

■ TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
English	1
Mathematics	2
Science	3
Social Studies	4
Religion	5
World Languages	5
Visual and Performing Arts	6
Physical Education	8
Academic Support	8
School Counseling	9
Middle School Extracurriculars	10
Math and Learning Labs	10

■ INTRODUCTION

Cornelia Connelly instructed her teachers back in 1863 to “lead by love rather than fear.” We learn this and many other tenets from Cornelia’s own “Book of Studies”—in short, her legacy is alive and well in the classrooms of Holy Child today.

Holy Child’s Middle School program is committed to student success through:

- Comprehensive and creative curriculum
- Innovative instruction
- Caring faculty
- Small classes
- Leading edge technology High-quality programs
- Personalized learning
- Academic Support

In addition to core academics and experiences in the arts and athletics, Holy Child prepare our girls to be successful in the world by emphasizing 21st century skills.

Critical Thinking
Creativity
Collaboration
Communication
Character
Cultural Competence

■ ENGLISH

Our Middle School English curriculum was created to meet the unique needs of adolescent students. Using

text that is meaningful, diverse, moving and challenging them to think deeply about the world around them and how they can use reading and writing as a vehicle for change. An essential question starts every unit of study exposing our middle school students a question such as, “How do you find courage in the face of fear?” Then through a variety of texts; novels, short stories, articles, and selected poems and myths students make personal connections and challenge their own thinking. These thematic units allow students to address issues that are meaningful and help them connect to the world around them. Using Note & Notice Signposts strategy, students learn to annotate the “Aha Moment,” Contradictions, Words of the Wiser, Memory Moment and much more. Teaching our girls to use their head then their heart as they approach their reading fueling deeper thinking, discussions, analytical essay, and creative writing projects.

Writing in middle school is about exposing our students to a variety of writing modes. Through journal writing, students learn how to share their ideas fluently and how to build a journal of ideas to reflect and later revise in a formal writing piece. Students are motivated to see that writing and speaking are skills that are necessary in all aspects of their world. Whether it is a podcast, article, debate, summary, poem, or blog writing is a skill that can give them a voice. Writing and speaking go hand in hand, as students write for a variety of reasons and celebrate with their peers through class presentations. Our classroom instruction is a blended approach using text and practice activities online to model and teach annotation strategies and how to move from reading to written reflection through journal writing. Using reading passages from class, students learn language conventions, vocabulary, and parts of speech in context bringing meaning to challenging concepts and ideas.

■ Key Concepts 6

- Analyze character and plot
- Analyze setting, structure, and speaker
- Cite evidence
- Analyze digital texts
- Make Inferences
- Analyze Point of View
- Infer theme
- Analyze Text Structure
- Analyze imagery
- Analyze arguments
- Determine key ideas
- Analyze authors purpose

■ Key Concepts 7

- Analyze plot, setting and conflict
- Make inferences
- Analyze tone
- Author's purpose
- Rhyme
- Analyze sound devices and mood
- Analyze argument
- Point of view
- Memoir
- Realistic fiction
- Figurative language
- Analyze sonnets
- Rhyme scheme
- Lyric Poetry
- Analyze media
- Analyze novels in verse
- Voice in Poetry
- Elements of a documentary
- History writing

■ Key Concepts 8

- Analyze organization and structure
- Irony
- Claim and evidence
- Rhetoric and reasoning
- Literary criticism
- Rhyme scheme
- Point of view
- Plot development
- Analyze theme & literary devices
- Narrative structure
- Analyze characterization in nonfiction
- Analyze author's craft & purpose
- Analyze figurative language
- Poetry
- Analyze argument & identifying counter argument
- Rhetorical devices

■ MATHEMATICS

For our students to be ready for their future, we want our students to be critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and develop reasoning skills. We are committed to providing opportunities for our girls to challenge themselves, persist, see how math is connected to the world around them.

Our math curriculum allows flexibility and a wide range of skills. Students are assessed and individually placed in a sequence, which would be most appropriate for them as learners.

■ Math 6

The 6th grade math program is designed to build proficiency and accuracy in the application of math procedures and principles that encompass fractions, decimals, word problems, introductory geometry, and measurement techniques. This course also introduces many pre-algebra concepts.

Topics include:

- Review of procedures for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of fractions and whole numbers.
- Recognize various types of word problems
- Accurate use of compass, protractor, and ruler
- US Customary measurement system
- Area and perimeter
- Solving for a single variable in an equation
- Exponents
- Least Common Multiple and Greatest Common Factor

■ Math 7

Math 7 is the on-level 7th grade class in mathematics. Students begin to deepen their knowledge of foundational topics in math with the focus remaining on arithmetic while algebraic concepts such as functions are also introduced. Emphasis is placed on integer operations, problems involving percentages, order of operations, and mathematical properties. Students will also begin to form and solve multi-step equations and simple inequalities. In statistics, students will learn the measures of central tendency.

■ Pre-Algebra Accelerated 7

This is a fast-paced class for students who have excelled in 6th grade level mathematics. Students will be recommended to this class based on teacher observation and/or performance in benchmark assessments.

Students build a foundation in integers, decimals, fractions, percent, and ratio and proportion. Variables are introduced in a more complex way and with more frequency. Graphing in the coordinate plane is introduced, along with the concept of slope as a rate of change. In geometry, students further their knowledge of perimeter and area of simple and composite figures. Problem-solving techniques are used as students learn to communicate with their solutions verbally and in writing. With each topic that has been explored, a balance between conceptual understanding and computational fluency has been emphasized.

■ Principles of Algebra and Geometry

Principles of Algebra and Geometry places heavy emphasis on graphing in the coordinate plane. Students are introduced to slope as a rate of change, and the links between different representations of math – algebraic, graphical, numerical – are reinforced. As a precursor to algebra, students will also learn techniques of algebraic addition. There will be further reinforcement of fraction arithmetic, expanded now to negative fractions, and students will also practice operations on numbers written in scientific notation. In geometry, students further their knowledge of perimeter and area of simple and composite figures. Students will move to Algebra 1 or Algebra 1 Honors on completion of this course.

■ Algebra I

This course reviews those topics of Algebra commonly covered in Pre-Algebra and middle school Algebra 1 courses and extends into other fundamental areas of algebra that are required as a basis for further study. The program begins with a review of the content areas from Concepts of Algebra 1. The new subject matter includes operations on polynomials, factoring, quadratic equations, exponents and exponential functions, radicals and connections to geometry, rational equations and functions, probability, counting theory, and statistics.

■ Algebra I Honors

This course is designed to provide students with a greater depth of understanding of algebraic concepts, and proceeds at an accelerated pace. The aim is to help students develop their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Modeling and problem solving are at the heart of the curriculum. Mathematical modeling consists of formulating a problem in mathematical terms, using mathematical strategies to reach a solution, and interpreting the solution in the context of the original problem. Students are encouraged to present problems algebraically, graphically, and in tabular form, thus promoting the creation of connections between different mathematical concepts. Topics covered in this course include arithmetic operations on integers and on rational numbers, the properties of the real number system, linear equations and inequalities, systems of linear equations, absolute value equations and inequalities, graphing in the coordinate plane, mathematical functions, operations on polynomials, factoring, quadratic equations, exponents and exponential functions, radicals and

connections to geometry, rational equations and functions, probability, counting theory, and statistics.

■ Geometry

This is a course on Euclidian Geometry. Topics include theorems and proofs on congruency and similarity of polygons, parallelism, circles, areas and volumes, coordinate geometry, and trigonometry. Students will use software to discover and to demonstrate theorems, and to perform constructions throughout the course.

■ SCIENCE

Our Middle School Science curriculum follows the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) which strives to help students build a deeper understanding of concepts and better connect with various disciplines. Through an integrated approach to science, our curriculum encourages critical thinking, analyzing data, and complex problem solving for a deeper understanding where students see the interconnectedness between science disciplines. Throughout their middle school science courses, students will build a strong understanding of major scientific concepts through investigations, labs, and projects.

■ Integrated Science 6

The 6th grade science course introduces students to physical and earth sciences through the study of astronomy and human biology. Students acquire skills in data collection and analysis, and in the design and execution of scientific investigations. This year, we are introducing a STEM program for the second semester. Students will focus on real-world problems and use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to design solutions.

- Space
- Force, Motion and Fields
- Waves and their Application
- Science & Engineering

■ Integrated Science 7

The 7th grade science course introduces students to chemistry, physics, and earth science. Through hands on investigations, students participate in labs and demonstrations weekly to help them gain a better understanding of the content and make connections to science text. Students are engaged in Project Based Learning units that incorporate scientific concepts into real world applications. Students collaborate in class to solve real world issues that help them make

connections and see how what they are learning applies to the real world.

■ Chemistry

- Structure of Matter
- States of Matter, Changes of State
- Chemical Processes and Equations

■ Geologic Processes & History

- The Dynamic Earth
- Earth Through Time

■ Forces and Motion

- Forces
- Gravity and Friction

■ Earth and Human Activity

- Earth's Natural Hazards
- Resources in Earth's Systems
- Human Impact on Earth's Systems

■ Integrated Science 8

The 8th grade science course introduces students to biological, physical, and environmental science. Through hands on investigations, students participate in labs and demonstrations weekly to help them gain a better understanding of the content and make connections to science text. Students engage in Project Based Learning units that incorporate scientific concepts into real world applications. Students collaborate in class to solve real world issues that help them make connections and see how what they are learning applies to the real world.

Interactive Notebook – By 8th grade, students use One Note, which allows them to interact in class to take notes, respond to questions, click links to view video links to help clarify concepts.

■ Cells and Heredity

- Cells
- Organisms as Systems
- Reproduction, Heredity, and Growth

■ Ecology & the Environment

- Matter and Energy in Ecosystems
- Relationships in Ecosystems
- Ecosystem Dynamics

■ Energy

- Potential and Kinetic Energy
- Energy Transfer

■ Diversity of Life

- History of life on earth and evolution

■ SOCIAL STUDIES

Holy Child's Middle School Social Studies program challenges students to think critically about the world around them by connecting the past to the present. The content is conveyed using innovative educational technology, interactive notebooks, and visible-thinking strategies. Students delve deeper into history by analyzing primary sources, participating in student-led Harkness discussions, and creating student-generated projects. Students also hone their expository writing skills as they contextualize major events and eras of history.

■ Ancient World 6

Through the study of ancient cultures, students examine the emergence of social structures such as government, religion, law, and economics. Students analyze how geography influences emerging civilizations and how the contributions of these civilizations still affect our world today. They will develop research skills that begin to apply critical thinking to evaluate materials, and express their opinions based on historically accurate information.

■ US History Through Industrialization 7

Students work to understand the main ideas in which our country is founded. Our study begins with the cultures of pre-exploration Americas, continues through the thirteen colonies and the American Revolution, and ends up at the Civil War. To begin to understand the country we are today, students look for the main ideas behind significant events and historical figures, and they also begin working with primary sources. Critical thinking and making inferences are important parts of the social studies curriculum, as students are asked to think more in depth about history and our country.

■ US History: Civil War to Present 8

Students will study civics and citizenship by focusing on a citizen's rights and responsibilities as well as the three branches of government, political parties, and elections. Students then pick up from where they left off in seventh grade with a review of the Civil War. We then move through history thematically focusing on women's rights, immigration, the Holocaust, world wars, and civil rights. Students also study current events by tying them to historical precedents and events.

■ RELIGION

■ Religion 6

God's merciful love and plan for our salvation is explored in Old Testament stories and prophecies that find their fulfillment in Jesus and the sacramental life of the Church. Students learn, experience, and live out their faith through writing assignments, discussion, prayer and meditation, and experiential projects that are meant to draw the students into a deeper life of faith and incorporate it into their everyday life.

■ Religion 7

Students focus on understanding the person of Jesus and the mystery of his fully human and fully divine natures. Students will specifically address how Jesus reveals God to man and man to himself, and how Jesus reveals the meaning of the world and God's relationship to it. They will especially explore these mysteries by examining the Gospels and the books of the New Testament, appreciating the unified vision that we are given of the person of Christ. Finally, the students will explore how to approach, read, and interpret Scripture, and ask why Scripture is so important to the Church and to understanding who Christ is. Throughout the year, they will be given the opportunity to grow in their faith by participating in liturgies, prayer blocks, Lectio Divina, and community service projects.

■ Religion 8

Students will attempt to answer life's big questions through the lens of faith: Who am I? Why am I here? What is the meaning of life? Students begin by studying the central tenets of Catholicism, including defining faith, morality, prayer, and the commandments. During this time of their faith development, a foundation is laid for asking meaningful and thoughtful questions, which is developed through intricate class discussions and personal reflection journals. As the year progresses, students will study Judaism and Islam, focusing on understanding the similarities and differences among these three monotheistic religions. Students are encouraged not only to ask questions, but to pursue answers with the goal of helping them deepen their own faith and understanding of faith. Prayer services, liturgies, and community service projects are also prepared and presented by students to their class and the school community.

■ WORLD LANGUAGES

When students enter Middle School in 6th grade, they will take Exploring Language and Culture. This is an introductory course that allows students to experience both languages offered at Holy Child. Then in grades 7th and 8th can choose between Spanish or French. Students will develop their communication skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing through readings, writing tasks, videos, projects, conversations, and other communicative activities in the target language. Students review, strengthen, and expand their previous knowledge not just in content and skills, but also in terms of their individual process for learning a language. Students also increase their knowledge and understanding of the cultures of French- or Spanish-speaking countries as they study the language. Prerequisite: Seventh grade (1A) World Language course.

Students are assessed during the admission placement testing and individually placed into a sequence which will be most appropriate for them as a learner. The courses below are the typical track for entering Middle School students. If student come at an advanced level in either French or Spanish we will adjust their courses or instruction to meet their level of understanding.

■ Exploring Language and Culture 6

In this course, sixth graders will explore the multiple relationships between languages and culture. This is an introductory course to world languages. Students will focus a semester of study in Spanish and a semester in French. While learning beginning skills to listen, speak, read, and write, students will develop effective strategies to acquire another language, remembering that it can be different for different people. This course will help students learn about the benefits of learning different languages and cultures. Students will also identify how cultures and the ways in which language and human communities shape each other. After completing this course, students will select either French or Spanish for seventh grade.

■ French IA

French IA is an introduction to the French language and culture. It is devoted to the development of proficiency in four basic skills of language learning: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Central to the course is a systematic study of practical grammar and vocabulary as well as a regular inquiry into the

history, culture, lifestyles, and customs of French-speaking people.

■ French IB

French IB is devoted to the development of proficiency in four basic skills of language learning: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Central to the course are a systematic study of practical grammar and vocabulary as well as regular inquiry into the history, culture, lifestyles, and customs of French-speaking people.

■ French I AB (Full Year Course)

Students use the text *D'accord 1!*, which presents an integrated multimedia approach that includes audio and video materials, computer presentations, and paired/cooperative communication activities to encourage communication with accuracy in an authentic cultural context. Using correct French syntax in speaking and writing, students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of thematic topics. Through the study of France and the French-speaking world, students learn to appreciate a new culture. ACTFL Proficiency level achieved: Novice - mid

■ Spanish IA

Students in Spanish 1A focus on developing communicative and interpretive skills as they learn to talk about themselves and people and experiences familiar to them. Level 1A introduces students to meeting and describing new people. Students also study school, classes, and schedules in Spanish-speaking countries. This allows them to grow their cultural understandings as they compare their school experience with that of students in the Spanish-speaking world. Students finish the school year studying families, where they build on their previous knowledge of descriptions. Throughout each unit, students speak, listen, read, and write to further develop their language skills.

■ Spanish IB

Students in Spanish 1B build on the skills and knowledge they developed in Spanish 1A. They focus on improving their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills as they continue their language study. We expand on our family and descriptions unit. Delving into a study of both pastimes and travel, students begin to express themselves using more advanced grammar. Students continue to build their cultural competencies

as they are exposed to the ways that different Spanish-speaking countries approach these concepts.

■ Spanish IAB (full year)

This course is designed for the beginning Spanish student. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are developed simultaneously through an integrated, multimedia approach. Upon completion of the course, students have the skills to communicate with accuracy and comprehend a variety of social exchanges. Emphasis is also placed on understanding and appreciating the diverse Hispanic cultures through basic readings, videos, magazines, newspapers, and class presentations.

■ ARTS

Visual and performing arts are a big part of student life at Holy Child, through courses and electives during the school day and extra-curricular activities after school. Throughout the year there are a lot of opportunities for students to make the arts part of their experience at Holy Child. Our foundress, Cornelia Connelly, understood that the arts are a vital part of education and that our goal is to enhance students' lifelong appreciation of the arts, bring joy to their process, and challenge their ability to grow in personal expression and overall achievement. The arts can enrich their lives and help explore their creativity.

Our goal is to make the visual and performing arts approachable to all students in the school while also creating depth in all disciplines.

All 6-8th grade students participate in our middle school musical theatre production during music classes in the first quarter with several performances. All students have the opportunity to audition for a principal role and ensemble member, or join the stage crew, which includes stage management, costumes, sound, lights, props, and scenery.

More information on after school arts programs will be made available at the beginning of each school year.

■ Performing Arts - Music & Dance

■ Performing Arts 6

In 6th grade performing arts, students will be introduced to a variety of vocal music, instrumental music, and dance in a nurturing, and creative

environment. All students will begin the school year by participating in the Middle School Musical. Working together throughout the year, students will build community and musical/artistic skills. Through listening and observing performances, students explore an array of instruments and styles of music to inspire their own musical path. Students will be invited to create and share their own music and create a songbook of their musical journey. Foundational music skills such as solfege, rhythm, sight-reading, and scales are introduced. Music history will be introduced through musical selections and composers. In dance, the classes are centered around exploration, creativity, and performing social dance forms.

■ Performing Arts 7

In 7th grade performing arts, students will be introduced to a variety of vocal music, instrumental music, and dance in a nurturing, and creative environment. All students will begin the school year by participating in the Middle School Musical. Working together throughout the year, students will build community and musical/artistic skills. Listening to recordings and observing performances, students explore an array of instruments and styles of music to their own musical path. Students will be invited to create and share their own music, as well as create music history projects. Foundational music skills such as solfege, rhythm, sight-reading, and scales are further developed. In dance, the classes center creating dance as well as the history context and technical execution of social dance forms.

■ Performing Arts 8

Students will continue to build on the skills learned in 6th and 7th grade music including singing, music theory, sight-singing, and instrumental music. Students will begin to explore projects using GarageBand and other integrated technology in music class. Students will look at the history of music focusing on the 20th century in classical music and popular music, including jazz, rock and roll, and contemporary pop music. They study the form and structure of music in preparation of their own songwriting project. Through their participation in annual musical theatre productions and performing the 8th grade song, students are taught to sing and perform in a healthy, professional manner. Students will develop a deeper understanding of musical genres, while also learning how to be professional in a performance setting. In dance, the purpose is to give students of varying dance abilities and backgrounds

introduction into specific forms (modern dance, jazz, and hip-hop) as well as historical context.

■ VISUAL ART

■ Art 6

In 6th grade, students will learn to become observers of their everyday worlds. Making art stimulates thoughtful inquiry and sharpens careful perception. Students will work to capture the details that make each living thing, event, or place unique. Students will discover that ideas can be interpreted in many different ways, and art making is a means to expressing new ways of thinking and feeling. Through exploration of media such as painting, drawing, printmaking, collage, and sculpture, students develop an understanding of the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design, deepen their expressive and critical faculties, hone their art skills, and develop confidence in their creative capacities. While engaged in the art making process, students will draw inspiration from a global array of artists.

■ Art 7

As students advance, they develop their ability to, and confidence in, tapping into their own creativity. Students will develop powerful new thoughts and feelings that challenge established world-views. As their experiences become increasingly conflicting and diverse, art making becomes a safe arena for experimenting in the construction of new relationships between inner and outer realities. Painting, drawing, collage, printmaking, and art appreciation become important vehicles for testing ideas, making judgments, forming values and exercising curiosity. In particular, the exploration of new and different ideas about the representation of three-dimensional space helps students express new points of view about themselves and their worlds.

■ Art 8

In 8th grade, students continue to understand how art may be used to help them observe and interpret their ever-expanding world. Students hone observation skills and discuss works of art; develop visual arts vocabulary to describe art making, the tools and techniques used to produce art, read and write about art to reinforce literacy skills; interpret artwork by providing evidence to support assertions; and reflect on the process of making art. Students begin to think and work like artists and designers as they engage in

problem solving, goal setting, planning, and work independently and in teams. Students learn that these practices in the art room are also career-building skills required in all other fields of endeavor. While some students will pursue art-related careers, all students learn to regard art as an important means of expression and as a source of lifelong enjoyment.

■ PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Middle School physical education program provides opportunities for our students to participate in a wide range of physical activities, learn fundamentals of team and individual sports, learn personal fitness skills, interact within their social world, and develop healthy lifetime habits and interests.

■ PE 6

The 6th grade Physical Education course is designed with an emphasis on personal improvement in integrating movement skills through a variety of traditional team sports and recreational activities. Units are designed to help students understand teamwork, develop social skills, strengthen their athletic abilities, and understand the rules governing sports. Units are selected from flag football, floor hockey, net games (volleyball, speedminton and badminton), team handball, softball/kickball, soccer, lacrosse, and field hockey. Additionally, students are exposed to a variety of recreational, creative games to help hone their teamwork, sportsmanship, and social skills with one another. Cardiovascular endurance and overall fitness are improved through daily warm-ups. A unit in the fitness center introduces students to the proper use of equipment and free weights to begin a healthy fitness routine to establish lifelong healthy habits.

■ PE 7

The 7th grade Physical Education course is designed with an emphasis on personal improvement in integrating movement skills through a variety of traditional team sports and recreational activities. Units are designed to help students continue to understand teamwork, further develop social skills, strengthen their athletic abilities, create game strategies, and understand the rules governing sports. Units are selected from flag football, floor hockey, net games (volleyball, speedminton and badminton), team handball, softball/kickball, soccer, lacrosse, and field hockey. Additionally, students are exposed to a variety of recreational, creative games to help hone their

teamwork, sportsmanship, and social skills with one another. Cardiovascular endurance and overall fitness are improved through daily warm-ups. A unit in the fitness center further exposes students to the proper use of equipment and free weights to begin a healthy fitness routine to establish lifelong healthy habits.

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■ ACADEMIC SUPPORT CLASSES

Academic Support classes are available to those middle school students that have a diagnosed learning disability. The goal of these study skills courses is to help students develop academic confidence through self-advocacy skills, time management, test preparation, note-taking, memory techniques, and creating individualized organizational systems.

In addition to the study skills lessons the students receive support in managing their Accommodation Plan. Their learning specialist communicates the accommodations and recommendation outlined on the students plan and coordinates the necessary supports with each classroom teacher.

*Note this course replaces a World Language course in the student's schedule.

■ Academic Essential I

In 6th grade the Academic Essential I course is a “push in” model or small group that is coordinated between

the classroom teacher and the learning specialist. The primary focus of this support system is to support the students in the context of the language arts classroom. Skills such as notebook organization, using an agenda planner, managing assignments, and reading strategies are the primary focus. For any additional areas of need the teacher and learning specialist work together to determine what type of supports are required and implement a plan.

■ Academic Essential II

In 7th grade, students in the Academic Essentials II course begin the year by taking a learning styles inventory which helps the students understand their learning style and how to use their learning strengths to help with areas of challenge. In this class, students work on a variety of study skills including assignment management using an agenda planner, test taking strategies, notebook, and locker organization, using their 1:1 device for assignment submission, writing emails, checking assignments on the school learning management system (Veracross), and memory techniques.

■ Academic Essential III

In 8th grade, students in Academic Essentials III course is similar to the 6th and 7th grade content however the classroom workload and expectations becomes greater. The learning specialist revisits the learning styles inventory to help the students understand the ways in which they learn best and how to capitalize on their strength. Continued study skills focus lessons target assignment management using an agenda planner, test taking strategies, notebook, and locker organization, using their 1:1 device for assignment submission, writing emails, checking assignments on the school learning management system (Veracross), and memory techniques.

■ SCHOOL COUNSELING

Our Middle School Counseling Program supports the academic achievement and social emotional and career development of our students by providing weekly class meeting, individual and small group meetings, and academic counseling. Our Middle School Counselor works closely with parents, faculty, and administration to support the success of our students.

In addition to the counseling support, our counselor support course registration and transition planning

for high school. These supports are built into the school day during homeroom, lunch, assembly, and afterschool.

■ 6th Grade

Class meetings are the focal point of the middle school counseling curriculum. All students have a class meeting once in a 8-day cycle. Students meet in homeroom groups led by the school counselor to discuss issues impacting the students' lives and to develop communication skills as well as an understanding of their values and emotions. Class meetings use the social emotional curriculum Second Step as a guide that offers students discussion-based content on practical skills for situations in and out of the classroom. Time is often provided for student-centered discussions. These conversations include topics such as digital citizenship, mindset and goals, values and friendships, decision making and preventing and resolving conflicts. The purpose of the class meetings program is to provide a safe place for students to discuss and implement positive solutions to social and emotional issues with the help of their peers and under the guidance of the school counselor. We work as a team to establish the class meeting as a non-judgmental and caring environment.

■ 7th Grade

Students will join once in a 8-day cycle for class meetings. These homeroom groups led by the school counselor discuss issues impacting the students' lives to develop communication skills and an understanding of their values and emotions. The curriculum includes topics such as communication skills, thoughts, emotions and decisions, digital citizenship, and a healthy body image. Student-centered discussions may move to friendship difficulties, school stressors, and healthy life choices. This safe place for the students to discuss and implement positive solutions to social and emotional issues with the help of their peers and under the guidance of the school counselor is even more critical as they enter their teens and approach high school. We work as a team to establish the class meeting as a non-judgmental and caring environment.

■ 8th Grade

All 8th graders have a class meeting once in a 8-day cycle. They meet in homeroom groups led by the school counselor to discuss issues impacting the students' lives and to develop communication skills and an understanding of their values and emotions. Class

meetings include topics such as communication skills, digital citizenship, healthy body image and healthy relationships. Time is often provided for student-centered discussions. These conversations include topics such as friendship difficulties, school stressors, and healthy life choices. Throughout the year, students engage in high school transition discussions. The purpose of the class meetings program is to provide a safe place for students to discuss and implement positive solutions to social and emotional issues with the help of their peers and under the guidance of the school counselor. We work as a team to establish the class meeting as a non-judgmental and caring environment.

■ MIDDLE SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULARS

Students are encouraged to try out new things and explore their talents and passions. Students select a new pursuit each trimester.

■ Middle School Athletics

Our interscholastic MS teams include field hockey, soccer, tennis, basketball, softball, lacrosse, swimming and track and field. Students practice the skills of these sports three times a week during afternoon PGT from 2:30pm- 3:15pm, with games scheduled at least once a week. We stress the importance of development of the athletes' physical skills while fostering the values of cooperative team play and sportsmanship. We also reinforce motor coordination skills and develop overall physical conditioning. *Students must tryout to participate in athletics.*

■ Charity in Action

Students involved in service learning will reflect on, create, announce, and organize service projects in the middle school. Students will read current articles regarding social justice issues and discuss them. They will create posters, crafts, letters, and emails advocating for justice and announcing service projects. Students will organize the Martha's Table sandwich campaign, Thanksgiving baskets, visits to Martha's Table and Victory Terrace, the Help the Homeless Walkathon, the winter clothing drive for the homeless at Christmas time, and other activities throughout the year.

■ Enrichment Clusters

This is a time and a place created within the weekly schedule that focuses students' attention on authentic

learning applied to real-life problems. Students will enroll in an enrichment cluster based on their interest. A teacher leader will help students facilitate research and investigate a chosen topic and create an authentic product based on their research.

■ Chorus

■ Band

■ Dance Team

■ Visual and Performing Arts Extracurricular Programs

After School Arts provides a supplemental and in-depth experience that builds on skills learned in the classroom, fosters a love for the arts, and expands artistic expression. Through visual and performing arts, students have the opportunity to continue studies in a small group class.

Currently, we offer courses in visual and performing arts four days a week:

- Drama Club
- Art Club
- Instrumental Music
- Piano Lab
- Dance

There is an activity fee that is paid by trimester with registration through Veracross. Drop-in Activities (included in tuition)

■ Learning Lab

The Learning Lab is a program available to students in 6-12 who would like more support with studying, reviewing for a test, and organization. Learning Specialist work with students 1:1 and in small group in the Coakley Center Monday through Thursday from 3:30pm-4:30pm. Afterschool Study Hall: For students who arrive early or stay afterschool the McShain Library is open for study hall starting at 7:00am until 7:45am Monday through Friday and afterschool 3:30pm until 5:00pm Monday through Thursday.

■ Writing Center and Math Lab

Through our Writing Center and Math Labs student can request 1:1 or small group support before and after school using the online appointment schedule through Veracross.