

JUNIOR HIGH

Throughout the junior high curriculum, our approach is both challenging and nurturing, designed to inspire intellectual curiosity, personal growth and faith development.

Teachers bring learning to life through engaging projects like Greek Day and class debates, while students showcase their skills in essay contests and science fairs. Beyond the classroom, weeklong experiences like Mount Hermon and Caritas provide opportunities for teamwork, reflection, and connection as a class and community.

Students strengthen their relationships and leadership skills with retreats and social emotional learning, culminating in the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in 8th grade.

Their junior high years prepare them to step into high school as confident learners, compassionate leaders, and engaged members of their communities.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The junior high English Language Arts program engages early adolescents in reading, writing, speaking, and listening experiences that foster confidence and creativity. Students learn to express ideas effectively, collaborate meaningfully, and support their thinking with evidence from texts. Literature study introduces classic and contemporary authors, exploring historical and cultural contexts while developing skills in critical thinking, composition, and interpretation. Grammar and writing conventions are integrated throughout.

Each year culminates with the 8th Grade Speech project, giving students the opportunity to reflect on their growth and the school's mission through written and oral presentation. While all students complete the project, one is selected to share their speech with the entire student body at graduation.

6TH GRADE - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Analyzes how sentences and paragraphs contribute to the overall structure and ideas within a text. Interprets figures of speech and explores how language shapes meaning.

7TH GRADE - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Examines how authors structure and organize ideas to develop meaning across a text. Identifies and interprets figurative language and its impact on tone and theme.

8TH GRADE - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Analyzes in detail how paragraph and sentence structure refine key concepts and arguments. Interprets and applies figures of speech in both literature and student writing.

MATHEMATICS

Our mathematics equips students with the skills to think critically, solve problems, and recognize patterns that connect to real-world applications. Our program builds a strong foundation in arithmetic and algebra, preparing students to become confident problem-solvers and analytical thinkers. Through hands-on practice, collaboration, and exploration, students learn to see math not just as numbers, but as a powerful language for understanding the world.

6TH GRADE - MATHEMATICS

Ratios and proportional relationships. Early expressions and equations. Multi-digit division and operations with decimals and fractions. Recognizing and applying patterns in ratio tables.

7TH GRADE - MATHEMATICS

Ratios and proportional relationships in real-world contexts. Operations with rational numbers (positive and negative fractions and decimals). Expressions, equations, and inequalities. Informal geometry and probability foundations.

8TH GRADE - MATHEMATICS

Operations with rational numbers and exponents. Algebraic expressions and linear equations. Graphing and analyzing linear equations and inequalities. Understanding functions and connections between algebra and geometry.

MATHEMATICS PATHWAYS

5TH GRADE - FOUNDATIONS OF PRE ALGEBRA: Grade Level; Accelerated.

6TH GRADE - FOUNDATIONS OF PRE ALGEBRA: Grade Level (Grade 6 Math); Accelerated (Grade 6 Math/Pre Algebra); Advanced (Grade 7 Math/Algebra).

7TH GRADE - PRE ALGEBRA AND ALGEBRA: Grade Level (Grade 7 Math); Accelerated (Grade 7th Math/Algebra); Advanced (Algebra).

8TH GRADE - ALGEBRA AND GEOMETRY: Grade Level (Grade 8 Math); Accelerated (Grade 8 Math/Algebra); Advanced (Geometry).

SCIENCE

At St. Matthew School, science comes alive through hands-on inquiry, discovery, and collaboration. Our program is designed to spark curiosity and critical thinking, helping students learn by doing. Demonstrations, labs, and projects invite discussion, experimentation, and problem-solving, while connecting classroom concepts to the real world. Students are encouraged to ask questions, test ideas, and think like scientists as they explore the natural and physical world.

6TH GRADE - SCIENCE

Systems and subsystems in Earth and life science. Earth system interactions that cause weather. Causes and effects of regional climate patterns. Impacts of global warming on living systems.

7TH GRADE - SCIENCE

Atoms as the building blocks of organisms and nonliving things. Cycling of matter and flow of energy through organisms and ecosystems. Natural processes and human activities shaping Earth's resources. Sustaining biodiversity and ecosystem services in a changing world.

8TH GRADE - SCIENCE

Motion, forces, and collisions between objects. Influence of noncontact forces on physical phenomena. Evolution as the explanation for life's unity and diversity. Sustaining biodiversity at both local and global levels.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The junior high history curriculum offers a broad exploration of world and U.S. history from ancient civilizations through the modern era. Students examine the key ideas, events, and movements that have shaped societies, addressing complex topics such as religion, slavery, war, and human rights. Through inquiry, discussion, and analysis, students connect the past to the world they live in today.

6TH GRADE - SOCIAL STUDIES

Explores the development of early Western, African, and Asian civilizations. Examines how geography, culture, and innovation influenced ancient societies. Encourages reflection on how early civilizations continue to shape the modern world.

7TH GRADE - SOCIAL STUDIES

Studies medieval and early modern world history, including the rise and fall of empires. Investigates the diffusion of religions, languages, and trade networks across regions. Analyzes how people, ideas, and goods moved through interconnected global systems.

8TH GRADE - SOCIAL STUDIES

Focuses on American history through political, social, cultural, and economic lenses. Examines the evolving themes of freedom, equality, and liberty across eras. Strengthens skills in historical inquiry, critical analysis, and civic understanding.

RELIGION

Religious education is at the heart of who we are, guiding students to grow in faith, character, and service. Our program is designed to help students deepen their personal relationship with Jesus while making meaningful connections to the blessings in their lives. Rooted in Catholic traditions and values, students learn what it means to live as active Christians that embrace faith, prayer, community, and service as essential parts of daily life. Through scripture, discussion, and practice, they come to understand and appreciate the richness of the Catholic faith and their role in carrying it forward.

CURRICULUM FOCUS AREAS

What We Believe: Knowledge of the Faith, Creed, and Scripture. How We Celebrate: Liturgy and Sacraments. How We Live: Conscience and Christian Living. How We Pray: Christian Prayer. How We Live in Community: Catholic Church and Vocation. How We Serve: Living our faith through service to the world.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

In junior high, social-emotional learning (SEL) supports students as they navigate the growing complexity of adolescence with empathy, confidence, and integrity. Through the Kimochis and Character Strong programs, students build self-awareness and strengthen their ability to manage emotions, resolve conflicts, and foster authentic connections with others. Lessons emphasize leadership, accountability, and compassion that encourage students to make thoughtful choices and live out the values of respect and kindness in their daily interactions. By applying these principles in class discussions, service projects, and peer collaboration, students develop the emotional intelligence and character needed to thrive as positive, resilient members of their school and faith community.