St. Michael's
EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL

Grade Level Summary: 8th Grade

Art
Students learn various techniques, skills, and artistic applications by studying historic content and culture through the eyes and hands of an artist. Studies are overlapped and integrated with other grade-level subjects and classes. Examples include self-portrait studies and interpreting and imitating art from other cultures. While exercising drawing and painting techniques, students learn to evaluate their personal work and develop an understanding of the art elements and principles.

History
Eighth grade uses the Impact California Social Studies curriculum and additional supplemental resources for history class. The United States history course begins with an overview of the roots of a democratic government and explores the transformation from the thirteen colonies to a new united nation. Students examine the documents that helped form our nation, including the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution. The students investigate how the federal government works and the responsibilities of all citizens. Discussions on reform and expansion are a focus throughout the year, culminating with the division of the nation and the subsequent Civil War.

Language Arts
Eighth-grade Language Arts is designed to involve the student in applying reading, writing, listening, speaking, and research skills in an independent manner through meaningful interdisciplinary tasks. Students continue to develop an appreciation for literature and writing through the study of literary elements in classic and contemporary selections, focusing on the different genres of writing and the overall writing process. Emphasis is placed on moving from the literal to the abstract in the students' critical thinking skills and in their use of language. Students engage in the writing process to create and master the techniques needed to succeed at the high school level and beyond. Students have the opportunity to relate academic material to real-world ideas.

Latin
In their final year of Latin, eighth graders will continue to build on the Latin grammar and syntax from their first two years. Students continue to memorize Latin vocabulary and reflexively infer the meaning of various English words based on learned Latin vocabulary. Students will engage in projects built on Latin's contributions to the fields of medicine, law and philosophy.

Mathematics
Students are placed into differentiated math splits for eighth grade. Students in Algebra focus on operations with real numbers, solving equations and word problems, operations with exponents and polynomials, factoring polynomials, linear functions and equations, systems of equations and inequalities, quadratic functions and equations, rational functions and equations, and exponential and radical functions. Students in Geometry study the foundations of geometry, geometric reasoning and proof, parallel and perpendicular lines in the plane, triangle congruence properties and attributes of angles, polygons and quadrilaterals, similarity and congruence, right triangles and trigonometry, spatial reasoning, circles, and extending transformational geometry.

Music
Students spend the majority of their time learning how to read music and play the bells in a cohesive manner. Students focus on singing in tune with proper technique, singing in two or three-part harmony, as well as reading and notating music. They also listen, analyze, and describe music. Lastly, they continue to practice singing with expression and performing in front of an audience.

Physical Education
Classes focus on health-related topics, including body composition, cardiovascular fitness, muscular endurance, strength, and flexibility. Additionally, skill-related fitness concepts such as agility, balance, coordination, power, reaction time, and speed are incorporated into daily activities. Units consist of team sport activities, such as soccer, team handball, basketball, floor hockey, pickleball, and badminton. Students have daily physical fitness activities, and one day a week, the concentration is on cardiovascular fitness through middle-distance endurance as well as circuit training targeting skill-related concepts.

Science
Eighth-grade students use their Engineering Design and Scientific Inquiry Process skills to learn about Physical Science. The instructional segments are organized to show what drives change, from simple to complex. Students will be applying their understanding of forces, motion, and energy, as well as the Engineering Design Process, to construct a creative and original prototype of a rollercoaster. Eighth-grade science will also focus on the relationship of electrical and magnetic energy and wave interactions. By the end of the school year, students will learn how chemical energy and chemical reactions can change the properties of matter.

Spanish
In Spanish, students learn to speak, read, and write with a variety of high-frequency vocabulary words ranging from places around town, throwing a party, describing animals and foreign countries, to prepositions, irregular verbs, and the near future and past tenses. Students learn to incorporate and conjugate more -ar, -er, and -ir Spanish verbs in their reading, writing, and speaking. Eighth graders also read several beginner Spanish novels and complete many individual and group projects.

Theater
Eighth-grade theater begins with an overnight field trip to Ashland, Oregon, for the Shakespeare Festival. Learning throughout the remainder of the school year focuses on Shakespeare, including exercises designed to help students become familiar with his syntax, meter, and vocabulary. Students study, rehearse, and perform a Shakespearean history or tragedy.