

# **2023-2024 School Year**

## **Welcome to Middle School!**



Middle school is a time of tremendous personal growth as expectations are adjusted to place greater responsibility upon the student. As in any step of this nature, a learning curve is experienced as students adjust to a different environment. Our goal for each middle school student is to foster independence, and provide the work habits needed for the next big step...high school.

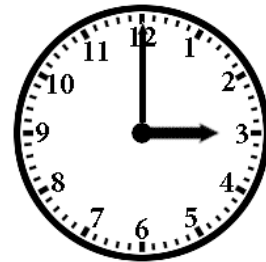
## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Dismissals**

Middle school students are dismissed to parents at the end of the day. Grades 5-8 can be picked up in front of the church unless the student has siblings in younger grades. Those students can be picked up on the south driveway.

If your student is taking the bus or walking home, we need permission on file in the office. Students cannot leave campus without parent permission in writing given to the homeroom teacher and the office – even for isolated incidences.

If you need to pick up your student before school ends, please go to the school office to sign the student out. The office will then contact the teacher to release the student.



### **Uniforms**

St. Madeleine Sophie has a uniform policy for all grades, detailed in the family handbook. In middle school, students can earn Non-Uniform Dress passes when they go an entire month without a uniform violation. These passes can be used on the first Friday of the following month. Additional uniform violations will be dealt with according to school policy. \*\*Please read the 2023-24 SMS uniform policy for all areas of the dress code, including the PE uniform.

Middle school students will wear SMS PE uniform on Wellness and Development days. This uniform consists of a PE shirt (ordered from the school office) and a pair of navy-blue sweatpants. Uniform shorts may be substituted in September, May and June.

## Technology

All middle school students and their parent or guardian must sign an annual acceptable use agreement that includes rules and procedures surrounding technology use.

While some devices are available at SMS, we allow students in grades 6-8 to bring their own computer device to school. It is not a requirement that a student bring a device to school, but it allows for students to use their own platform to enhance learning at school. Computing devices (laptops and tablets) are used as a learning tool for school. They are not an entertainment system. Please refer to the Technology Agreement for full details. Some important highlights are listed below:

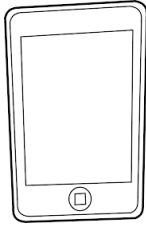


- Computing devices are used with permission or when directed by your teacher
- No personal e-mail, or social networking sites should be accessed while at school. (you will be issued a school e-mail account)
- No games are permitted in school.
- No photos, videos, or audio recordings should be made in school except with explicit teacher permission.
- These devices are only allowed to be used in the classroom, with teacher permission.
- Streaming video, music and other large bandwidth items are prohibited without teacher permission.
- Attempts to circumvent internet filtering will result in a loss of computer privileges.
- Devices cannot be used on school grounds before or after school without permission.
- Technology policies will also apply at off campus school sponsored activities.

Computing devices are a privilege and not a requirement for our learning. Failure to follow school policies can result in the loss of these privileges.

## Cell Phones / Wearable Technology

Student cell phones will be collected and stored in a secure cabinet at the beginning of each day, and returned at the end of the school day. Students who bring a cell phone to school but do not turn it in will lose tech privileges, and be subject to additional discipline according to school policies.



\*Wearable technology (i.e. iWatch) that can send or receive text, data and/or voice must **also** be turned in during the school day.

\* Bluetooth headphones / earbuds must be turned into the phone box.

**\* Before and after school, while on campus, students are not allowed to use their cell phones unless given permission from a teacher.**

**\* Phones will also be collected during Aftercare.**

## Changing Classes

Students are given passing time for class transitions with a mid-morning snack break included in the schedule.

## Health and Nutrition

Scientific research reinforces again and again that students learn better when they come to school having had a good night's sleep and a nutritious breakfast. Young minds work best with high quality nutrition at the start of the day. Caffeine and sugar, with its empty calories, are not helpful.

- For morning snack, appropriate snacks in school are fruit, cheese, crackers or other healthy snacks.
- A reusable water bottle is required for every wellness and development class
- Pop and energy drinks are not allowed as beverages for snack or lunch except at specific class celebrations.
- Healthy lunches help students have a productive afternoon of learning

## Appropriate Behavior / Think Sheets / Behavior Contracts

At St. Madeleine Sophie, we have developed an approach to positive behavior and discipline in middle school. We focus on individualized goals, and personal growth. In addition to this goal-driven strategy, we also ask students to reflect and take responsibility for behaviors that are impactful on the learning environment.

Page 10 in our family handbook states:

***Thus, to ensure that every child is provided an adequate learning environment, we will implement the following disciplinary principles:***

***Through their cooperation, attentiveness and behavior in class, students will:***

- ***Allow teachers to teach***
- ***Respect their own and others right to learn***
- ***Behave in ways that support the best interests of the class and school***

If a student is not making responsible decisions, disrespecting peers or teachers, or impacting the learning of their classmates, we will be asking them to mindfully reflect upon their behavior with a **Think Sheet**. Once this is completed, we will be sending it home to be signed by you. This way, you will be aware, and can help keep your student focused on their goals. After your child receives **three Think Sheets**, the student will be referred to Mrs. Patterson to work on a behavior contract. There are situations where a student's behavior can accelerate the process and the Middle School Team may choose to immediately implement the behavior contract. If this were to occur, we would reach out to you for a meeting.

Once the behavior contract is in place, we will do everything we can to support your student in meeting their goals. Should the student violate their behavior contract, there will be a series of predictable consequences implemented.

<b>First Violation of Behavior Contract:</b>	1 Day In-School Detention
<b>Second Violation of Behavior Contract:</b>	2 Day In-School Detention
<b>Third Violation of Behavior Contract:</b>	3 Day In-School Detention
<b>Fourth Violation of Behavior Contract:</b>	Referral to Ms. Romero for further review of consequences.

## **Inclusive Mission**

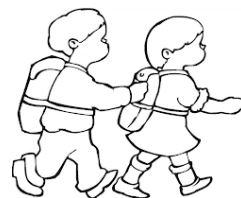
St. Madeleine Sophie welcomes students of all ability levels and we commit ourselves to supporting all students. Our Vice Principal, Jessica Patterson, leads this effort while working with classroom teachers. Our purpose is to assist every student, each with a unique learning style and varying exceptionalities, to grow into the fullness of life in Jesus' image. Our specialists hope to provide ongoing support to teachers and parents, and to enable each student to be successful.

It is important that our specialists have documentation for students seeking extra support so that effective plans for students can be put into place. It is also important to be clear that there is a difference between accommodations and modifications, particularly at the middle school level. Accommodations do not affect the actual content of lessons and curriculum; they involve adapting or adjusting classroom space, instruction, or assessment. However, if content is adjusted or modified, this action will be noted on the student's record, since it is a variation from the content that is taught in a particular class, and thus changes the curriculum. This is just a brief description. For further explanation and clarification, please contact Mrs. Patterson.

## Special Privileges, Duties, and Events

### Safety Patrol

As older students, more privileges and responsibilities are available to those in middle school. Safety Patrol is one of the special duties that students in grades 7-8 participate in, helping to greet and assist younger students during morning drop off. Some 6th graders may be invited to participate in the spring trimester.



### Challenge Course – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade only

Students also look forward to special privileges, such as the fall Challenge Course. This team-building event offers both personal and group challenges on the ground on the high ropes course.

### Spring Play

A spring musical performance is part of music education for students in grades 5-8. All students have the opportunity to audition for a major role. While there is some rehearsal time built into the middle school schedule, there may be extra rehearsals for all roles, particularly the primary roles in the weeks immediately preceding the musical in April and May. (Students are encouraged to bring homework or a reading book to engage their time when not actively rehearsing.) A fabulous performance will be viewed by the community in the late spring.



### Class Parties and Celebrations

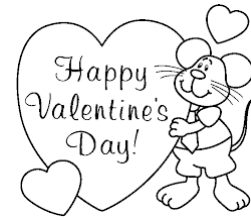


Parties and celebrations in middle school differ a little in how they are observed in elementary school. While we take time to honor birthdays and celebrate Halloween and Valentine's Day, these events are smaller in scale.

Students are welcome to bring in treats to celebrate their birthdays. Treats may be shared during snack break or lunch. Parents should contact the homeroom teacher a few days in advance of sending in treats.

Homeroom teachers work with the homeroom parent in planning the Halloween celebration, which typically takes place during the last period of the school day. Your room parent will contact you with more information as the time approaches.

Our Valentine's Day celebration is a unique tradition in our middle school, with students preparing a special lunch for one of their peers and enjoying a long lunch that day. Information regarding this event will be sent home at the end of January.



### **8th Grade Graduation Events**

The 8th grade year is an important time of preparation for high school and is punctuated by special events.



In the fall, 8th graders are encouraged to visit area Catholic high schools during the school day and are also host to visiting representatives from Seattle Area Catholic high schools. Students applying to private schools submit recommendation forms to the SMS office before Thanksgiving.

In the spring, 8th graders participate in an on-campus retreat day. During their last week of school, 8th graders are honored at the Wednesday Mass by receiving special affirmations from their peers and teachers. Graduation will take place in early June.

# Succeeding in Middle School



## Time Management, Homework, PowerSchool, and Communication

### Homework

Individual teachers set homework expectations. We expect an average of 60 – 90 minutes overall total of homework a night, with the

bulk of the homework time being devoted to Reading, Writing and Math. Given projects and tests, there is some variance in expected homework time. The first month of school is a big adjustment period. If your student is spending hours each night on homework, please contact your student's teachers. We don't want anyone spending so much time on homework that it cuts into family time or sleep schedules!

### School Planner and Google Classroom

Each student will be issued a school planner that students are required to use. It is expected that students record tests, projects and homework assignments in it. These should be reviewed by parents at home, and should be available for teachers to examine at school.

Homework assignments are posted through your student's Google classroom account and calendar as a reference for parents and students, but students are still expected to record information in their planners to better develop their organizational skills. (Bonus! The planner not only tracks assignments, but also can be used for sports practices, family events, and other out-of-school events in order to schedule the time needed to complete the tasks.)

Google Classroom will only have due dates for electronic submissions on your Google Calendar. Students need to record due dates for physical assignments in their planner.

Since one of the biggest steps for students entering middle school is time management; parents may assist this process toward independent student learning by checking in on homework progress and offering to help students review for tests.

### Understanding Standards-Based Grading

Saint Madeleine Sophie School is using a standards-based grading policy in order to accurately communicate your student's mastery of content. We believe this provides a clear picture of your student's academic progress.

1. Coursework will be divided into two categories: **Practice** and **Assessment**. Practice includes homework and other independent activities involving the skill. Assessment is the opportunity for the student to demonstrate mastery of the skill.
2. Content grades will be based upon demonstrated mastery of the course skills and standards being assessed. All of the course grade is based upon **Assessment** scores. Content grades will **NOT** include points for effort, homework, participation, or extra credit. These areas will be reflected in the self-directed learner category of the report card.
3. Homework completion will be tracked, but will not count toward the content grade.
4. We will use the four-point scale to determine mastery (see the explanation below). Students need to score a 3 or higher on a skill or standard to demonstrate mastery.
5. Students scoring below a 3 on any standard(s) or skill(s) are allowed additional retests before or after school or at recess at the teacher's discretion. Students **MUST** complete course requirements showing growth in learning before retesting will be allowed. This could include completing homework, additional studying or coursework. Students should consult with their teacher about specific requirements for that course.

### **The Four Point Scale**

- 1- The student meets few requirements for proficient work and demonstrates little knowledge or understanding of the skill.
- 2- The student meets some requirements for proficient work and is approaching mastery of the skill.
- 3- The student is demonstrating proficiency on the specific skill. He or she can regularly complete this skill and show solid understanding.
- 4- The student demonstrates the skill at an *extremely high level* (high school or college) in a *unique* way that exceeds expectations.

### **Clarifying 4 point system**

The four point scoring system is not a percentage. For example, receiving a 3 does not mean that the student is earning a 3 out of 4 possible points, or a 75%. It means the student is mastering that skill. Receiving a 4 is not the same as receiving full credit; it means the student is showing a highly rare and advanced level of mastery. On Powerschool reports, parents and students should focus on the the four point scale scores and *not the percentage scores*. This score is listed under the Grade column of the Powerschool reports. The four point scale scores more accurately describe how well the student is mastering the skill.

Please discuss these procedures with your student and make sure he or she understands that each student is expected to master EACH individual concept with a score of 3, and that there will be an opportunity for review or extra help prior to retesting.



### **Late Work Policy**

1. Late homework / classwork will only be accepted until the day of the test or project is due for the current unit.

2. Late projects or delayed tests must have prior approval from the teacher. You must request these extensions at least 24 hours in advance of the due date.

Not all requests will be honored.

Examples that may be honored:

1. I have 3 projects due on that day.
2. I have 3 major tests due on that day.
3. My grandparents are visiting that week.

Examples that may not be honored:

1. I didn't start the project until late.
2. I don't want to take a test on that date.
3. I didn't study for the test.

3. Students will still be able to retake tests or revise graded projects. In order to retake tests, students must make arrangements with the teacher and show that they have taken steps to learn the material before a retake will be given. Deadlines to retake tests or revise projects will be set by the teacher.

Example: I did not do well on my math test. I may need to go back and finish assignments I didn't complete to show additional learning before I can retake the test.

4. Students with support plans may have different policies.

5. Students who are absent will be given appropriate time to make up assignments or tests. See next section.

### **Make up Policy**

If school has been missed, the student should do the following:

1. Check teacher websites to review assignments that have been posted during the absence, as well as their Google classroom calendar.
2. Upon returning to school, meet with each teacher to ask for assignments and materials that may have been given out during this time.
3. Discuss with teachers a reasonable timeframe for completing assignments and record due dates in the student planner. In general, students will have at most twice the days absent to make up work. Teacher and student will confirm the new due dates together.

## **PowerSchool**

PowerSchool is the online program that teachers use to record grades and is the best place to look for a summary of student progress. In this program, assignment completion and assessment performance may be viewed. You can expect grades to be updated within two weeks of on time submission of student's work. Late work will be graded as time permits. Detailed grade information can be found by logging onto the PowerSchool website. (Log-ins and passwords will be given for each student/family.)

The mobile version of PowerSchool does not have as much detail as the browser version. We encourage parents / guardians to explore the full version to get a better view of your students' grades.

## **Communication**

Communication between parents and teachers is important for the success of your student. Feel free to contact teachers with your questions, concerns or comments. Teachers will endeavor to respond by the next school day. Teachers are happy to meet with parents; please schedule an appointment.

It takes teamwork between school and home to help achieve responsibility, independence, and motivation in each student. Parents double checking the student planner, allowing students to work on homework independently, while still monitoring their efforts, and checking grades and assignments on PowerSchool will help meet the goal.

## **How can you best help your child to succeed at school?**

- Maintain an interest in everything your student does at school. Know his/her friends and ask about them regularly.
- Provide routines and structure, especially when it comes to completing homework. Provide a set place and time for homework/reading. Carefully consider limits on student use of electronics that are not related to completion of homework. Start today and stick to it!
- Do not overbook your child. Education should be the priority. The odds of getting athletic scholarships are very thin, and are often tied to academic achievement. Provide support, but not a crutch. At this stage they should not have to be rescued, but you should be able to coach them and allow them to respond.
- They need to learn a sense of urgency and responsibility before high school. If you rescue them now, these skills won't develop.
- Grades are important...but the SKILLS they need to be successful in high school and beyond are far MORE important. Provide consequences and rewards, but do not help them avoid consequences, or they will not learn personal responsibility.
- Help them with long term planning, especially for projects/tests. Have a monthly calendar posted, and teach them to establish milestones for their project and to keep track of deadlines. Outstanding work is not created at the last minute (unless you want a nervous breakdown). Provide proper nutrition, especially make sure they eat a proper breakfast and



lunch, encompassing more protein and less sugar. Poor diet often translates into poor sleep and lack of concentration and energy when they attend school.

- Talk to them about personal hygiene. Social success and acceptance help teens to have a good opinion of themselves.
- Monitor their use of the television and the Internet (especially their use of texting, Instagram, Skype and online games), including on cell phones. These are big time wasters and are very distracting. Monitor the content and the amount of time your student spends on these activities. If you limit these, you will have more control over what is influencing your child's value system, AND your child might turn to READING as a pastime. (There is software to help you limit computer activity). Consider restricting the use of electronic devices in the bedroom, so students actually get their sleep instead of going online.
- Strive for perfect attendance at school and miss as few school days as possible. For the next several years, attendance is critical to success because so much is explained, reviewed, and assigned during an actual class. It is not enough to just "get the notes" or check the teacher website. It is nearly impossible for a teacher or tutor to replicate the instruction that took place in class on a one-on-one basis, as children also learn from their peers and the questions that are asked in class.
- Visit a major university sometime in the next two years, so that your student can understand the goal for which he/she is working. This helps motivate students to do their best.
- Model a positive, optimistic attitude. Ask "Tell me something good that happened to you today." Don't encourage your student to find fault with his/her day.
- Treat teachers as partners, not adversaries. Keep all email mature, calm, and professional. We love your kids and want to help...let's work together and keep all relationships positive and productive.
- Encourage your child to read. If you have time, read to them. Make weekly visits to the library or local bookstore. Fifteen minutes of reading a day for a year can improve your child's reading comprehension, and vocabulary scores three times beyond what they are presently. Give your child this gift!

## **Our Year Together**

We are looking forward to learning and growing with your students! Starting a new school year is always an exciting time because it is a fresh start for everyone. This is a chance to make big plans, maybe to change things about ourselves that we haven't liked in the past. It is good to set goals, to think about where we'd like to be in the future, and what we'd like to do differently from the past. It is also important to be gentle, to enjoy the time that we have here, and to be patient and flexible. It is our hope that by the end of the year, each of us will be that much closer to being the person the God calls us to be.

## Course Descriptions



### Religion



All Middle School students are required to complete service hours as part of their Religion class. Students are expected to complete 5 hours of service each trimester and record their hours in Service Hours slideshow in their Religion Google Classroom.

Grading is based on Archdiocesan Religion Domains:

Knowledge of the Faith

Liturgical Formation

Moral Formation

Prayer

Church and Community Life

Missionary Spirit

Daily Work / Class Participation = included Self-Directed Study grade

Textbooks

*Blest Are We - RCL Benziger*

*The Catholic Children's Bible - St. Mary's Press*

### Grade 6

This year, we will spend a significant amount of time reading and discussing the Old Testament, focusing on the stories in Genesis and Exodus. These stories will help us to explore our own relationship with God; however, we will also learn about other topics throughout the year. There will be tests, prayer quizzes, projects, papers, and other assignments. By the end of the year, the stories in Genesis and Exodus will be very familiar.

### Grade 7

Through prayer, study of scriptures, reading of texts, service projects, and other opportunities, students will develop an appreciation and understanding of God's Kingdom through the New Testament and Catholic faith tradition. Students will study the connections between the Old Testament and the New. They will know selected K-8 prayers by heart.

Students will also have the opportunity to participate in the Missionary Discipleship Institute (MDI) which is supported through the Archdiocese of Seattle Office for Catholic Schools and Missions Office, and the Maryknoll Society. It is a 3 part missionary service experience specifically designed for 7th

graders which will provide a framework for students to encounter people on the margins and explore their lives, gain awareness of injustices that people on the margins face and reflect on the disturbance that those injustices cause us as people of faith, and discern, develop, and execute a missionary service response.

St. Madeleine Sophie will also plan a Mission Institute gathering with a partner school for all participating students to pray and reflect, share and celebrate what they have learned and what they have done to respond, and receive feedback from peers and experts.

## **Grade 8**

Through prayer, study of scriptures, reading of texts, service projects, and other opportunities, students will develop an appreciation and understanding of the Catholic faith tradition. Students will be able to explain the highlighted K-8 vocabulary. They will be able to identify the distinguishing features of the Trinity, the role prayer plays in personal and community life, and significance of the Eucharist, the Liturgical Year, and how God's nature is revealed in scripture. Students will learn about the beginnings of the Christian Church, how saints inspire our growth as disciples, and about the Ecumenical and Interfaith movements.

## **Reading and Writing Courses**



The Reading courses incorporate reading and writing as collaborative strategies to build the foundation for students to become independent readers, writers and thinkers. The LA classes are getting a new curriculum this year called HMH Into Literature. This book will be used at all grade levels and will aid with reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills required for success in tomorrow's world. Students will build their vocabulary and comprehension skills through the Writing grammar books.

Students will have an additional Writing class that will focus primarily on grammar, conventions and techniques in writing. Through this class, students will enhance fluency, organization, word choice, conventions, and voice. The assessments and activities in the Writing course will be graded independently in the course gradebook.

## **Grade 6**

*HMH Into Literature Grade 6, Grammar for Writing Grade 6*

*Novels covered are: Walk Two Moons, Hatchet and Out of My Mind, and literature circles will fuel our focus for this class. We will also be working on further developing our fluency and reading comprehension skills throughout the year.*

## **Grade 7**

*HMH Into Literature Grade 7, Grammar for Writing Grade 7*

Novels covered are: *The Giver*, and *The Outsiders* and *Where the Red Fern Grows*, and literature circles will fuel our focus for this class. We will also be working on further developing our fluency and reading comprehension skills throughout the year.

## **Grade 8**

*HMH Into Literature Grade 8, Grammar for Writing Grade 8*

The fantastic novels of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Night*, *Schooled*, and *a choice between Fahrenheit 451 and Animal Farm*, as well as literature circles will fuel our focus for this class as we prepare for high school. We will also be working on further developing our fluency and reading comprehension skills throughout the year.

## Grading

The Reading and Writing courses use standards-based grading to assess student progress. Students will be assessed on the following standards: Reading of Literature, Reading of Informational Texts, Written Expression, Speaking and Listening, and Written Language.

These standards will be assessed through tests, quizzes, essays, discussions, group projects, and other writing assignments.

## Retesting

Students have the option to retry mastering a standard. If the standard is assessed through a writing assignment or essay, this might require a simple revision or addition to their writing. If the standard is assessed through an exam, the student will be given an alternate assessment to retest the skills they did not master. If it is assessed through a project, this might require some revisions or additions to the product that was submitted.

## **Math**

Students in middle school are assigned math classes based on their current abilities. This allows us to meet the needs of students who need smaller classes or a differentiated pace to receive the help needed to succeed and to challenge those who excel in math. Some students are also given the chance to take high school level math courses.



Placements are coordinated by the Math Specialist, Angela Ensminger, in consultation with the classroom teachers, administration and inclusion staff. Information is gathered from many sources including:

- Previous Math grades
- Previous course levels
- Recommendations from previous teachers
- Written placement tests
- Personal interviews
- Standardized tests (STAR)

Current SMS students are assessed and placed at the end of the school year. New students are assessed during their first week of school.

MS Level S: Math Support: Focuses on helping students who need individualized math programs.

MS Level F: 6<sup>th</sup> grade Math: Focuses on fractions, decimals, integers, ratios, percents, geometry, problem solving, and statistics.

MS Level G: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math: Focuses on ratios, percents, fractions, decimals, geometry, problem solving, expressions, equations and statistics.

MS Level G2: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math: Focuses on ratios, percents, fractions, decimals, geometry, problem solving, expressions, equations and statistics plus extra preparation to move directly to Algebra 1.

MS Level H: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math: Focuses on linear equations, geometry, problem solving, expressions, equations and statistics.

HS Level: Algebra 1: Solving equations, linear functions, exponential functions, quadratic functions and problem solving.

HS Level: Geometry: Logic, proofs, lines and planes, angles, 2D and 3D figures, transformations and problem solving.

#### Textbooks

Math S: *Individualized Program*

Math F: *McGraw Hill Illustrative Math Course 1*

Math G: *McGraw Hill Illustrative Math Course 2*

Math G2: *McGraw Hill Illustrative Math Accelerated 7th*

Math H: *Big Ideas Math Blue*

*Algebra 1: Big Ideas Algebra 1*

*Geometry: Big Ideas Geometry*

## Grading

In math courses, we use standard-based grading. This means that grades will be based on how well the student meets the established standards for each assessment. This type of grading will give you more information about your child's progress in a particular area. For example, if a test covers integer operations, your child would receive separate scores for each operation skill: adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing integers in the gradebook. Final trimester scores will be an average of these separate objective scores. Effort, homework, timeliness and other important study skills will be evaluated separately.

## Calculators



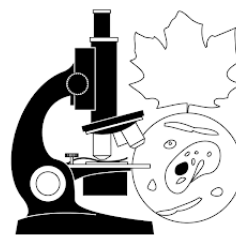
Since different high schools have different calculator requirements, we are not asking you to buy a graphing calculator. There are web resources that serve the same purpose. If your student has an iPad, they are encouraged to install the graphing app Desmos. This powerful tool is also available on the web at [desmos.com](https://www.desmos.com) for those with laptops.

All Math students must have a basic scientific calculator with trig functions (sine, cosine, tangent). We suggest the TI-30XIIS or an equivalent.

# Science

## **Science Standards Grades 6-8 - 2023-24 focus - Structure and Function & Genes and Molecular Machines**

*Structure and Function, and Genes and Molecular Machines* addresses the performance expectations, attendant science and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts deemed appropriate for grades 6 through 8 by the Next Generations Science Standards (NGSS). It allows students to develop an understanding of fundamentals of chemistry and physics.



Each lesson in this unit builds on the skills and concepts presented in previous lessons. As students progress through the unit, they take increasing responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, the unit will be taught in its entirety.

To structure and scaffold the development of students' knowledge, skills, and cognitive reasoning, these units include three primary lesson types: pre-assessment, skills and knowledge, and assessment. The pre-assessment lesson allows the teacher to assess students' preconceptions, misconceptions, and



skills. The skills and knowledge building lessons provide multiple opportunities for students to grow and learn through formative assessment. The assessment lesson includes both performance and written assessment activities that function together as a summative assessment of student learning.

### Grading

Middle School Science uses the Standards Based grading system of 4.0, 3.5, 3.0, 2.5, 2.0, 1.5 and 1.0. Practice is not included in the final grades, as we recognize that students make mistakes while they are learning the material presented. All final grades are based on Assessments that include specific rubrics for the given assignments.

### Text

*Smithsonian Education Center - Science and Technology Concepts for Middle School - Genes and Molecular Machines*

*Smithsonian Education Center - Science and Technology Concepts for Middle School - Structure and Function*

Homework and class work (student warm-ups and lab activities) will be reflected on the report card under Self-Directed Learning and Problem Solving.

## **Social Studies**

### **Grade 6**

In sixth grade, students will deepen their understanding of the world and its peoples through the study of history, geography, politics, culture, and economic systems. The focus of social studies learning in sixth grade is World History and Geography. Students begin their examination of the world by exploring the location, place, and spatial organization of the world's major regions. This will be followed by studying world history from its very earliest, prehistoric beginnings, then on to the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Asia, then on to ancient Greece and Rome. Students will work to develop higher levels of critical thinking by considering why civilizations developed where and when they did and why they declined. We will also look at modern day life in these regions and think about how the past affects the present.



Students' learning will be assessed through tests, work on projects, papers, and maps, review current events related to the part of the world we are studying, and daily assignments.

### Text

*World Studies: The Ancient world - Pearson Prentice Hall*

## **Grade 7**

We begin the year with Medieval History. We will pick up at the Fall of the Roman Empire where 6th grade Social Studies leaves off. We will continue on with the Byzantine Empire, the Ottoman Empire, then move back into Europe during the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the discovery of the “New” World.

In the New World we will study the ancient civilizations of both South and North America, followed by the impacts of the arrival of Europeans and subsequent colonization. We will end by focusing on North America, the 13 colonies and the founding of the United States. We will also include early Washington State history in our studies.

Along the way we will continue our study of geography, religion, culture and art as they relate to the various civilizations. We will make connections from the past to the present. Our work includes maps, historical writing, projects and presentations along with reading and tests.

### Texts

*World Studies: Book II* - Pearson Prentice Hall

*The American Nation* - Pearson Prentice Hall

## **Grade 8**

In 8th grade Social Studies, the year will begin with a review (from 7th grade) and continuation of the founding of the United States. We will then devote our time to Civics for the next several weeks. In Civics we will study what it means to be an American citizen and an active participant in our civic life. We will study the Constitution and Bill of Rights, including the history of its creation. We will learn about the three different branches of the federal government. We will also examine state and local government, how laws are made, how our legal system works and fundamentals of the economy. Along the way we will practice skills of reading, researching and writing informational material, reports and essays.

We will then continue on with American history - the expansion of the Republic, the growing divide over slavery, the Civil War and its aftermath. We will continue to examine the causes and consequences of major events in U.S. history and determine how these events still impact America today. We will also be studying Washington State history - first as part of the larger history of the United States, finally as a separate culminating unit.

We will read the textbook, articles, and primary sources throughout the year. Students will take tests, work on projects, create presentations, write papers, and do current events. This will help them to learn more about American government and citizenship, American history and how to study history.

### Texts

*The American Nation* - Pearson Prentice Hall

*Civics: Government and Economics in Action* – Pearson Prentice Hall

## **All Grades**

### **Grading**

Middle School Social Studies will use standards-based grading to assess student progress. There are three categories of scoring: Practice (worksheets, chapter questions and other homework assignments), Assessment Practice (pop quizzes, map reviews, short answer questions, mini-projects), and Assessments (unit exams, maps and map quizzes, current events, weekly bellwork, major projects and presentations, essays, and other writing assignments). Assessments will receive grades. Practice and Practice Assessments will be reflected on the report card under Self-Directed Learning and under Problem Solving on the report card.

Grading is based on the following standards:

- Using Knowledge to make decisions as an informed citizen
- Applies reasoning skills to researching, evaluating and discussing
- Analyze sources to understand various perspectives
- Able to identify major ideas and turning points in history
- Applies knowledge in the creation of an original product
- Explains, compares, and contrasts key concepts
- Understands basic foundation of civilization
- Engages in discussions using reasoning based in evidence
- Demonstrates and applies knowledge of geography
- Daily Work / Class Participation included Self-Directed Study grade

### **Retesting**

Students have the option to retry mastering a standard. If the standard is assessed through a writing assignment or essay, this might require a simple revision or addition to their writing. If the standard is assessed through an exam, the student will be given a limited time frame for reviewing/revisiting work prior to scheduling an alternate assessment to retest the skill they did not master. If it is assessed through a project, this might require some revisions or additions to the product that was submitted. All reassessment will be completed within a specific time frame during the trimester of the original assessment.

## Wellness and Development

The mission of the Middle School Wellness and Development course is to prepare students for college, career, and life. Health and physical education comprise extensive content areas that include, but are not limited to, the development of knowledge and skills to be physically active, eat nutritiously, access reliable health information and services, communicate effectively, and set health-enhancing goals. These skills are learned in comprehensive Wellness and Development learning environments that span from pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. The Middle School Wellness and Development course will support students' academic performance in other subject areas, play a major role in reducing the cost of health care statewide, and provide students with a global perspective on wellness. During the 2023-2024 school year, a commitment will be made to implement high-quality Wellness and Development instruction in order to:



- Lay the foundation of knowledge for students to be healthy and well throughout life.
- Support the development of healthy and productive members of society.
- Prioritize the needs of each student by using inclusive language.
- Emphasize instructional understanding and application of the Whole Child Approach.

Washington State Health Education Learning Standards (6-8):

1. Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
2. Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
8. Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

## Washington State Physical Education Learning Standards and Topics (6-8):

1. Students will demonstrate competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.
2. Students will apply knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance.
3. Students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.
4. Students will exhibit responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.
5. Students will recognize the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.

## MUSIC AND ART

Arts education addresses an essential form of human communication and provides unparalleled opportunities for exploring a multiplicity of viewpoints and modes of expression. Students develop a greater capacity for understanding not only a variety of artworks and art forms, but also the people and contexts that produce them. At the same time, students learn skills, techniques, and ways of thinking that enable them to use art to express their own perceptions, experiences, and views— while simultaneously developing confidence and fundamental skills that will serve them well in school and throughout their lives. The anchor and performance standards presented are intended to generate students who are artistically literate and have the creativity and cognitive skills required to prosper in all aspects of life and to contribute in meaningful ways to the world around them.

To achieve artistic literacy, it is vital that students not only learn about and respond thoughtfully to art, but also actively participate in making it. The arts standards provide a rational structure to help guide students' learning experiences within each arts discipline so that students develop age-appropriate knowledge and skills, practice collaboration in relevant contexts, and become proficient in the use of the tools, processes, and materials of whichever art forms and disciplines they are engaged in learning. For the disciplines of art and music, we seek to provide opportunities for all four benchmarks: **Creating** (imagining, planning, evaluating), **Presenting/Performing** (analyzing, interpreting, rehearsing, refining), **Responding**, and **Connecting**. The students express this learning through artistic design, understanding of music history, musical knowledge through singing and playing instruments (recorders, ukuleles and hand chimes) as well as participation in our Spring musical.

# Teacher Bios

**Macy Bruneel** was born and raised in the “Great White North” where she got her Honours Specialisation in French Language and Literature at the University of Western Ontario. She is now studying to get her MAT in the PACE program at the University of Portland. She has worked in both the Canadian and French education systems teaching classes ranging from kindergarten to university level. This will be Macy’s second year teaching in the United States where she will be teaching English, Religion, and French at the 6-8 grade level. In her free time, Macy enjoys learning new skills, reading, watching movies, and traveling to new places.



**Angela Ensminger** grew up in Texas and moved to Washington State in 1998. She graduated magna cum laude from Loyola University in New Orleans with a BS in Mathematics. She also holds an MS in Mathematics with a specialization in Statistics from the University of Texas at Dallas. After serving on the feasibility committee for SMS school, she went back to school to become certified to teach in Washington. This is her 15th year teaching at SMS. In her spare time, Angela loves to travel, read and play computer games.

**Riley Hole** was born and raised in Seattle with a small detour to Cheney to attend Eastern Washington University. He graduated with a BA in Social Studies Secondary Education. This is his second year teaching full time, previously, Riley has spent time substituting for every grade level from first grade to seniors in high school. When he’s not at school, he enjoys spending time with friends, golfing, bowling, watching movies, and reading.

## **Sherri McCarthy**

Sherri hails from the San Francisco Bay area, and came up to the Pacific Northwest to attend Seattle University and graduate studies at Seattle Pacific University. She’s taught everything from kindergarten to eighth grade in the academic classroom as well as visual and performing arts both in Washington and Oregon for 30 years. She’s beginning her 16th year here at St. Mad’s! She and her husband, Kevin, have five children living across the United States, and now have seven grandchildren! When not visiting family, she enjoys games, movies, quilting, music, a fine glass of wine, and cozying up with a good book!

**Marissa Shaw**

Marissa Shaw lived just north of Seattle, Washington her whole life until she moved to Portland, Oregon where she completed a Bachelor of Science degree in both Secondary Education and Spanish as well as gained endorsements in Middle School Mathematics and Special Education. She has been in classrooms from 4th grade all the way to high school. This will be Marissa's third year teaching and has loved every moment at SMS. Marissa will be the 6th grade homeroom teacher and will be teaching both science and math this year. In her free time she likes to be outside biking, hiking or swimming, spend time with her family, friends and dog, and she loves nothing more than when the sunshine peeks out.

**Faith Stacy**

Faith Stacy was born in Northern California but grew up in North Seattle. She attended the University of Washington where she completed her Bachelors of Arts. She is currently pursuing her MEd at the University of Washington with an emphasis in Applied Behavioral Analysis and her MA in Elementary Education at WGU. This will be Faith's second year teaching; previously she had been working as a Registered Behavior Technician for the past 7 years. She is very excited and looking forward to this new experience. In her free time, Faith enjoys spending time with family, friends, and her two kitties.