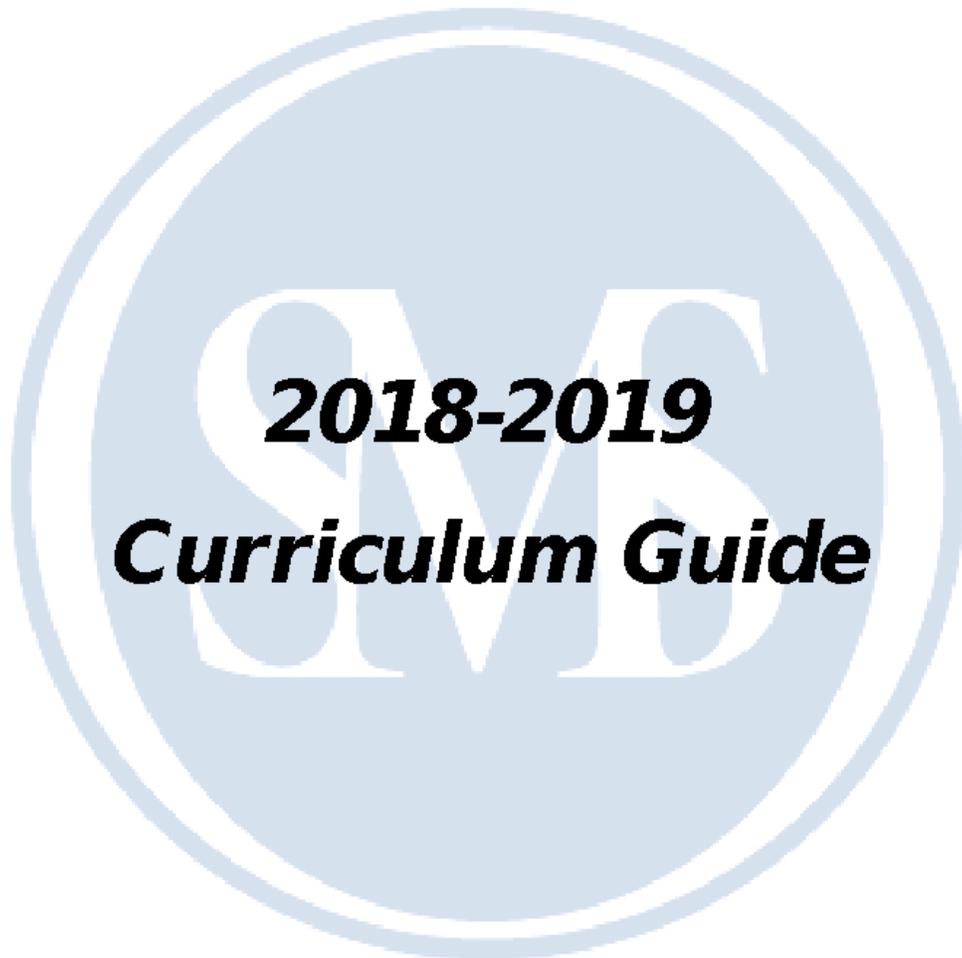




ST. MARY'S SPRINGS

Academy

† Middle School †



2018-2019

Curriculum Guide

ST. MARY'S SPRINGS ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL

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INTRODUCTION

We are proud to offer the SMSA curriculum guide for the 2018-2019 school year. Please review this document carefully. As always, we are available to answer your questions and assist you in planning for your student's future.

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MISSION

St. Mary's Springs Academy, rooted in Christ's teaching, academic excellence, and service to Church and community, prepares students to meet global challenges and become leaders for tomorrow.

VISION

St. Mary's Springs Academy inspires students to live a purpose-filled life through inclusion in Catholic community, development of God-given strengths and a commitment to individualized academic achievement.

The SMSA Core Value Statements: “The Ledger Way”

In 2017, our SMSA community began developing our core value statement which define the unique qualities, values, and principles that our students and community embody. Together, students and staff determined the values that define what it means to be a member of the St. Mary’s Springs Academy, to follow the “The Ledger Way.”

Faith

We live our Catholic faith in both word and action. We are disciples of Jesus Christ, called to be living examples of both faith and stewardship.

Learning

We are committed to excellence in education through personal growth and achievement. We strive to be inquisitive critical thinkers, problem solvers, and team players.

Leadership

We are devoted to a life of servant leadership, going above and beyond to serve the school, parish, community and world. We are responsible citizens and Christians committed to living life, promoting peace, and fostering social justice.

Respect

We treat God’s people with respect and kindness at all times. We acknowledge our differences, offering compassion, empathy and tolerance.

Responsibility

We lead by example and are accountable for our actions, even when it's difficult. We affirm sound judgement and trustworthy behavior.

Community

We foster a welcoming, supportive, engaging and collaborative community that works in unison to overcome challenges and celebrate success. Together we honor our traditions and work in partnership to advance our institution.

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This guide has been designed to provide an overview of courses offered at St. Mary's Springs Academy Middle School. Students and parents may use this information to plan a course of study that will allow the best possible preparation for high school education and career pursuits.

Consideration needs to be given to individual abilities, personal goals and objectives, and extra-curricular involvement when developing a plan for success. Please consult with teachers, school counselors, and administration for additional assistance in the course selection and planning process.

Our middle school curriculum is based on the state standards and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Standards and Curriculum Guidelines. Students who complete the SMSA middle school curriculum are well prepared to successfully attend any high school in the state or nation.

POLICY ON STUDENT ACCEPTANCE AND ENROLLMENT

St. Mary's Springs Academy Middle School accepts students regardless of race, religion, creed, or national origin who present the necessary qualifications for participating in and achieving success both behaviorally and intellectually in the total school program that is offered.

Students who are not Catholic must be willing to be present at faith-based activities and fulfill the Religion class requirement for middle school.

PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION

New and current families with students new to the system must submit an online application to begin the enrollment process. More information is found on www.smsacademy.org/applynow.

Current families will find the application found in their Skyward account under their family access. Current families can add their new child to the registration form that is mailed to every current family once the online application has been completed and the new student is accepted to St. Mary's Springs Academy.

Final decisions regarding student evaluation and acceptance are reserved to St. Mary's Springs Academy Administration Team.

As part of the admission process, new students are required to submit records including:

- Past year's Report Cards
- Standardized Test Scores
- Attendance Records
- Individualized Education Plans/Service Plans and/or testing referral

Students may be required to complete a placement test if standardized test scores from previous schools are unavailable. Students will be accepted based on student's reason for attending SMSA, what the student brings to SMSA, and academic and behavior records.

Upon acceptance, the registration form and fee must be returned to St. Mary's Springs Academy to complete the registration process.

Transfer students may be admitted to St. Mary's Springs Academy on a case by case basis, depending on the reason for transfer and time of year enrollment is being sought.

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

ENGLISH and LANGUAGE ARTS

The English curriculum provides courses which guide students in attaining skills in reading comprehension, English usage, spelling and grammar, and writing skills. A variety of literary styles and authors form the basis for each grade level of instruction.

Grade 6 Readers and Writers Workshop/English Language Arts

The emphasis in sixth grade is on students' comprehension of complex narrative and informational texts. Students will read two or more texts on a topic and use a variety of comprehension strategies to compare, contrast, and integrate information from the texts. They will analyze how structure, point of view, visual elements, and figurative language contribute to the meaning or tone of texts. As their analysis skills deepen, students should be able to identify key individual events and details and use them as evidence to support their analysis and to distinguish claims that are supported by an author from those that are not. They will learn academic language and domain-specific vocabulary through their reading and use it in their writing and speaking. In their writing, students should gain familiarity with organizational features, and a clear style of writing appropriate for an identified purpose and audience, and gain experience with the stages of the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing). Students will also write multi-paragraph texts with a central idea or theme, relevant supporting details, precise words and visual imagery, and a conclusion.

Grade 7 Readers and Writers Workshop/English Language Arts

These classes study various genres of literature, including poems, short stories, plays, and books the students choose to read. Close-reading strategies are modeled by the teacher and practiced by the students. Course work involves critical reading skills to determine theme, elements, central ideas, word meanings, author's purpose, and point of view, alongside nonfiction reading skills that encompass comparing, contrasting, and tracing and evaluating an argument. Providing textual evidence is at the heart of the program during reading and developing clear and cohesive writing (essays: narrative, literary analysis, and argumentative). Developing speaking and listening skills is stressed in table and whole-class discussions.

Grade 8 Readers and Writers Workshop/English Language Arts

During the eighth-grade year, students begin to look forward to high school. Grade 8 standards ready students for the challenges and transition to come. Students begin to study the history and the development of English vocabulary. They continue to read a variety of grade-level-appropriate classic and contemporary literature, nonfiction, poetry, and plays, and they begin to compare and contrast the different types of writing as well as different perspectives on similar topics or themes. They evaluate the logic of informational texts and analyze how literature reflects the backgrounds, attitudes, and beliefs of the authors. They not only write or deliver research reports, but also conduct their own research. They use the conventions of Standard English correctly. They deliver a variety of types of presentations and effectively respond to questions and concerns from the audience.

MATHEMATICS

The mathematics curriculum is designed to provide for the needs and abilities of all students. Placement in middle school math course is based upon previous math courses completed, grades earned, testing results, and teacher recommendations about the student's motivation and demonstration of ability.

Math 6: Course 1 Mathematics

Students focus on five areas (1) connecting ratio and rate to solve whole number problems and word problems; (2) broaden understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of positive and negative rational numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; (4) advancing understanding of statistical thinking; and (5) solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface, area, and volume.

Math 7: Course 2 Mathematics

Course 2 Mathematics is based on the Grade 7 Common Core State Standards and builds on the concepts of the previous year. The Common Core State Standards in Grades K-7 ensure that students have a strong foundation to begin study of algebra in Grade 8. Students are expected to achieve fluency with operations with most rational numbers by the end of Grade 7. The four main areas of emphasis in Grade 7 are (1) proportional relationships and applying those relationships to solve problems; (2) operations with rational numbers; (3) scale drawings and informal geometric constructions; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

Math 8: Course 3 Mathematics

Course 3 Mathematics is based on the Grade 8 Common Core State Standards and builds on the concepts of the previous year. The Common Core State Standards for Grade 8 are algebra-focused. Students focus on three areas (1) expressions and equations, including systems of linear equations; (2) functions to describe quantitative relationships; and (3) analysis of two- and three-dimensional space and figures and the Pythagorean Theorem. At the end of Course 3, students are well prepared for a high school algebra course.

Students in middle school may be placed in high school math courses depending on the above considerations. For a detailed explanation of high school math courses please refer to the high school curriculum guide.

SCIENCE

Courses are designed to emphasize the scientific processes of observing, inferring, measuring, formulating and testing hypotheses, collecting and analyzing data, and problem-solving. The laboratory experience is an essential part of the curriculum.

Grade 6: Earth Science

The Earth science curriculum builds on the natural curiosity of students. The topics focus on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). By connecting students to the beauty of geological history, the diverse landforms around Wisconsin and the world, the nature of the sea and air, and the newest discoveries about our universe, the curriculum gives students an opportunity to relate to their everyday world.

Students will explore topics such as the fundamentals of geology, oceanography, meteorology, and astronomy; earth's minerals and rocks; earth's interior; plate tectonics, earthquakes, volcanoes, and the movements of continents; geology and the fossil record; the oceans and the atmosphere; and the solar system and the universe.

Grade 7: Life Science

Throughout the year, 7th grade students will use appropriate reference materials to support scientific understanding, plan and carry out a clear understanding of integrated science curriculum in the life science branch.

The topics that are covered focus on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) which include: 1.) Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics, 2.) From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes, 3.) Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits, 4.) Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity. Students also participate in Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Medical Detectives program which is a hands-on approach for students to learn more about the human body.

Grade 8: Physical Science

Students in 8th grade will use appropriate reference materials to support scientific understanding, plan and carry out a clear understanding of integrated science curriculum in the physical science branch.

The topics that are covered focus on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) which include: 1.) Matter and Its Interactions, 2.) Motion and Stability: Forces and Interactions, 3.) Energy, 4.) Waves and Their Application in Technologies for Information Transfer. Students also participate in Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Magic of Electrons program which is a hands-on approach for students to learn more about electricity and electrical circuits using Snap Circuit Kits.

Grades 6-8: STEM

STEM is a curriculum based on four specific disciplines: science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Students utilize skills that involve creativity, inquiry, engineering and designing, critical thinking and collaboration while engaged in various hands-on activities that emphasize the four specific disciplines.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social studies courses place emphasis on history, geography, government and the nature of our society and the individual. Students are given a sense of their role and responsibility as citizens of our nation in an ever-changing and complex world. The curriculum provides students with a framework of knowledge relating to the events that shaped humankind as well as the development of political, economic and social institutions.

Social Studies 6: History Alive! The Ancient World

Using an online program that is aligned to the state standards, students are engaged in a multi-faceted learning experience that incorporates note taking, group work, and step-by-step discovery. Students are introduced to the beginnings of the human story as they explore the great early civilizations of Egypt and the Near East, India, China, Greece and Rome. In addition, students watch a 10-minute digital news show, CNN10, to learn about global news.

Social Studies 7: Geography

Geography is a broad discipline that seeks understanding of Earth and its human and natural complexities. Not merely where objects are, but also how they have changed and come to be. Broken down into 3 themes Map the World, Learn the World, and Discover the World, students will interact with the world and geography multiple of ways. Students will learn about the cultures, issues, geographical features, and so much more while continuing to develop note taking, writing, and study skills.

Social Studies 8: U.S. History

The 8th grade U.S. History class is designed to introduce students into the history of United States from Native American to present day. The class is broken down into 3 main aspects: The People of America, The Constitution, and Conflict. Student start out learning the history of America and its people up to the Revolutionary War. Then we discuss the formation of our government from the declaration of independence, our constitution, to the major legal issues that have shaped our country. Lastly, students will learn about the major conflicts America has faced during its short 240 years as a country.

RELIGION

Religion curriculum develops and strengthens each students' faith life. Students focus on a wide range of religious teachings and issues, as their personal struggles and joys of growing into Christian adulthood, are nurtured in an atmosphere, which facilitates this growth.

6th Grade Religion

Students deepen their understanding of the Catholic Church and what it means to be a Christian by examining the basics of Catholic teaching and practice. They explore Sacred Scripture, and learn how to read the books of the Bible, with a focus on looking at some of the major stories in Scripture. Through reading the Bible and learning Christian history, students will come to understand the scope of the history of Israel and the Church.

7th Grade Religion

Many children these days don't see the value of having faith. In the 7th grade they will not only get an understanding of where to begin a faith life, but also be given a chance to form a relationship with Christ and His Church. The students will explore their bibles for the first time, memorize well known versus, explore church history, and discover how their faith pertains to them every day of their lives. They will also understand why Mary is important in our Catholic faith. Lastly, they will be introduced to the Theology of the Body.

8th Grade Religion

Students will deepen their relationship with Christ this year. They will be shown many forms of prayer, why the sacrament of reconciliation is vitally important to their relationship with Christ, and why we should mimic the Saints in our lives. 8th grade also dives into the subject of how to defend your faith. Students take an intimate look at their lives and search for things that distract them from God. They also are asked the age old question, "Who is God?". Next, they will get an understanding of who Jesus actually is and how to form a relationship with Him. Lastly, they will continue to step into St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body. Here they will learn that our bodies are not only extremely holy, but help to point us to Heaven.

WORLD LANGUAGE

The course offering in the World Language Department for middle school is chosen by students who have an interest in speaking, reading, writing and understanding another language. Language opportunities are offered in German and Spanish at the middle school level for 8th grade.

Spanish – 8th Grade

Students will begin to explore the Spanish language, learning some basic vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation skills. They will explore the culture of the Spanish speaking world, including food, history, and holidays. This class is a fun introduction for those just beginning their language learning journey.

German – 8th Grade

This is a basic introduction to German language and culture. Students will learn rudimentary skills such as greetings and farewells, talking about their day and the weather, and describing people and families.

Students will compare and contrast German life and culture with American life and culture, including topics such as foods and holidays.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION and HEALTH

Physical education and health are necessary components in an education program reflecting the total development of the individual. Health curriculum complements physical education courses as the student is assisted in addressing the concept of total wellness.

Physical Education/Health: 6-8th Grades

Our Physical Education class is a class for all students to grow and develop in their competency and understanding of their motor skills, movement skills, movement concepts, principles, strategies and tactics. Through the use of different types of games and activities, the students will participate regularly and at a health enhancing level. Many of these games and activities will also help the students to grow and develop their skills of personal and social responsibility, such as remembering their gym clothes, sharing, working together and good sportsmanship. Finally, we hope that the students will learn to value physical activity so that they will continue to be lifelong movers.

FINE ARTS – ART AND MUSIC/BAND

The art and music curricula provide students with a creative outlet for personal expression

Art: Grade 6 - 8:

Art is designed for all students to continue to develop a deeper understanding of the Elements of Art and Principles of Design. In addition, students will also continue the development of various art skills and techniques. Throughout the year, students will participate in a variety of art activities, including Art Production, Art Criticism and Critiquing and exploring Art History. Students will also be given the opportunity to experience a wide variety of art media and develop the techniques in their own artwork.

Chorus: 6-8th grade

Chorus for 6th - 8th graders is a class for all students to grow in their vocal skills, regardless of their natural ability. Through the use of a wide variety of choral works, students will expand their knowledge of the techniques of singing, practice music theory and study music history. Other areas that will be explored are harmony singing, sight-singing and ear training. Students will have at least two choral concerts to demonstrate their learning, plus other performance opportunities with Solo & Ensemble. Students are graded on daily participation, written quizzes and tests, and final performances at the concerts.

Exploring Music: Grade 7

Exploring Music 7 is designed for students interested in the basics of music without the pressure of school concert performances. Students learn the basics of music theory and music history and experience music performance in class. Students will explore instruments such as xylophones, percussion and the ukulele and discuss pop music and social issues, the science of sound and what makes music good.

Exploring Music Grade 8

Exploring Music is for students who are interested in the basics of music without concerts or the daily practice of music. Students will continue to learn the basics of music theory and music history to enable them to experience music performance in class. Instruments such as xylophones, percussion and the ukulele will be explored. Discussions of pop music and social issues, the science of sound and what makes music good may also be explored.

Intermediate Band (6th Grade)

Students in Intermediate Band continues their development of playing skills and techniques learned the year prior, including dynamics, rhythms, musicality, tone, tuning, and music theory. In addition to daily ensemble rehearsal, students have weekly small group lessons, combining both rehearsal techniques for large band, small group, and individual practice. Students perform in concerts twice per year, as well as having the option of performing for district and state Solo and Ensemble Festival.

Concert Band (7th - 8th Grade)

Concert band students have played a minimum of two years on their instrument. Students in this class focus on refining and expanding on skills learned previously; including sight-reading, phrasing and articulation, dynamics, music history, in-depth music theory, musicality, dynamics, timbre, and tone. In addition to daily large group rehearsal, students practice in weekly small group lessons to further refine individual playing, and improve themselves both individually and within a group. Students perform in two concerts throughout the year, as well as participating in district and state Solo and Ensemble Festival and other clinics.

SUPPLEMENTAL COURSES AND OFFERINGS

The following are additional courses and offerings to all middle school students

Guidance Class 6-8th Grade

As a part of the comprehensive school counseling program at SMSA, Guidance classes are offered to all students throughout the academic year instructed by the middle school counselor. Guidance classes cover topics such as bullying/harassment, self-esteem building, problem solving, social skills, and career and college exploration.

Counseling Services

With attention focused on the personal development of each student, the counseling department at SMSA directs its efforts facilitating individual growth and development. The counseling department helps the students to be more independent in his/her judgments and decisions by assisting in academic, career and social/emotional development. In working toward these objectives, the counseling department consults with students, parents and guardians, teachers, administrators and/or community resources that provide services to individual students. The role of the counselor is to assist with three primary areas of student life: academic, college and career planning, and social emotional growth. The counselor assists with these three primary areas of student life through individual conferences, small group meetings and classroom presentations and Guidance classes.

Student Services

The Student Services Department provides support and resources for qualifying students who need reinforcement in study skills or who have identified learning concerns. Students use the Student Success Suite to complete homework, take tests and receive individual assistance in a small classroom setting. In addition, the Director of Student Services and Support Specialists coordinate classroom accommodations for students who have been medically diagnosed or educationally identified as a student with learning needs. Accommodations are provided based on professional assessment information and established through a Service Plan, 504 Plan or Student Accommodation Plan. Enrollment is determined by the Student Services Team in partnership with classroom teachers and parents/guardians. Enrollment is reviewed annually or as needed.

Please contact the 6-12 Director of Student Services for more information.