowledge acquired over the course of the year. Upon researching the root causes and resulting effects of a particular environ-

mental issue, the girls design and build working prototypes of their solutions to share with the community.

Technology/MakerSpace

Students continue to learn best practices about Internet safety and information management, and receive instruction in the care and use of their laptop. Students will move beyond visual-based computer programming and learn syntax-based languages, including Processing and Arduino. They will learn 3D computer-aided design programs for projects involving the 3D printer. Students will engage in a coding and robotics unit in science class.

World Languages

French, Spanish and Chinese

Seventh-grade students will continue the sequential study of their language working on the basic skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking, with emphasis on oral proficiency and writing. Thematic units at this level build on previous years and students are expected to be able to communicate about these familiar topics with greater confidence. Students at this level are able to create with the language about familiar topics by combining and recombining known vocabulary and grammar structures to produce sentences and strings of sentences. Students continue to explore cultures that reflect their language of study and learn to appreciate the similarities and differences between the products, practice and perspectives of different cultures. Formal and informal assessments are ongoing throughout the year and there is a final project at the end of the year. All classes will be conducted in the target language.

The World Language Department recommends that a student study the same language K-12 to achieve the maximum benefit.

Theology

All Sacred Heart Greenwich students study theology as an academic discipline. Rooted in the vision of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, the spirituality of the Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) and the Catholic Church, the program embraces the *Goals and Criteria*. In addition to

classroom learning, students are given many opportunities to deepen their faith. Celebrating Sacred Heart feasts, daily prayer, chapel services, monthly liturgies, yearly retreats, along with community service, all contribute to helping students grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Seventh-graders study the life and message of Jesus Christ as found in the New Testament, also known as the Christian Scriptures. Exploring the political, economic, social, and religious dimensions of the land of Palestine in the time of Jesus gives students a deeper understanding of the written word found in the Scriptures. Students become familiar with different types of prayer throughout the year. Skills of reflection are sharpened as each student assumes the privilege and responsibility of preparing and leading the class in prayer. The knowledge of feasts and celebrations specific to Sacred Heart are deepened. Projects provide opportunities for research as well as creativity. Discussions are encouraged to reinforce critical thinking and a more mature way to approach the development of a personal and active faith. Students will continue to deepen their knowledge of feasts and traditions specific to Sacred Heart.

Social Justice and Service

Rooted in Sacred Heart tradition and practice, community service is part of the fabric of each student's life. Community service includes projects to protect the environment, serve the elderly and homeless, and assist children and families in need. We emphasize Catholic teaching on social justice and moral issues through service learning and by cultivating an awareness that leads to advocacy.

Chapel

To support an active experience of *Goal 1*, fostering the student's personal relationship with God, special attention is given to daily prayer and reflection. Woven into the regular routine are celebrations of Mary as Mater Admirabilis, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, St. Philippine Duchesne and Sacred Heart traditions.

In addition to their work in the theology classes, Middle School students take responsibility for the prayer life of the School by planning and leading regular liturgical celebrations. Chapel times help build community and are part of the weekly program. Gathering for chapel gives the girls an opportunity to focus on global concerns and to pray for the world. Masses are scheduled throughout the year. Liturgies provide the students with opportunities to share their gifts through prayer, song, written word, dance, drama or personal reflections.

Campus Ministry

The Middle School campus minister works in conjunction with the classroom teachers to support an ever more active experience of *Goal 1*, fostering the student's personal relationship with God. Students will participate in chapel services, liturgies and a one-day retreat for the seventh grade. The chapels help to build community and are part of the regular schedule. Themes that have been explored in the classroom, contemporary social justice, moral issues, and RSCJ feast days are developed during these celebrations.

The Arts

Music

The Middle School music curriculum allows each student to experience music in many aspects. The curriculum is performance-based and emphasizes choral music and vocal art in the general classroom program. The students are taught history, music fundamentals, and sight singing. Students are encouraged to perform for their fellow classmates during liturgies, chapels, gatherings, and in the classroom. The Nightingales are a Middle School chorus composed of seventh and eighth graders. They rehearse during recess and study hall and perform at many School functions. In addition, an after-school instrumental program (violin, cello, flute, clarinet, guitar, voice, piano, etc.) is offered for those interested in private lessons. Our Middle School handbell choir rehearses before school and performs throughout the year at School events, as well as at the Hudson Valley Handbell Festival each spring.

Dance

Sacred Heart Greenwich collaborates with a local dance studio to provide Middle School students quality dance instruction in a workshop setting. The seventh-grade workshops will focus on modern dance and hip-hop. The program is designed to inspire a passion for dance while nurturing creativity and confidence. The instructors will teach students the tools to develop strong dance technique, artistic ability and self-confidence.

Drama

The Middle School drama curriculum encourages students to think creatively and work collaboratively, while developing foundational theater skills. Students explore theater history, including the dramatic traditions of Ancient Greece, and the theatre of various world cultures, such as Japan's Kabuki Theatre. Participating in hands-on projects, students have the opportunity to express themselves artistically and gain practical understanding of the theatre. In-class exercises and improvisational activities are aimed at encouraging quick-thinking, fostering effective teamwork, and building confidence.

Shakespeare is a highlight of Grade Seven drama study. Classical monologues and texts are analyzed, as well as performed. Students have the opportunity to write and perform their own dramatic work. Stage make-up workshops continue with more diverse materials/tools. Class critiques continue to offer constructive criticism and insight.

Visual Art

Seventh-graders are interested in mastering formal artistic conventions, such as accurate observational drawing, through perspective and three-dimensional features, scale and point of view as a tool to express personal imagery. The curriculum challenges students to expand their range of artistic competencies in studio art in drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpting, and in digital media. They learn to develop goals and evaluation criteria for their art making and learn

visual organizational strategies to clearly communicate their ideas. Students develop art literacy through art appreciation and critique, which are an integral part of each unit. Interdisciplinary projects connect art to science, history and math, as well as challenge students to explore the role of visual art research.

Study Skills

Study skills are integrated into academic classes to help students acquire a thorough knowledge of learning strategies and techniques, and to develop effective study habits and test-taking skills. The program includes note taking and summarizing skills, active reading strategies, writing in the content areas, process writing, and research skills.

Library Skills

Seventh-grade students continue to use the resources available in the library/media center, including reference materials, specialized indices, audio-visual materials, fiction, biographies and computers. Library skills are correlated with individual research projects.

Physical Education

Students in the seventh-grade physical education program participate in individual and team sports. These units include basketball, field hockey, indoor field hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, squash, swimming, volleyball, and tennis. The program refines the skills necessary for these team sports and provides an understanding of the rules. All units culminate with intra-class scrimmages for each sport. The swimming unit continues to build their endurance and water safety skills. Students further their awareness of the importance of physical activity that leads to a healthy lifestyle.

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

Evidence-based research published by the Women's Sports Foundation indicates that involvement in regular physical activity and sports builds the necessary foundation for girls and women to lead healthy, strong and fulfilled lives.

Grade Seven

Team sports offer a natural environment where participants can build a strong sense of self to feel connected and accepted by others while learning how to interact as a team to achieve a common goal.

Participation in the after-school interscholastic program is voluntary and open to students in grades six through eight. Sacred Heart's philosophy is "Athletics for All" (anyone who wants to play, can). Practice and competition takes place three days (typically, Monday through Wednesday) during the school week from 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Season-by-Season Team Sport Opportunities:

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Cross Country	Basketball	Lacrosse
Field Hockey	Squash	Softball
Soccer	Swimming	Track and Field
Tennis		Water Polo
Volleyball		

Health

Seventh-grade girls are involved in a sequential health education course that stresses the incorporation of values into the decision-making process. A "no use" message (in terms of drugs, alcohol and tobacco) is emphasized and strategies for dealing with personal and peer pressures are continued. Guest lecturers and online resources enhance the program. The curriculum also focuses on such topics as self-awareness, personal relationships, bullying and the power of the bystander, Internet safety including the use of social networking sites, conflict resolution, stress management, eating

disorders, puberty, the male and the female reproductive systems, sexual reproduction, HIV and AIDS.

Homeroom Program

Students in the seventh grade, under the direction of their homeroom advisors, work together in positive ways to acquire new skills in leadership and group participation. Opportunities are created for engaging in activities that promote self-esteem, cooperation and a sense of community. Activities enable students to develop a sense of their own power to bring about change for their own and the School's benefit. They are encouraged to engage in responsible behavior toward one another, the community and their families. The homeroom program includes community service projects.

The Elective Program

In addition to the regular curriculum, all seventh-grade students are eligible to participate in an after-school activity. These activities enable students to pursue their interests in an atmosphere that promotes friendships with students in other Middle School age groups.

Electives are held before, during and after school and are determined by student interest, time and the availability of instructors. Girls may choose to join various clubs or groups that focus on a particular area of interest, which might include exploring math, photography, writing poetry, producing a student literary magazine, studying the environment or engaging in community service. Electives in the arts, such as art, dance, chorus, instrumental music, bell choir and drama become available if enough students show interest.

English

The eighth-grade course centers around writing and literary analysis, with an emphasis on working independently in order to prepare students to be self-reliant, responsible, and successful in high school English courses. Most reading takes place in the context of reading workshop, an ongoing program with direct continuity from the seventh-grade English course in which students independently choose their own books to read (with teacher guidance as appropriate). The expectation is that students will read at least five books each trimester, with emphasis on a particular genre each trimester, usually matching the genre focus of writing workshop (see below.) The goal for reading workshop is for students to develop an intrinsic appreciation of reading and to interact with the texts they read. Students practice the close reading strategies necessary for complex literary analysis, such as questioning character motivation, evaluating character development, and searching for deeper meanings through devices like allegory, metaphor and symbolism.

Writing instruction takes place in the context of a workshop curriculum, focusing on the writing process from brainstorming, pre-writing, drafting, revision and editing/proofreading. The course places special emphasis on the central stages of revising and editing, as students learn to develop, focus and organize longer and more complex pieces of writing by looking at them from a reader's perspective. Students practice these skills in a variety of genres, with particular focus on memoir/personal essay, literary analysis and poetry, and often read short examples of these genres which serve as models. Grammar, usage, and style are studied as a part of the editing process with an emphasis on crafting clear, powerful sentences capable of expressing complex ideas.

Coursework in literary analysis includes the study of common texts as well as extensive independent reading through the reading workshop format. The common readings for the course center around themes of iden-

tity, independence, and coming of age, as students prepare to move on to high school. Common readings include three major works: Elie Wiesel's *Night*, Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*, and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, supplemented by shorter texts and selections as needed.

Mathematics

Algebra I

This course provides the foundation of algebraic reasoning and problem solving. Functions, equations and graphs are used to model realistic situations. Graphing calculators enrich this experience. Topics of study include expressions, equations, functions and inequalities, irrational numbers and the Pythagorean Theorem, systems of equations and inequalities and quadratic, exponential and polynomial expressions and functions.

Algebra I Honors

The Algebra I Honors course content focuses on developing algebraic fluency by providing comprehensive content and varied real-life applications. Word problems are central in developing understanding and the use of graphing calculators enriches this experience. Concepts covered include: solving, writing and graphing linear equations, solving and graphing linear inequalities, solving systems of equations and inequalities, exponents and exponential functions, quadratic equations and functions, comparing linear, exponential and quadratic models, factoring, and solving rational equations.

Algebra I: Linear Topics

Prerequisite: Pre-Algebra Foundations

This course provides the foundation of algebraic reasoning and problem solving with a focus solely on the linear topics of a traditional Algebra I curriculum. Functions, equations and graphs are used to model realistic situations, and graphing calculators enrich this experience. Topics of study include expressions, solving, writing, and graphing linear equations/functions, inequalities, rational numbers, percents, probability, and systems of equations.

Geometry

Prerequisite: Algebra I Honors

Concepts developed in Algebra I Honors are used here to support visualization and analysis of geometric relationships in two and three dimensions. Inductive and deductive reasoning skills are enhanced by the use of interactive geometry computer programs and graphing calculator technology. Topics of study include lines, angles and planes, polygon properties, coordinate geometry, parallel line theorems, congruence and similarity, area and volume, triangle trigonometry, and circles.

MATHCOUNTS®

MATHCOUNTS® is a national competitive program designed to promote a deeper knowledge of mathematics. Sacred Heart students interested in the program meet weekly to learn more mathematics and to prepare for the competitions.

History

During the eighth-grade year, students continue to study American history and geography from the pre-Civil War period forward, completing a two-year sequence. Emphasis is placed on the unmistakable connection between past and present events, as well as the development of important historical trends.

Units concentrate on the following: the challenges, successes and failures of Reconstruction; the spectacular industrial growth of the U.S., including the rise of big business, the birth of the labor movement, the wealth of the Gilded Age, and the transformation of society through invention; the vast challenges and benefits of immigration and urbanization and the advent of unprecedented government intervention to address problems in a rapidly changing society; the Progressive Era as a response to profound societal changes; the emergence of the U.S. as a world economic and military power during the age of imperialism, militarism, and nationalism; the catastrophic events of World War I, the birth of modern warfare, and the roots of totalitarianism; the Roaring Twenties, with

its cultural changes at home and isolationism from events abroad; the cataclysm of the Great Depression and the growth of government; totalitarianism and World War II, the advent of nuclear power, and the resulting Cold War; an examination of issues of justice and equality with regard to the Civil Rights Movement; social and political upheavals related to U.S. participation in the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal; and evolving superpower challenges in the modern world.

Among the skills developed and assessed are the following: independent thinking and analysis of sources for point of view and bias; understanding interdependence of events, including cause and effect; sound note taking and organizational skills; clear, concise and informative expression of ideas in both written and oral work; speaking skills, poise, and confidence through class discussions, debate, and oral presentations; regular exploration of current events and the ability to connect issues today with past issues in history; ability to locate, select and organize information from diverse sources; map, chart, graph, and cartoon reading and analysis; chronology; formulation and critique of argument; inference; analogy; and deductive thinking.

In addition to the foregoing experiences, students continue to utilize their laptops and educational applications for research and presentations, to complete digitally-based assessments, and to avail themselves of the School's extensive media center holdings and subscription offerings. They also regularly examine current events and travel to Washington, D.C. to visit many of the historic places and institutions in our nation's capital.

Science

The eighth-grade curriculum is a laboratory course that emphasizes learning through inquiry. Collaboration is an essential skill that students hone, and critical thinking skills are emphasized as students design all labs carried out in class.

The year begins with the fundamentals of science research: how to make accurate measurements with lab equipment, how to design an experiment to test any given question, and how to analyze and graph the data collected using spreadsheet software. The physical property of density is explored through a series of labs and activities, reinforcing these skills. Environmental issues, atoms and elements, chemical reactions, nuclear chemistry, the carbon cycle and states of matter and heat transfer are also studied. Students spend time using microscopes to investigate pond life and plant and animal cells.

Throughout the year, students are improving their ability to use the Internet for research and to summarize written material. Assignments include presentations to the class on current science articles and individual research.

The course culminates in a lab practical assessing the students' ability to make accurate measurements and calculations, use lab equipment, design experiments and analyze and graph data using spreadsheet software.

Capstone Experience

Eighth grade students participate in a capstone experience that serves as a multifaceted, culminating academic and intellectual experience. It is a long-term investigative project for which students choose a research topic about which they are passionate and which they are interested in exploring throughout the year. The experience is interdisciplinary, as they apply skills and investigate their topic across domains of knowledge in history, science, theology and art.

The capstone experience asks students to examine how their faith motivates them, use their intellectual talents, and potentially make a change in their community. The capstone experience encourages students to think critically and to develop and apply skills, such as problem solving, goal setting and planning, writing a research paper, media literacy, oral communication and public speaking, and creating a reflective work of art. It encourages students to connect their projects to social

issues or problems, and to integrate field work learning experiences, such as interviews, scientific observations, or internships. The capstone experience culminates in a symposium and celebration at the end of the year.

Technology/MakerSpace

In eighth grade, students will continue their exploration of digital video, digital photography, and web design at a more advanced level. Students will be exposed to coding through the creation of 3D animation projects and explore more sophisticated physical computing projects, including e-textiles. They will use iMovie to write, produce and edit their own creative projects. Hands-on instruction in professional-level software tools will be emphasized in digital painting, digital imaging, web design, and video production. Students have an opportunity to use the broadcast journalism studio to write, create, film and produce their own news publications. Students will continue to learn best practices about Internet safety and information management. They will learn to capture, manipulate, and publish images and produce digital media projects that demonstrate an understanding of composition, light, color, visual impact, and art history.

World Languages

French, Spanish and Chinese

With this course, eighth-grade students will complete the required four-year program of the Middle School language sequence. Students will be expected to master the four language skills at a proficiency level that reflects the amount of time spent studying the language since entry into the Middle School. Eighth-grade students converse with more ease and confidence about themselves, school and interests. They are able to converse effectively about physical and social needs, such as food, shopping and travel. Eighth-graders write compositions or simple summaries related to their personal lives or to the thematic unit of study. At this level, students are expected to read and converse about authentic texts in the target language. Classes will be conducted in the target language and assessments are ongoing throughout the year with a cumulative final at the end of the year.

Theology

All Sacred Heart Greenwich students study theology as an academic discipline. Rooted in the vision of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, the spirituality of the Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) and the Catholic Church, the program embraces the *Goals and Criteria*. In addition to classroom learning, students are given many opportunities to deepen their faith. Celebrating Sacred Heart feasts, daily prayer, chapel services, monthly liturgies, yearly retreats, along with community service, all contribute to helping students grow in the knowledge and love of God.

The eighth-grade curriculum fosters the intellectual and spiritual development of young women as they prepare to complete their Middle School years. It focuses on a traditional exploration of Church history from the time of Jesus Christ to the present. However, this is not simply another history course, but rather an examination of how the teachings of Jesus have been passed down authentically to us today. Many significant women, often less well-known in Church history, are included such as Mary Magdalene, Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine of Siena, Julian of Norwich, and Clare of Assisi. Students also participate in the “Making History” project which reflects their community service interests. They choose an area of local or global concern and plan and implement a method to affect change. Discussions throughout the year emphasize critical thinking, logic and respect for all opinions.

Social Justice and Service

Rooted in Sacred Heart tradition and practice, community service is part of the fabric of each student’s life. Students have an opportunity to take part in long-term volunteering at either BANC Reading Champions program, Blythedale Children’s Hospital or The Greens at Greenwich Residential Center.

Chapel

To support an active experience of *Goal I*, fostering the student’s personal relationship with God, special attention is given to daily prayer and reflection. Woven

into the regular routine are celebrations of Mary as Mater Admirabilis, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, St. Philippine Duchesne and Sacred Heart traditions. In addition to their work in the theology classes, Middle School students take responsibility for the prayer life of the School by planning and leading regular liturgical celebrations. Chapel helps to build community and is part of the weekly program. Gathering for chapel gives the girls an opportunity to focus on global concerns and to pray for the world. Masses are scheduled throughout the year. Liturgies provide the students with opportunities to share their gifts through prayer, song, written word, dance, drama or personal reflections.

Campus Ministry

The Middle School campus minister works in conjunction with the classroom teachers to support an ever more active experience of *Goal I*, fostering the student’s personal relationship with God. Students participate in chapel services, liturgies and a one-day retreat for the eighth grade. The chapels help to build community and are part of the regular schedule. Themes that have been explored in the classroom, contemporary social justice, moral issues, and RSCJ feast days are developed during these celebrations.

The Arts

Studio Art

Students in eighth grade take visual arts for a full year. The first half of the year focuses on exploring a variety of materials, skills and techniques. Students use new-found skills to create a number of smaller projects. They will use graphite, pastels and charcoal, paint with watercolors and acrylics and learn new image transfer and printing techniques. Beginning in the second trimester, students draw on their explorations in various media and work on a culminating creative project connected to their eighth grade capstone experience. Throughout the year, students study artists who have worked in similar media and explored relevant themes. Students engage in regular peer critiques and think about why and how people make art to establish and reflect identity and to engage in social discourse.

Arts Electives

Eighth graders are offered a variety of electives to choose from when they sign up for their elective classes. Offerings may include but are not limited to the following:

Architecture and Urban Design

Students learn a variety of design research methods, approach problem solving for design through brainstorming and sketch modeling. They will also learn to use SketchUp to design 3D spaces digitally and compare 2D and 3D methods for designing three-dimensional spaces. Students create architectural drawings, render their design in one and two point perspective and build final architectural models.

Ceramics

Students work on the pottery wheel and learn a variety of hand-building techniques to create sculptures and functional vessels. They consider the inventive use of scale, positive and negative space and balance, as well as expressive textures and form in their works.

Coding in Processing

Students learn to code using Processing, a language for learning how to code within the context of the visual arts. Students first learn the basic language components through a series of individual projects and then work cooperatively on a public art project.

Photo-Editing

Students learn to capture, manipulate, and publish images and produce digital media projects that demonstrate an understanding of composition, light, color, visual impact, and art history. They develop visual thinking strategies to analyze the content of images, and discuss the implications of altering current events images. Students learn about the history of photography and image manipulation.

Dance

Sacred Heart Greenwich collaborates with a local dance studio to provide Middle School students quality dance instruction. The dance program is designed to inspire a passion for dance while nurturing creativity

and confidence. The instructors will teach students the tools to develop strong dance technique, artistic ability and self-confidence. Eighth-graders will have the opportunity to study a variety of different dance genres over the course of the trimester:

The study of ballet focuses on posture, balance, discipline, grace, self-confidence, stamina and flexibility. Knowledge of basic Ballet is extremely important for all other styles of dance and serves as the backbone of all dance training.

Jazz classes incorporate different styles of jazz into each class including swing, blues and pop. Jazz dance often uses bold, dramatic movements, including isolations and contractions.

Contemporary is a style of expressive dance that combines elements of several dance genres including modern, jazz, lyrical, and classical ballet. Contemporary dancers strive to connect the mind and the body through fluid dance movements. Contemporary dance stresses versatility and improvisation, unlike the strict, structured nature of ballet.

Modern dance integrates the mind, body, and spirit through movement. It encourages dancers to express their inner feelings and emotions and teaches the body to move as an expressive tool.

Hip-hop class provides students with the latest hip-hop styles and choreography. Hip-hop class helps dancers loosen up and gain rhythm during a fun, high-energy classroom experience. Dance moves from popular movies, television shows, and music videos will be incorporated into other hip-hop styles including both East and West Coast hip-hop.

African Dance embodies energy and a graceful beauty flowing with rhythm. In Africa, dance is a means of marking life experiences, honoring kings and queens, celebrating weddings, marking rites of passage, and other ceremonial occasions. Dance is also done purely for enjoyment.

Drama

As a grade eight arts elective, Drama provides a myriad of opportunities for theatrical exploration. In depth monologue and scene study are analyzed as students create characters. Preparation for a Middle School Arts Night performance is the highlight of the second trimester, while acting for film/on camera work is studied in Trimester Three. Class critiques offer insight and constructive criticism.

Mosaics

Students complete a ceramic tile mosaic while exploring design, composition and color. They learn about the history of this ancient art as well as look at contemporary mosaic work. Students are taught basic mosaic techniques: planning, choosing colors, laying a border, cutting the tiles, tools and equipment, and applying grout.

Music: Music Fundamentals

The course consists of a study of rhythm, music notation, and musical terminology, including learning the staff, notes, intervals, scales, chords and key signatures. Students will use keyboards, music games and singing to enhance their musical ability.

Technology: Filmmaking

This filmmaking elective will enable students to explore their creative side through video. Students will work in small groups to create a short film on a topic of their choosing. Projects may range from documentaries to original short films. The four stages of film production will be taught: pre-production, production, post-production, and presentation. In addition, iMovie and Garage-Band will be used to edit and enhance films.

Handbell Choir

Eighth-grade students have the opportunity to participate in the handbell choir. This group meets once a week and performs at various functions throughout the year.

Study Skills

Study skills are integrated into the academic classes to help students acquire a thorough knowledge of learning strategies and techniques and to develop effective study habits and test-taking skills. The program includes note-taking and summarizing skills, active reading strategies, writing in the content areas, process writing, and research skills.

Library Skills

Eighth-grade students will continue to use the resources available in the library: reference materials, specialized indices, audio-visual materials, fiction, biographies and computers. Library skills will be correlated with research projects.

Physical Education

Students in the eighth-grade physical education program will continue to participate in individual and team sports. These units include basketball, field hockey, indoor field hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, squash, swimming, volleyball, and tennis. The program emphasizes the skills necessary for these team sports and provides an understanding of the rules. All units will culminate with intra-class scrimmages for each sport. The swimming unit will continue to build endurance and water safety skills. Students further their awareness of the importance of physical activity that leads to a healthy lifestyle.

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

Evidence-based research published by the Women's Sports Foundation indicates that involvement in regular physical activity and sports builds the necessary foundation for girls and women to lead healthy, strong and fulfilled lives.

Team sports offer a natural environment where participants can build a strong sense of self to feel connected and accepted by others while learning how to interact as a team to achieve a common goal.

Participation in the after-school interscholastic program is voluntary and open to students in grades six through eight. Sacred Heart's philosophy is "Athletics for All" (anyone who wants to play, can). Practice and competition takes place three days (typically, Monday through Wednesday) during the school week from 3:30-4:45 p.m.

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Field Hockey	Squash	Softball
Soccer	Swimming	Track and Field
Tennis		Water Polo
Volleyball		

Health

Eighth-grade girls are involved in a sequential health education course that stresses the incorporation of values into the decision-making process. A "no use" message (in terms of drugs, alcohol and tobacco) and strategies for dealing with personal and peer pressure situations are continued. Guest lecturers and online resources enhance the program. Topics such as self-awareness, personal relationships, bullying and the power of the bystander, Internet safety including the use of social networking sites, stress management, eating disorders, mental health, puberty, the male and the female reproductive systems, sexual reproduction, HIV, and AIDS are discussed. Girls practice both physical and verbal strategies in order to develop personal safety skills during a specially designed "Prepare" workshop.

Homeroom Program

Students in eighth grade, under the direction of their homeroom advisors, work together in positive ways

to acquire new skills in leadership and group participation. Opportunities are created for engaging in activities that promote self-esteem, cooperation and a sense of community. Activities enable students to develop a sense of their own power to bring about change for their own and the School's benefit. They are encouraged to engage in responsible behavior toward one another, the community and their families. The homeroom program includes community service projects.

Big-Little Sister Program

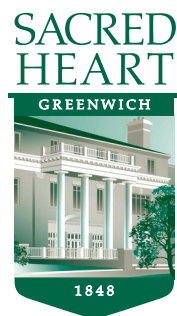
Along with being a part of the larger Middle School family group, eighth graders have a Big Sister experience with upper school students. This allows the girls to interact with someone in a different grade level who can offer insights in regard to the high school experience. During the year, activities are planned to develop these relationships and build community.

The Elective Program

In addition to the regular curriculum, all eighth-grade students are eligible to participate in an after-school activity. These activities enable students to pursue their interests in an atmosphere that promotes friendships with students in other Middle School age groups.

Electives are held before, during and after school, and are determined by student interest, time and available instructors. Girls may choose to join clubs or groups that focus on a particular area of interest, which might include exploring math, photography, writing poetry, producing a student literary magazine, studying the environment or engaging in community service. Electives in the arts, such as art, dance, chorus, instrumental music, bell choir and drama become available if enough students show interest.

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