



**St JOHN'S**  
EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

**Middle Division  
Course of Study  
2017-18**

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## THE SCHOOL

### MISSION STATEMENT

Grounded in the rich history of diversity and excellence in Episcopal education, St. John's fosters every child's full intellectual, physical, and spiritual development. A nurturing learning environment and programs built on an ideal balance of tradition and innovation encourage our students to pursue lives of service and purpose.

### VISION STATEMENT

To provide an extraordinary STEAM education that best prepares our students for a life of leadership, character, and purpose in the 21st century.

### VALUE PROPOSITION

St. John's Episcopal School is an independent school providing a unique learning environment for children ages eight weeks through eighth grade. Remaining true to our Episcopal heritage, every child is known and encouraged through close personal attention to thrive and to lead a life of service and purpose. As an independent school, St. John's is able to make program decisions that best serve its students and community without mandate from the government or any other outside entity. Adopting a STEAM approach to teaching and learning is one such manifestation of this autonomy. STEAM integrates curricula across subject areas and enables students to collaborate on projects to create solutions to real world problems. This approach is hailed by leading educators as the best way to prepare students for high school, college, and the dynamic 21st-century workplace. Our engaging programs, coupled with our inclusive, faith-based culture, enrich each student's mind, body, and spirit, resulting in exceptional academic trajectories and exceptional individuals.

## THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### MIDDLE DIVISION PHILOSOPHY

The "middle years" are a time of great physical, emotional, cognitive, and social change for adolescents. During this critical period, our tweens and early teens will start to answer the eternal questions, "Who am I?" and "What should I do?" At St. John's, we are privileged to partner with parents in helping guide our students to answer these questions for themselves. While we know that too much structure can be stifling, not enough can be overwhelming and counterproductive. We provide a challenging, but nurturing and inclusive Christian environment in which all students can safely explore different interests and learn how to pursue lives of service and purpose.

### CURRICULUM

The St. John's Middle Division curriculum prepares students for the demands of highly selective local and regional high schools, and so it is appropriately challenging. Each Middle Division student takes eight periods of classes every day. In addition to enrichment classes, which are specific to each grade level, and a world language (Mandarin or Spanish), all students take required courses in the basic disciplines. As part of our STEAM approach to teaching and learning, all students also select a Performing Arts elective and an Advanced Elective.

#### Grade Six

Required courses:

English, history, makers, mathematics, performing arts elective (band, choir, dance, or drama), physical education/athletics, religion, science, visual arts, world language (Mandarin or Spanish), and an advanced elective.

#### Grade Seven

Required courses:

English, history, mathematics, performing arts, performing arts elective (band, choir, dance, or drama), physical education/athletics, religion, robotics, science, world language (Mandarin or Spanish), and an advanced elective.

#### Grade Eight

Required courses:

English, history, Medical Detectives, mathematics, performing arts elective (band, choir, dance, or drama), physical education/athletics, The World Ahead, science, world language (Mandarin or Spanish), and an advanced elective.

## COURSE OF STUDY

### GRADE SIX COURSE OF STUDY

#### Grade Six Required Courses

##### English Language Arts 6

**Instructors:** Mrs. Garrett and Mrs. Sarachman

**Texts:** *McDougal Littell Literature, Level 6; Grammar for Writing, Level 6; Membean* (online vocabulary program); *The Cay; Out of My Mind; Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World; Walk Two Moons; Fever 1793*

The sixth-grade Language Arts program provides students with a rich background of various genres of literature. While exploring short stories, poetry, fiction and drama students will successfully apply comprehension strategies and gain independent reading skills to further their potential as lifelong learners. Students engage in the writing process to further their understanding of concrete and abstract writing while citing textual evidence when necessary. Instruction continues in grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure within the context of students' writing.

##### History 6

**Instructor:** Mrs. Corbett

**Text:** *My World History*

History 6 is a one year course in which students explore the ancient past using essential questions to provide a framework for understanding the big picture of each ancient civilization. The goal is a broad and deep understanding of the content through stories, digital activities, games, class discussions, note-taking, and projects. Through this process, students will develop critical thinking skills to build upon as they follow the story of mankind across different regions of the world. The ultimate goal is to acquire the ability to connect lessons about ancient life to knowledge and problems of the world in which we live.

##### Math 6

**Instructor:** Mrs. Petersen

**Text:** *Saxon Math Course I*

The Math 6 curriculum provides the middle school student the opportunity to master the 6<sup>th</sup> grade math standards and start preparing the foundation for algebra. Rather than separating decimals from fractions or from geometry from pre-algebra, the course integrates and connects these concepts daily. The approach is mathematical thinking balances; relationship of math standards and the meaning of operations to the application of word problems, critical thinking and real-world applications. The concepts that are covered in Math 6 are the following; numeration with emphasis on properties of numbers and operations, decimals, fractions, percent, square roots, ratios, proportional reasoning, basic geometry, solving measurement problems, data collection and graphs, probability, order of operations,

two step equations, and problem solving with real world applications.

**Math 6 Advanced** (*By recommendation only*)

**Instructor: Mrs. Galus**

**Text:** *Saxon Course 2*

Math 6 Advanced is a course designed to combine the course requirements for Math 6 and Math 7 to allow the student to begin Course 3 as a 7<sup>th</sup> grader and Algebra 1 High School Equivalent as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader. Students will enter a course of study covering the mathematical strands of Number Operations, Algebra, Geometry, Measurement, Data Analysis and Probability.

**Resource 6** (*By recommendation only*)

**Instructor: Mrs. Small**

The Learning Resource Program is designed for Elementary and Middle Division students who would benefit from additional academic support, including organizational and study skills. Its goal is to help students with learning differences achieve and work to his or her full potential by providing support both in the classroom and in a small group setting. The Learning Resource Specialist consults/collaborates with the regular classroom teachers and parents to develop strategies, accommodations, and modifications which assist in meeting individual learning needs and facilitate academic success. To qualify for this program, a student must have a recommendation from the classroom teacher and principal. In addition, an educational evaluation, which indicates that a pull-out program would be beneficial, is required from a qualified, outside professional.

**Science 6**

**Instructor: Mrs. Muthu**

**Text:** *Prentice Hall Earth Science*

Students will explore Earth Science during their year in 6<sup>th</sup> grade science. Students will learn about the scientific method and how to implement a scientific experiment while maintaining safety in the lab setting. During our Mapping Earth's surface unit, students will learn how to interpret different types of maps and how they are used. We explore the difference between rocks and minerals and how they classified, utilized, and recreated. Students will investigate the composition of the Earth and how this affects the Earth and its crust. We will take a look at the science behind volcanoes and earthquakes and discover how they are measured.

**WORLD LANGUAGES**

**Mandarin 1A**

**Instructor: Mrs. Diamond**

**Text:** *Discovering Chinese, Volume 1*

Mandarin 1A is an introductory course in which students learn to listen, speak, read, and write simple daily conversational Chinese. Students will learn basic vocabulary and useful expressions, develop an understanding of basic grammatical structures, and acquire

communication skills to comprehend and convey information on a variety of familiar topics such as: greetings, nationalities, school, family, directions, date/time, food, and numbers 1-10,000.

### **Spanish 1A**

**Instructor: Mrs. Acosta**

**Text:** *Avancemos 1A, lessons Lección Preliminar - 3.1*

In Spanish 1A, students will begin their formal study of the Spanish language in preparation for high school. Students will build their proficiency in speaking and pronunciation, reading, writing, and listening skills. Students will learn where Spanish is spoken and focus on the Hispanic cultures of the United States, Mexico, and Puerto Rico. By the end of this course, students will be able to greet others, introduce themselves, talk about likes, describe themselves, talk about food, and talk about school. Grammar centers on regular verb conjugations in the present tense, the irregular verbs *gustar*, *ser*, *tener*, *estar*, and *ir*, noun-adjective agreement, and basic sentence syntax of statements and questions. Students entering St. John's with no previous Spanish experience will be placed in this course.

### **Grade Six Required Enrichment Courses**

Grade Six Enrichment classes meet once per week for the year.

### **Religion 6**

**Instructor: Mrs. Acosta**

**Text:** *NIV Teen Study Bible*

Sixth grade Religion is based on the teachings of the Old Testament. Students will study the Old Testament as the background for Christianity. They will be introduced to the Jewish culture and explore the rise of kingship in Israel and Judea. Students will explore the depth of human emotion in the Psalms and find relevance in their daily lives.

### **Visual Arts 6**

**Instructor: Mrs. Kelly**

The course curriculum is designed to meet the State National Standards for Art Education and follows the five strands: (Artistic Perception, Creative Expression, Historical Context, Aesthetic Valuing, and Connections with Applications.) Students experience art as both a means of expression and communication and will analyze art elements and principles of design. The course will include, but not be limited to, drawing, painting, graphic design, and block printing. Students will also learn about the development of the visual arts from several early cultures. A student Statement Reflection will be included for the Writing Strand in Visual Art.

### **Robotics 6 (Meets twice per week)**

**Instructor: Mrs. Young**

Sixth grade Automation and Robotics is an introductory course in engineering. In year one of this course, the students trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics. They learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation and

computer control systems. Students use their knowledge and skills in problem solving, teamwork, collaboration, and innovation while using a complex robotics platform to design, build, and program solutions that solve real world problems. Students will acquire knowledge and skills in engineering problem solving and explore requirements for careers in engineering.

## GRADE SEVEN COURSE OF STUDY

### Grade Seven Required Courses

#### English Language Arts 7

**Instructor: Mrs. Garrett**

**Texts:** *McDougal Littell Literature, Level 7; Grammar for Writing, Level 7; Membean* (online vocabulary program); *The Pearl; Freak the Mighty; The Outsiders*

The seventh-grade Language Arts program provides students with various genres of literature such as, but not limited to, short stories, nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and drama. While exploring all aspects of literature, students will be able to engage in open-ended discussions, create meaningful dialogue, and become lifelong learners. With an emphasis on the improvement of writing skills, students participate in meaningful discussion focused on issues that arise in the appropriate novels. Instruction continues in grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure within the context of students' writing.

#### History 7

**Instructor: Mrs. Corbett**

**Texts:** *Medieval and Early Modern Times; Crispin and the Cross of Lead*

History 7 is a one year course about world history, concentrating on medieval history and society, the Renaissance, and the early modern era in Europe, Africa, and Asia. It not only builds upon Sixth Grade's ancient history knowledge, but also teaches students that much of what they see in today's politics, cultures, traditions, and conflicts is rooted in this time period. Students analyze the rise and fall of empires, examine the influence of geography on people and places, and connect causes with effects. Knowledge and critical thinking skills with creative talents culminate in a group STEAM project of designing and producing a medieval newspaper.

#### Math 7

**Instructor: Mrs. Petersen**

**Text:** *Saxon Math Course II*

Math 7 is a Pre-Algebra class that continues with the same integrated instructional approach of concepts and focus on mathematical thinking that is part of the Math 6 curriculum. The priority of the Math 7 course is to prepare the middle school student for Algebra I success. Algebraic thinking is embedded throughout this 7<sup>th</sup> grade math curriculum and not addressed as a separate topic. The algebraic topics covered are the following: patterns, relations, functions, order of operations applied to whole numbers, integers, rational numbers, and exponents. Students build on their understanding of variables, expressions and extend them to equations and inequalities. They also analyze functions leading to graphing on the coordinate plane.

**Math 7 Advanced** *(By recommendation only)***Instructor: Mrs. Galus****Text:** *Saxon Course 3*

Math 7th Advanced is an Advanced Pre-Algebra class taught using Saxon math, a teaching method which involves learning a new concept every day and constantly reviewing older concepts. Concepts covered in this course include: number theory, integers, algebraic expressions, inequalities, equations, linear functions, geometry, exponents, radicals, and polynomials. Students who complete this course successfully will be prepared to take Algebra 1 (High School Equivalent) in 8th grade.

**Resource 7** *(By recommendation only)***Instructor: Mrs. Small**

The Learning Resource Program is designed for Elementary and Middle Division students who would benefit from additional academic support, including organizational and study skills. Its goal is to help students with learning differences achieve and work to his or her full potential by providing support both in the classroom and in a small group setting. The Learning Resource Specialist consults/collaborates with the regular classroom teachers and parents to develop strategies, accommodations, and modifications which assist in meeting individual learning needs and facilitate academic success. To qualify for this program, a student must have a recommendation from the classroom teacher and principal. In addition, an educational evaluation, which indicates that a pull-out program would be beneficial, is required from a qualified, outside professional.

**Science 7****Instructor: Mrs. Muthu****Text:** *Focus on Life Science*

In 7th grade science, students will learn basic concepts of biology. Topics include cell biology, biochemistry, genetics, and human anatomy and physiology. Students will learn about the different body systems such as the musculoskeletal system, nervous system and digestive system. We will also cover some areas of physics that relate to biology such as the properties of light and sound waves and how our eye and ear interpret them. In addition, the scientific method and the engineering design process will be used to develop problem solving and critical thinking skills during lab activities.

**WORLD LANGUAGES****Mandarin 1B****Instructor: Mrs. Diamond****Text:** *Discovering Chinese, Volume 2*

In Mandarin Chinese 1B, students will continue to learn Chinese skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students will write in Chinese characters and Pinyin. The topics that will be covered in this Level 1B course include: colors, clothing, health/body, sports and movement, animals, insects, transportation, directions, shopping, nationalities, weather/seasons, comparisons, and numbers 1-1,000,000. Students will also learn to recite

Chinese tongue-twisters, apply the correct usage of Chinese idioms in daily conversations and explain the meanings of Chinese idioms.

## **Spanish 1B**

**Instructor: Mr. Helvig**

**Text:** *Avancemos 1, Holt McDougal*

After a review of the concepts learned in Spanish 1A, students will continue to build their proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills. Culture centers on the countries of Puerto Rico, Spain, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic. By the end of Spanish 1B, students will be able to talk about clothing and shopping, restaurants and food, their home and other places around the city, sports, and events. Grammar focuses on stem changing verbs, verbs with an irregular yo form, using the comparative, direct object pronouns, and command forms. Students will demonstrate their proficiency by way of skits, short compositions or letters, and projects. Pre-requisites for entering this course: 1A, its equivalent, or placement exam.

## **Grade Seven Required Enrichment Courses**

Grade Seven Enrichment classes meet once per week for the year.

## **Performing Arts 7**

**Instructors: Mrs. Boyd and Ms. Courter**

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Performing Arts allows students to interact with a multiplicity of texts, including musical scores, Shakespeare scenes, and multimedia clips. Ensemble and small group work encourage students to collaborate with their peers on a creative level. Students actively work to decipher 2-3 octave music while simultaneously learning how to properly ring and hold a handbell. Modern twists are put on classic Shakespeare scenes to promote a deep understanding of rich text. Our year culminates in an in-depth look at a variety of careers in the performing arts, ultimately leading to a personalized study of a career of the student's choosing.

## **Religion 7**

**Instructor: Mrs. Acosta**

**Text:**

The 7th grade Bible curriculum focuses on the New Testament, specifically the work of Jesus Christ, and the life, impact, and practices of the early church. The course is structured to provide students with strategies for reading the Bible as God's grand narrative of salvation; interpreting Scripture within a historical context; interacting theologically with the text in search of contemporary relevance; and discovering and applying God's timeless truths, principles, and practices to their lives.

**Robotics 7****Instructors: Mrs. Hardy**

In year two of our Automation and Robotics course, our engineers will build upon the experiences they gained in year one. This will be a year spent building larger and more complex robotic machines. In year one, the students just touch on the idea of programming and writing code. This skill will advance greatly in year two, as every project will be required to be programmed to accomplish certain tasks that vary in complexity. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program real-world objects such as traffic lights, toll booths, line following vehicles, and robotic arms. This activity-oriented, cutting-edge program shows students how technology is used in engineering to solve everyday problems.

**Makers 7****Instructor: Mrs. Armstrong**

The 7th Grade makers class is a hands-on learning environment where students gather to create, tinker, explore, invent, and discover using a variety of tools and technology. They learn leadership, collaboration, and problem-solving skills while developing creative solutions to authentic challenges.

## GRADE EIGHT COURSE OF STUDY

### Grade Eight Required Courses

#### English Language Arts 8

**Instructor:** Mrs. Sarachman

**Texts:** *McDougal Littell Literature, Level 8; Grammar for Writing, Level 8; Membean* (online vocabulary program); *Among the Hidden; The Diary of Anne Frank* (play adaptation); *Night; Animal Farm; The Westing Game*

The eighth-grade Language Arts program provides students with the opportunities and resources to develop the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing which will enable them to participate as informed, literate members of society. The study of literature explores all genres, including short story, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and drama. Students engage in the writing process and produce a variety of writing pieces with special emphasis given to literary analysis. Instruction continues in grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure within the context of students' writing. Importance is placed on moving from the literal to the abstract in the students' critical thinking skills and in their use of language.

#### History 8

**Instructors:** Dr. Jordan and Dr. Pratt

**Text:** *Holt McDougal Middle School: United States History*

History 8 is a one year course in which students explore the history of the United States thematically and chronologically. The course begins with an overview of the major markers of US history to prepare students for their weeklong field trip to Williamsburg/Washington DC. Guided by essential questions, students will then examine four themes throughout the year. Each theme will be investigated chronologically from its beginnings to the present. The themes are: Movement, War and Diplomacy, the Role of Government, and Protest and Reform. Students also learn to evaluate original source materials and continue to develop their creative, note-taking, and critical thinking skills in various projects and class discussions. Throughout the course, students will generate original research questions and thesis statements, culminating in a multi-paragraph, persuasive research essay.

#### Algebra A

**Instructor:** Mrs. Galus

**Text:** *Saxon Course 3*

Math 8 is a one year Pre-Algebra course. The course will help solidify students' understanding in the mathematical strands of Algebraic thinking, Geometry, Measurement, Data Analysis and Probability, and Problem Solving. Algebraic thinking will include proportional thinking, patterns, functions, equations and inequalities. Geometry will include the properties and relationships of lines, angles, and polygons, as well as investigate the use of the Pythagorean Theorem. Measurement will include physical attributes, systems of measurement, and similarity. Data Analysis and Probability will include a study of data collection and representation, data set characteristics, and probability.

**Algebra 1 High School Equivalent** *(By recommendation only)***Instructor:** Mrs. Grogan**Text:** *Saxon Algebra 1*

Students will use *Saxon Algebra 1* to cover all topics in this high school equivalent, intensive first-year algebra course. The algebraic foundation is built by incorporating incremental conceptual development in each lesson, practice problems related to that concept, and review problems related to previous lessons. The higher order thinking skills use real-world applications, reasoning, and justification to make connections to math strands. Major topics include properties of real numbers, domain & range, unit conversions, probability & data analysis, algebraic equations, exponents, functions & functional notation, polynomials, inequalities, linear equations, complex fractions, systems of equations, radicals, absolute value, word problems, quadratic equations, and factoring.

**Accelerated Algebra 1 High School Equivalent** *(By recommendation only)***Instructor:** Mrs. Hardy**Texts:** *Merrill Algebra 1; Houghton Mifflin Algebra Structure and Method*

An in-depth study of Algebra 1 focusing on critical thinking and problem-solving strategies. This includes the study of linear, absolute value, quadratic, and conic word problems and graphs. Time permitting, Algebra 2 concepts such as synthetic division, logarithms, and trigonometry are introduced. The course will also cover some basic geometry strands.

**Resource 8** *(By recommendation only)***Instructor:** Mrs. Small

The Learning Resource Program is designed for Elementary and Middle Division students who would benefit from additional academic support, including organizational and study skills. Its goal is to help students with learning differences achieve and work to his or her full potential by providing support both in the classroom and in a small group setting. The Learning Resource Specialist consults/collaborates with the regular classroom teachers and parents to develop strategies, accommodations, and modifications which assist in meeting individual learning needs and facilitate academic success. To qualify for this program, a student must have a recommendation from the classroom teacher and principal. In addition, an educational evaluation, which indicates that a pull-out program would be beneficial, is required from a qualified, outside professional.

**Science 8****Instructor:** Mrs. Grogan**Text:** *Physical Science*

Utilizing *Focus on Physical Science* by Prentice Hall, along with supplemental labs and ideas from *Discovery Education*, students will learn to think and act like scientists. They will use scientific inquiry to question everyday occurrences in the world and explore and apply their knowledge through hands-on activities. The course maintains a strong emphasis on basic chemistry with extensive practice in formal lab write-ups, laboratory procedures, and graphing. Topics to be investigated include laboratory safety, metric system & conversions, scientific

inquiry & the engineering design process, force & motion, Newton's Laws, phases of matter, elements & the periodic table, atoms & bonding, chemical reactions, and acids & bases.

## **WORLD LANGUAGES**

### **Mandarin 1C**

**Instructor: Mrs. Diamond**

**Text: *Discovering Chinese, Volume 3***

In Mandarin Chinese 1C, students will learn how to listen, speak, read, and write more in depth. Students will continue to write in Chinese characters as well as Pinyin. Topics covered include: positions, professions, date and time, home, activities and hobbies, greetings and manners, school, health and body, animals and insects, food, and numbers 1- 10,000,000. Students will apply all of the grammatical skills they have learned in the previous two years in this course.

### **Spanish 1C**

**Instructor: Mr. Helvig**

**Text: *Avancemos 1, Holt McDougal (lessons 6.2-8.2)***

In Spanish 1C, students will review the concepts presented in previous courses and build proficiency and accuracy in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Culture will focus on the countries of the Dominican Republic, Argentina, and Costa Rica. Short authentic literary and journalistic readings in Spanish will be introduced. Students will be able to talk about travel and hotel arrangements, daily routines, clothing and shopping, and family. Verb forms in this course focus on the use of the past tense, reflexive verbs, the progressive, command forms, and indirect object pronouns. Students will demonstrate a command of the language by way of skits, short compositions or letters, and projects. Students who successfully complete this course will be ready for Spanish 2 or 2 Honors at the high school level. Pre-requisites for entering this course: 1B, its equivalent, or placement exam.

## **Grade Eight Required Enrichment Courses**

Grade Eight Enrichment classes meet twice per week for the year

### **Medical Detectives**

**Instructors: Mrs. Hardy and Mrs. Petersen**

Medical Detectives is a *Project Lead the Way* course in which students play the role of real-life medical detectives as they analyze genetic testing results to diagnose disease and study DNA evidence found at a 'crime scene'. They solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, investigate how to measure and interpret vital signs, and learn how the systems of the human body work together to maintain health.

**The World Ahead****Instructor: Mrs. Peebles****Text: *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens***

8<sup>th</sup> Grade students will think beyond their Cardinal world as they look to their next steps in education and beyond. Visits from local Admissions Directors, in-class research and discussions will help guide them through the high school application process. Opening their minds to a better understanding of religious practices from around the world, students will choose, research, and present a faith practice using technology skills to create professional presentations and hands-on activities, opening their worlds a bit wider and teaching respect for those who may have a faith practice which differs from their own. In the third portion of the course, we explore the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, equipping the students with tools to better succeed in the years ahead. The final part of the course will expose students to the Edward R. Murrow radio series of the 1950's, *This I Believe* – an international organization engaging people in writing and sharing essays describing the core values that guide their daily lives. Each student will finish their middle school career by composing a *This I Believe* statement.

## **ELECTIVE COURSES**

### **Advanced Electives**

All middle division students rank their preferences and, depending on the length of the course, will be assigned one Advanced Elective, which will meet three times per week for the year, or three Advanced Electives, which will meet three times per week each trimester. Priority will be given to students based on submitting the application by the deadline, seniority, behavior, and, in some course, a separate application form.

### **Farm to Table Gardening**

**Instructor: Mrs. Christian**

Making, building, and doing are all important elements in this project based gardening class! Our student gardeners become talented garden tenders, apprentice chefs, and creative craft makers. They have fun learning successful gardening techniques as they plant, manage, and harvest fresh organic fruits, vegetables, and herbs that are donated to our local Rancho Santa Margarita Food Pantry. Students also enjoy creating delicious treats from sample garden produce with the use of our own fully licensed SJES kitchen. Another favorite class activity is building simple structures and garden accessories that add to the function and appeal of any garden. St. John's "Seeds of Hope Garden" provides our Cardinals with opportunities to explore, innovate, and serve our community!

### **Introduction to Programming**

**Instructor: Mrs. Galus**

Introduction to Programming is a trimester elective that teaches what it means to "program." Students will learn the basics of computer science, programming, and computational thinking with Karel the Dog. Students focus on solving problems using code by moving Karel the Dog around a grid and giving him tasks to complete. Students give commands to the dog to practice foundational concepts and solve programming puzzles. For those students who do well with Karel, they will be able to move forward into programming in html.

### **Makers/Robotics**

**Instructor: Mrs. Hardy**

Makers/Robotics is an engineering course featuring VEX IQ Robotics for the first half of the school year. Students will create, program and automate robots to complete a challenge. Then the students will compete with other schools at VEX IQ tournaments. The students will also complete a STEM project in conjunction with the competition. During the remaining portion of the year the students will be immersed in Makers. Students will use the engineering design method to create and test prototypes using equipment in our Maker's lab, culminating in a meaningful project/creation.

**Passion Projects****Instructor: Mrs. Sjostedt**

Find your passion! Come pursue a passion project of your own choosing. After you propose a project to be your focus, you will focus on information literacy skills to research, investigate, experiment, and research some more! Ultimately, you will create something to showcase your research: an experiment, a video, a computer program, a web page. At the end of the course, you will have the opportunity to share your passion and your creation with the St. John's community.

**PE Tech (Open to 8th Grade Only)****Instructor: Mr. Winn**

Assist Coach Winn in various athletic department duties such as painting the field, organizing equipment, inventory management, and field set-up. Students interested in being a "tech" for Coach Winn, must submit an application to the Middle Division office. Candidates selected to be techs will be notified.

**Poetry Jam****Instructor: Mrs. Garrett**

This Advanced Elective course will begin with a basic overview of poetry. Throughout the year students will recite famous poets such as Shel Silverstein, Emily Dickinson, Mother Goose, Jack Prelutsky and many more. Students will investigate rhyme, rhythm, metaphors, and the origins of poetry before becoming poets themselves. By the end of the year, each student will perform a Poetry Jam Session using their own poetry in front of their peers either in person or in the form of multimedia. Students will be using iPads, the green screen, and the Video Production Studio to generate their own projects.

**Television Production Studio****Instructor: Mrs. Armstrong**

The video production course is designed to introduce students to digital video production, including operating studio and portable cameras, controlling lighting equipment, and capturing audio. Students will identify the duties of each position in the control room, on the studio floor, and of the news package/interview crew. Additionally, they will learn pre-production planning, quality filming, and post-production skills including the principles of editing, assembling, and producing a scripted TV show. Resources for the course include Student Television Network Online Academy, CTE Online Video Production Model, and PBS Newshour Student Reporting Lab.

**Visual Arts****Instructor: Mrs. Kelly**

This course is designed for students to develop better awareness and appreciations of the Visual Arts. Students will have the opportunity to broaden their skills and knowledge through various forms and media of art. Some experiences will include the study of masks, Pop Art, optical illusions, painting in the style of Cubism and more STEAM-related projects.

**World Drumming****Instructors: Mrs. Boyd and Ms. Courter**

World drumming will give students an incredible hands-on musical experience. Students will play a variety of drums and other percussion instruments and, as an ensemble, experience the rhythms of Africa, Brazil, USA and the Caribbean. After learning basic drumming techniques, students will learn how to improvise and communicate with their peers in a non-verbal manner. This class will build important communication and listening skills, cooperative teamwork and respect for others while jamming out on some drums!

**Yearbook****Instructor: Mrs. Sarachman**

This course is designed to help students develop skills in yearbook production. Students will be guided through the basic skills of page design, publishing techniques, copywriting, and editing while producing a creative, innovative yearbook which records school memories and events. Participants gain useful, real world skills in time management, teamwork, and design principles.

## **Performing Arts Electives**

Students rank their preferences and will be assigned one Performing Arts Elective, which will meet three times per week for the year. Performing Arts Elective classes meet three times per week for the year, one period of which will be all grades together.

### **Band**

#### **Instructor: Ms. Courter**

The Middle Division band program fosters a deeper understanding of musical instruments while learning key musical terms and symbols in order to promote music literacy. Students play a variety of multicultural styles and genres ranging from classical to contemporary. Students are provided with ample opportunities to develop their skillset of a particular instrument, including a Christmas Concert and Spring Concert. Yearly band trips have included a trip to Disneyland to participate in a mock sound-scoring session.

### **Choir**

#### **Instructor: Mrs. Boyd**

The St. John's Middle Division choir program expands upon the foundations of music literacy and vocal technique that were developed during students' elementary education. Students sing a wide variety of vocal repertoire; ranging from early classical pieces to popular standards and everything in between. A strong emphasis is placed on healthy vocal production, proper breathing, and performance skills. Students also learn sight-singing techniques, how to read music, and are given the opportunity to sing in several different languages. As the year progresses, students become increasingly familiar with music symbols, terms, and vocabulary. They also participate in the Middle Division Christmas and spring concerts and go to choir festival in May, where they are critiqued by experienced choral directors before heading to a southern California theme park for a day of fun.

### **Dance**

#### **Instructor: Ms. Williams**

This dance course introduces students to rules, procedures, etiquette and vocabulary required for safe and effective participation in dance. The course provides a sequential introduction to dance techniques such as warm up, cool down, conditioning, stretching, and injury prevention. Students are introduced to a variety of dance styles including modern, jazz, and world dance. Students design, improvise, and perform movement sequences, solve movement problems and produce choreographic projects.

### **Drama**

#### **Instructor: Mr. Garaud**

This drama class will introduce students to both scripted and non-scripted theater art forms. Students will study the basics of acting, scene and character analysis, audition preparation, and many more interesting parts of scripted theater. This introduction to theater will also continue in the non-scripted part of the class, where the students will learn about stage presence, posture, projection, space-work, and story-telling through "improv" games and other interactive activities. All students will learn through direct participation, and they will showcase their skills in various performances throughout the year.

## **CLUBS**

Clubs meet twice per week for the year and are open to all middle division students. Some clubs require a special application process.

### **Advanced Drawing**

**Sponsor: Mrs. Kelly**

In this club, students will improve and expand their drawing skills, while broadening their ideas of what defines drawing. The students will refine the technical and conceptual skills that are critical to the drawing process, while also developing communication and critical thinking skills by using pencils, colored pencils, water-soluble colored pencils, scratchboard and ink.

### **Book Club**

**Sponsor: Mrs. Sjostedt**

Book Club is a place for students who love to read and talk about books. In our weekly meetings, students will focus on a variety of genres, book talks, reading and discussing reviews, and publishing their reviews online. Continuing the tradition of the Book Club which began with the Class of 2014, our activity group will also provide books to the needy.

### **Broadway Bound**

**Sponsor: Mrs. Boyd**

Broadway Bound is a trimester-long club where we will dive into the theatrical world of Broadway. Students will have a chance to work on scenes together from both musicals and straight-acting plays. They will participate in improvisation and acting games, have a chance to write and perform their own scenes, and will watch and analyze movie musicals.

### **Octothorpes (Teacher recommendation and invitation required)**

**Sponsor: Mrs. Galus**

The Octothorpes are members of St. John's Math Team. Group membership is by invitation only and based on test scores and teacher recommendation. The competition team participates in the UCI MathCounts Competition and the Sage Hill Math Invitational. This club will meet at lunchtimes to be determined.

### **PALs – Peer Assistance and Leadership (Selection process required)**

**Sponsor: Mrs. Garrett**

The mission of the Peer Assistance and Leadership (PAL) program is to enable young people to use their potential to make a difference in their own lives, those of their peers, and in their schools and communities. PAL nurtures and builds capacity to help youth increase resiliency and build protective factors to help them achieve school and social successes which lead to a productive life. As a versatile club, PAL creates environments in which students participate in productive pursuits with peers using decision making and resiliency building. PAL students also learn to adapt the power of peer pressure to influence others positively while building up the community of the school.

**Makers/Robotics Club****Sponsor: Mrs. Hardy**

This club will combine Makers with Robotics using the engineering design process. Students will work in teams innovating, creating and testing prototypes in response to design challenges. The students will use a mixture of next generation tools and shop tools such as: 3d printers, laser cutters, vacuum forms, robotics kits, circuit boards (Galileo, raspberry pi) as well as saws, hammers, and dremels.

**Speech and Debate Club****Sponsor: Mr. Winn**

Beyond being exciting and fun, speech and debate provides the avenue for students to develop critical, lifelong communication skills. Participation in speech will teach kids how to articulate and support their own opinions while building self-confidence to speak in front of an audience. Debate requires an ability to intellectually understand complex issues, research and gather information on an issue, construct arguments, think clearly and critically, speak persuasively, and refine the art of impromptu speaking.

**Student Council (Election process required)****Sponsor: Mrs. Petersen**

The SJES Student Council is the voice of the Middle Division Student Body. Members (elected positions) develop their leadership skills and learn how to make a positive impact at school and in the community by leading various service projects throughout the school year. Student Council promotes school spirit, good citizenship, a forum for student expression, and is the student voice to the faculty and staff. Other benefits of being involved include: gain experience in public speaking, an opportunity to meet new friends, and work with a wide variety of people.

**TV Production Club****Sponsor: Mrs. Armstrong**

In the TV Production Club, students will learn the fundamentals of pre-production, production and post production to generate quality multimedia projects for the school. The club will primarily focus on creativity, leadership and teamwork to generate unique video segments. Resources for the club include Student Television Network Online Academy, CTE Online Video Production Model, and PBS Newshour Student Reporting Lab.