



PROGRAM OF STUDIES

2026-2027



PROGRAM OF STUDIES
2026-2027

PUBLISHED BY
SAINT DAVID'S SCHOOL
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

MISSION

The mission of Saint David's School is to educate boys to fulfill their potential through rigorous academic pursuit, deliberate moral introspection, and critical analysis of ideas and issues. The classical tradition of balance has guided the school since its beginning. Saint David's boys are scholarly and creative, aesthetic and athletic. The school seeks to engender intellectual curiosity, appreciation for the arts, skill and sportsmanship in athletics, and an enduring love of learning.

Founded as an independent school in 1951 by nine Catholic families, Saint David's remains committed to the teachings of the Church. Our community includes boys and faculty of many religious backgrounds. Boys are taught to respect and learn from all religious traditions, to recognize their own capacity for spiritual experience, and to develop strong moral values.

Saint David's is a true community, known for its sense of family, compassion and kindness. The tradition of the school affirms that elementary education is important in its own right and should always be compelling, joyful, and designed to serve self, others, and God.

Mastery of academic skills and a strong sense of self-confidence enable our graduates to excel at the secondary school level and beyond. Saint David's boys distinguish themselves as young men of ideas and ideals, action and reflection, who fulfill the aspirations of the Founders "... that they be good men."

COMMUNITY AND INCLUSION

In addition to our rigorous academic program and in keeping with our founding faith's spiritual traditions, Saint David's is known for its sense of family, compassion, and kindness. Our community includes boys and faculty that reflect the cultural, ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, and religious diversity of New York City. At Saint David's, we believe that being curious without prejudice and without bias is essential to a well-informed, educated young man. Our boys develop cultural competency as they are taught to respect and embrace difference in all its myriad manifestations. Boys broaden their perspectives as they learn from diverse traditions, creeds, and ways of life – fundamental in fulfilling the aspiration of the Founders "that they be good men."

CONTENTS

LOWER SCHOOL

Pre-Kindergarten	3
Alpha	5
Kindergarten	6
Omega	8
First Grade	10
Second Grade	12
Third Grade	15

UPPER SCHOOL

Fourth Grade	20
Fifth Grade	23
Sixth Grade	26
Seventh Grade	30
Eighth Grade	34

LOWER SCHOOL

THE LOWER SCHOOL provides a structured, challenging, and dynamic academic environment in which each boy develops a strong sense of confidence in himself as a learner. In the pre-primary grades, the curriculum introduces a vast array of topics and disciplines that aim to foster a love of discovery while cultivating the skills necessary for continued academic achievement. By following the Golden Rule, boys learn to work and play together while taking their first steps toward independence.

Language arts and mathematics form the core of the academic curriculum. Taught in small instructional groups that progress at an appropriate pace, reading classes balance direct instruction with group and individualized work. Each boy is challenged to master carefully sequenced concepts and skills at every level. The reading program is enhanced by stimulating projects such as Book-O-Ween, where third grade students dress up as characters from their favorite books. Written composition is integral to the program and developing writers learn to express themselves in clear, well-organized sentences and paragraphs.

Incorporating formal listening and speaking instruction, language arts in the Lower School is a comprehensive approach to early literacy development. Homeroom teachers read aloud daily, sharing with the boys the beauty and excitement of classic children's literature. Poetry recitation is a long-standing tradition at Saint David's School. Each week, first through third graders recite classic and beloved poems in front of their classmates and teachers.

A small-group format in mathematics allows each boy to proceed at a pace appropriate for his level. Teachers emphasize the four basic operations, as well as

computation skills and the automatic recall of math facts. Along with math lab manipulatives and on-line games, fundamental math skills and concepts are introduced, reinforced, and mastered. Hands-on investigations allow boys to practice and apply skills in novel problem-solving situations as they dig into questions such as *Can you determine the number of people on a bus without counting?* or *How much space do we need to display our class's artwork?*

Interdisciplinary STEAM (science, technology, engineering, artistic design, and mathematics) classes take Lower School students on project-based learning adventures. These range from programming Bee Bots to follow a designated route, to designing three-dimensional cardboard structures outfitted with lighting and other conveniences, to engineering a mini-vehicle to race down a fifty-foot track in *The Nerdy Derby* competition. Through these units, boys have the opportunity to work together to solve problems they deem meaningful and relevant. They see that such work is iterative in nature, requiring multiple attempts and revisions before success.

Each day, Lower School boys are fully immersed in the Spanish language, and experience cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Students acquire Spanish speaking and listening skills through interactive language activities that parallel what the boys are learning in other subjects, deepening their understanding of multiple disciplines.

Beginning in pre-kindergarten, boys take field trips to explore the surrounding community and learn from the wealth of resources in our city. Lower School boys enjoy a dedicated library designed specifically for the needs of boys, with an exceptional collection of classic works and newly published volumes, designated story time space, and a variety of seating options. Boys participate in a daily sports period where they exercise and have fun while developing physical skills, teamwork, and good sportsmanship. Throughout the year, special events connect the Lower School boys with their older schoolmates as well as with their peers from neighboring schools.

Participating in community outreach begins early at Saint David's. In addition to bringing the school's Judeo Christian values to life, reaching out helps the boys to appreciate the differences and unique needs of others. During the fall and winter, second graders visit Manhattan Childrens Center, a school on the Upper

West Side that provides education and treatment for children with autism spectrum disorder and related disorders. Through working and playing with children who experience the world differently than they do, boys develop a deeper sense of empathy and an understanding that while people may differ in some ways, at the core, we are all the same.

Partnership with families is a prized component of our community approach to learning. Lower School parents feel connected to school life through homeroom visits, Curriculum Nights, class coffees, Parents Association meetings, topical discussion groups, and parent-teacher conferences. Teachers aim to be proactive and respond promptly to parent questions or concerns.

The strength of the Lower School program lies in its teachers. Lower School teachers are dedicated to developing the competence, critical thinking, self-esteem, creativity, and moral compass of each boy. The ethical and moral dimension is addressed through chapel, which begins in the first grade. As a result of their teachers' devotion, Saint David's boys treasure the school experience and are well on their way to becoming enthusiastic lifelong learners.

By the end of the third grade, the last year of Lower School, Saint David's boys have mastered fundamental skills. They can read for comprehension and identify the main idea, make inferences, and track character development. They can write a strong descriptive paragraph and a beginning research paper. They can add, subtract, multiply, and divide, and understand concepts of time, money, and measurement. They have strong study skills and are comfortable using our academic planner. They collaborate to solve problems. They have interacted with neighborhood schools, and have developed a sense of themselves as members of a wider community who share responsibility for its strength. Over the course of their Lower School years, they have discovered the foundations of what it means to be good men.

PRE-PRIMARY

Pre-Primary boys have fertile imaginations. They are curious about the world around them and ask thoughtful questions. They enjoy exploring new materials and equipment as well as playing games and

engaging in dramatic play. Pre-Primary boys begin to develop their moral compasses, and they crave structure and boundaries. They are eager to receive adult reinforcement. Boys learn about the Golden Rule as a central focus of their developing empathetic spiritual and ethical capacities.

During a boy's first years at Saint David's School, he is encouraged to become familiar with his surroundings while engaging in new activities. Cooperative work and play opportunities allow him to learn about himself, his classmates, and the school community. Teachers help promote each boy's self-esteem by recognizing his accomplishments and helping him build on his strengths. At the same time, he is introduced to various cultures and traditions through stories and sharing, and his study of social studies, art, music, and foreign language.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Art

The pre-kindergarten art program focuses on developing basic art skills. Projects are often inspired by classroom studies and are designed to introduce boys to a variety of media and techniques including collage, watercolor, tempera, clay, and wood construction. Boys are encouraged to learn through trial and error and experimentation with materials, and to begin to express ideas visually through their art.

Athletics

The pre-primary athletic program introduces cooperative group games. Boys develop gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities. Soccer balls, basketballs, foam balls, scarves, foam paddles, and parachutes are some of the equipment boys use throughout the year.

Language Arts

The pre-kindergarten language arts program provides opportunities for boys to use language in a variety of ways. Boys begin to develop phonemic awareness through rhyming and word games; their background knowledge and vocabularies are broadened through literature, poetry, and unit studies. Students are provided many opportunities to interact with books, learning how pictures and words tell a story for a variety of purposes. Boys hone their speaking skills through class discussions, dramatic play, and Show and Tell. Students learn to recognize their written names and those

of their classmates and are able to identify upper and lower case letters in and out of sequence, in addition to their sounds. Boys develop fine motor control and learn to write using correct pencil grip and posture. They begin to write stories using pictures, labels, and dictation. Boys develop their listening skills by following multi-step directions and listening to selections of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry.

Library and Technology Integration

The pre-kindergarten library program promotes a love for books and reading. During library time, boys are exposed to a variety of children's literature. They learn how to take proper care of library books and are introduced to the concept of borrowing books. The boys develop their listening skills through stories read aloud by the librarian, and they are encouraged to select and borrow a book during their weekly visits. The pre-kindergarten technology program enriches the curricula with activities that promote collaboration and problem solving. In science, boys work in teams to program Bee-Bots to navigate a grid mat. Boys develop skills and learn routines that prepare them for a future of learning success.

Mathematics

The pre-kindergarten program is designed to engage boys in mathematics through the use of games, stories, and problem-solving activities. Hands-on activities and exploration with manipulatives and visual models promote mathematical discovery. Through play-based instruction, students are introduced to fundamental mathematical concepts, including counting, arithmetic, patterning, geometry, and graphing. Throughout the year, contextual themes, such as seasons and insects, are used to promote engagement as boys progress in knowledge and skills.

Music

Rooted in the Kodaly philosophy that children should learn about music by being musicians, the pre-kindergarten music program encompasses all aspects of the performing arts. Boys explore a wide range of songs through musical storybooks, learn about musical artists from a variety of genres, and dramatize song material in each class. Basic music vocabulary, rhythmic notation, and composition are introduced, with an emphasis on creative collaboration. Pre-kindergarten boys perform at the annual Grandparents and Special Friends celebration in the winter and perform again at a spring garden party for parents.

Music: Creative Arts

The Creative Arts program further develops skills in the performing arts. Boys dramatize storybooks and build sets and create costumes. The emphasis is on learning to be a self-aware performer and a thoughtful audience member.

Science

Pre-kindergarten science is an interdisciplinary subject. Topics include a leaf study, colors, sinking and floating, Arctic and Antarctic animals, plants, space, and the ocean. Through hands-on activities and demonstrations, boys develop the ability to ask questions by utilizing the scientific method, become keen observers, and work cooperatively while maintaining a safe environment. Some of the highlights during the year are robotics with Bee-Bots, the metamorphosis of a butterfly, and the simulation of animals to discover how they can keep warm in colder environments.

Social Studies

The pre-kindergarten social studies program emphasizes the classroom and school community. Students learn to share with, listen to, and respect others through cooperative work and play. By exploring family relationships, holidays, farm life, and setting up a grocery store, kitchen, and pizzeria, the boys learn more about themselves and the immediate world around them, as well as what makes a successful community.

Spanish

The pre-kindergarten Spanish program is intended to develop boys' aural skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed each day in playful visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities that aid retention of content. Students experience traditional music, art, games, and stories. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in Spanish are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As part of a series of interdisciplinary units, boys learn to talk about Arctic and Antarctic animals, outer space, and food.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated

pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. In Pre-K, boys learn to use strategies to express their thoughts and feelings when exploring relationships with those around them. Boys use age-appropriate vocabulary and practice interpersonal skills to drive their learning about friendship and community values.

ALPHA

Art

The Alpha art program focuses on developing basic art skills. Projects are often inspired by classroom studies and are designed to introduce boys to a variety of media and techniques including collage, watercolor, tempera, clay, and wood construction. Boys are encouraged to learn through trial and error and experimentation with materials, and to begin to express ideas visually through their art.

Athletics

The pre-primary athletic program introduces cooperative group games. Boys develop gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities. Soccer balls, basketballs, scarves, footballs, foam paddles, and parachutes are some of the equipment boys will use throughout the year. Alpha boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program¹.

Language Arts

The Alpha language arts program focuses on reading readiness and emergent writing. Boys meet in small groups to learn strategies for decoding and comprehending text, and expressing their ideas in writing. Each day, boys have opportunities to develop phonemic awareness, practice decoding, and engage in phonics instruction through a multi-sensory approach. Through access to a wide variety of reading materials, including fiction and non-fiction, students build background knowledge, interest, and vocabulary as well as a familiarity with a number of books and authors. Boys learn to print lower case and upper case letters, using correct letter formation and proper pencil grip. Boys have ample opportunities to write using both pictures and words, and they learn to compose basic sentences and stories with corresponding illustrations. While using invented spelling for many words, students develop a growing repertoire of conventionally spelled words. Boys develop the ability to clearly share their thoughts and feelings as well as their listening skills by participating in classroom discussions.

Library and Technology

The Alpha library program promotes a love for books and reading. During library time, boys are exposed to a variety of children's literature. They learn how to take proper care of library books and are introduced to the concept of borrowing books. The boys develop their listening skills through stories read aloud by the librarian, and they are encouraged to select and borrow a book during their weekly visits. The Alpha technology program enriches the curricula with activities that promote collaboration and problem solving. In science, boys work in teams to program Bee-Bots to navigate a grid mat. Boys develop skills and learn routines that prepare them for a future of learning success.

Mathematics

The Alpha mathematics program focuses on developing students' mathematical understanding. Boys regularly work with a variety of mathematical models, including ten frames, number racks, bundles, sticks, and number lines. They begin by focusing on number names and counting sequences up to 10, with an emphasis on one-to-one correspondence, cardinality, and comparing quantities. Students then explore addition, subtraction, and measurement. Next, boys use attributes to classify, compare, and analyze two and three-dimensional shapes. The year concludes with a study of measurement and place value where students describe and compare objects by exploring measurable attributes. Throughout the year, students communicate and reinforce their understanding of mathematics through games and problem-solving activities.

Music

Rooted in the Kodaly philosophy that children should learn about music by being musicians, the Alpha music program encompasses all aspects of the performing arts. In each class, boys learn about musical artists from a variety of genres and work collaboratively to create small classroom productions. Boys use fingerplays, songbooks that connect literature and music, as well as creative movement to build active listening skills. Boys perform at the annual Grandparents and Special Friends celebration in the winter, and collaborate on a musical production for parents in the spring.

Science

Alpha science is an interdisciplinary subject. Topics include nocturnal animals, animal adaptations for winter, bees and pollinators, and urban animals. Through hands-on activities and demonstrations, boys

develop the ability to ask questions by utilizing the scientific method, become keen observers, and work cooperatively while maintaining a safe environment. Some of the highlights during the year are conducting a blubber simulation experiment to understand how animals adapt to their environments, learning to program Bee-Bots, and studying New York City's wildlife.

Social Studies

The Alpha social studies program focuses on guiding students to study Saint David's School, their families, and their surrounding community. The year begins with learning about places and people at Saint David's. As boys learn about the roles and responsibilities of various community members, including the nurse, the maintenance team, the Head of the Lower School, and the Headmaster, they have opportunities to meet with these individuals and visit the places in the school where they work. In the winter, boys embark on a unit about family. Boys share about family traditions and celebrations and what makes them special. In the spring, boys learn about the places and people in Central Park. At the culmination of each unit of study, boys share what they have learned with their parents during a special classroom visit.

Spanish

The Alpha Spanish program is intended to develop boys' aural skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed each day in playful visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities that aid retention of content. Students experience traditional music, art, games, and stories. The program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in Spanish are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As part of a series of interdisciplinary units, boys learn to talk about the seasons, holidays, and animals.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. In Alpha, boys learn to use strategies to express their thoughts and feelings when exploring

relationships with those around them. Boys use age-appropriate vocabulary and practice interpersonal skills to drive their learning about friendship and community values.

KINDERGARTEN

Art

The kindergarten art program supports the continued development of basic art skills while fostering an understanding of how visual artists apply elements such as line, shape, color, form, and space to communicate concepts and emotions. While exploring a variety of media and techniques including watercolor, tempera, collage, and three-dimensional construction, boys learn to persist through challenges, observe the world around them carefully, express their unique ideas, and reflect on their work, the work of their peers, and examples of artwork from the past and present.

Athletics

The pre-primary athletic program introduces cooperative group games. Boys develop gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities. Soccer balls, basketballs, scarves, football, foam paddles, and parachutes are some of the equipment boys will use throughout the year. Kindergarten boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program.¹

Language Arts

The kindergarten language arts program focuses on reading readiness and emergent writing. Boys meet in small groups to learn strategies for decoding and comprehending text, and expressing their ideas in writing. Each day, boys have opportunities to develop phonemic awareness, practice decoding, and engage in phonics instruction through a multi-sensory approach. Through access to a wide variety of reading materials, including fiction and non-fiction, students build background knowledge, interest, and vocabulary as well as a familiarity with a number of books and authors. Boys learn to print lower case and upper case letters, using correct letter formation and proper pencil grip. Boys have ample opportunities to write using both pictures and words, and they learn to compose basic sentences and stories with corresponding illustrations. While using invented spelling for many words, students develop a growing repertoire of conventionally spelled words. Boys develop the ability to clearly share their thoughts and feelings as well as their listening skills by participating in classroom discussions.

Library and Technology Integration

The kindergarten library program promotes a love for books and reading. During library time, boys are exposed to a variety of children's literature and learn the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. The boys further develop their listening skills through stories read aloud by the librarian, and they are encouraged to select and borrow a book during their weekly visits. The kindergarten technology program enriches the curricula with activities that promote collaboration and problem solving. In science, boys work in teams to program robots to follow commands and overcome challenges.

Mathematics

The kindergarten mathematics program focuses on developing students' mathematical understanding. Boys regularly work with a variety of mathematical models, including ten frames, number racks, bundles, sticks, and number lines. They begin by focusing on number names and counting sequences up to 10, with an emphasis on one-to-one correspondence, cardinality, and comparing quantities. Students then explore addition, subtraction, and measurement. Next, boys use attributes to classify, compare, and analyze two and three-dimensional shapes. The year concludes with a study of measurement and place value where students describe and compare objects by exploring measurable attributes. Throughout the year, students communicate and reinforce their understanding of mathematics through games and problem-solving activities.

Music

Rooted in the Kodaly philosophy that children should learn about music by being musicians, the kindergarten music program encompasses all aspects of the performing arts. In each class, boys learn about musical artists from a variety of genres, explore singing games and creative movement, create songmaps and experiment with body percussion. Rhythm syllables are reinforced through both dictation and reading, and sight singing skills are introduced using solfege. Boys perform at the annual Grandparents and Special Friends celebration in the winter, and they present a Neighborhood Show that highlights their hometown of New York City in the spring.

Science

The kindergarten science program is designed to build core science skills including close observation, understanding cause and effect relationships, and connecting form to function. Through hands-on activities, boys

investigate the world around them, and each activity encourages them to display scientific curiosity. Students begin the year by studying a meadow habitat, focusing on relationships between predators and prey, and creating puppets to demonstrate camouflage. During an in-depth study of bees, boys learn about bee anatomy, behavior, and beehives. Boys learn how their five senses work and are encouraged to use these senses to investigate various objects. They also learn about shells and the many animals who live in them. Finally, kindergartners are introduced to robotics. They practice programming simple robots and grow to appreciate their capacity to follow commands.

Social Studies

The kindergarten social studies program focuses on guiding students to study themselves, their families, Saint David's School, and its surrounding community. The year begins with establishing classroom manners and routines, as well as allowing boys and teachers to learn about each other. These routines also create opportunities for boys to develop independence within the classroom community. In the "Star of the Week" program, a highlight of the year, students share favorite books and interesting facts about themselves while developing skills such as active listening and public speaking. Students further explore their identities through the "All About Me" unit of study within the first few months of school. The "All About My Family" unit allows students to share information about their families and what makes them special. Boys then expand the scope of their study by exploring the Saint David's community. They gain a more comprehensive understanding of our school by touring the building, meeting people who work in our school, and conducting interviews. The social studies curriculum culminates with a study of the neighborhood, where boys take several trips to nearby museums, stores, and parks. Students present their new knowledge in the "Kindergarten Neighborhood Show," reciting facts and singing songs in a performance for their families.

Spanish

The kindergarten Spanish program is intended to develop boys' aural skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed each day in playful visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities that aid retention of content. Students experience traditional music, art, and stories. This

program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in Spanish are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As the boys study their neighborhood in social studies, they discuss *el barrio* in Spanish class.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. In kindergarten, boys learn to use strategies to express their thoughts and feelings when exploring relationships with those around them. Boys use age-appropriate vocabulary and practice interpersonal skills to drive their learning about friendship and community values.

OMEGA

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:
Global Artist Exchange

Omega boys participate in a Global Artist Exchange through our partnership with Level Up Village, an educational technology enterprise that facilitates global collaborative learning. Throughout this seven-week program, boys exchange brief videos with peers at a partner school in Argentina describing a typical school day, their favorite activities, sports, and holidays so that they can begin to understand how our culture intersects with Argentine culture as well as what makes each culture unique. In art class, Omega boys study American sculptor Alexander Calder, visiting the Whitney Museum of American Art to see his *Circus* up close before creating their own Calder-inspired artwork. They capture what they learn in videos which they share with their peers in Argentina. At the same time, the Omega class receives videos from their partner school and have the opportunity to learn about an Argentine artist and the media the students use to create their own artwork. In Sophrosyne, boys learn to express their thoughts and feelings as they examine ways that their experience is similar to and different from their peers in Argentina. Through language, art, and technology, the Global Artist Exchange sparks students' curiosity, builds connections, and broadens their horizons.



Art

Omega art experiences are child-directed and choice-driven. Personal expression and the experience of discovery are celebrated with emphasis on art processes and individual interpretation of lessons. Boys are encouraged to embrace experimentation and mistakes as part of the learning process and to think creatively, independently, and imaginatively. To this end, students explore the physical limitations and possibilities of media including tempera paint, clay, fiber weaving, and 3-dimensional construction materials such as cardboard and wood. Boys become familiar with works by Van Gogh, Cézanne, Nevelson, Matisse, Mondrian, Calder, and Moore among others. In the spring, boys participate in a Global Artist Exchange. Through a series of video exchanges with our partner school in Argentina, boys share what they learn about American artist, Alexander Calder, as well as the artwork they created inspired by his work while learning about an Argentine artist and artwork from their peers in Argentina.

Athletics

The pre-primary athletic program introduces cooperative group games. Boys develop gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities. Soccer balls, basketballs, scarves, football, foam paddles, and parachutes are some of the equipment boys will use throughout the year. Omega boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program.¹

Language Arts

The Omega language arts program focuses on reading readiness and emergent writing. Boys meet in small groups to learn strategies for decoding and comprehending text, and expressing their ideas in writing. Each day, students have opportunities to develop phonemic awareness, practice decoding, and engage in phonics instruction using a multi-sensory approach. By reading a wide variety of materials, boys build accuracy, fluency, vocabulary, and background knowledge as well as develop a familiarity with a number of books and authors. Boys identify and discuss the story elements of the books they listen to and read on their own. Mentor authors are used to guide and inspire the boys' own writing. Students develop receptive language skills by listening to stories and following multi-step directions. Boys practice printing lower case and upper case letters, using correct letter formation and proper pencil grip, and they have ample opportunities to write, using both pictures and words. Boys develop the ability to

clearly share their thoughts and feelings through speech by participating in classroom discussions, book talks, and casual conversations. Boys practice public speaking and listening skills through “Star of the Week” activities and unit projects such as career and dinosaur studies.

Library and Technology Integration

The Omega library program continues to promote a love for books and reading. During library time, boys are exposed to a variety of children’s literature and practice using the basic library system. The boys further develop their listening skills through stories read aloud by the librarian to understand the lesson or moral of a story, and they are encouraged to select and borrow a book during their weekly visits. The Omega technology program engages boys in activities that promote collaboration and problem solving. In science, boys work in teams to program robots to follow commands and overcome challenges.

Mathematics

During the Omega program, students work with a wide array of mathematical models, including double ten frames, number racks, and number lines. They begin with a review of number names and counting sequences up to 10, emphasizing one-to-one correspondence, cardinality, and comparing quantities. The class then dives into an exploration of addition, subtraction, and measurement. Next, they classify, compare, and analyze two- and three-dimensional shapes using attributes. They then engage in a study of measurement and place value, where students describe and compare objects based on measurable attributes. The year concludes with an exploration about frogs, in which students build a deeper understanding of subtraction and establish connections between quantity and written notation to 20. Students engage in games and problem-solving activities throughout the year to communicate and strengthen their understanding of mathematics.

Music

Rooted in the Kodaly philosophy that children should learn about music by being musicians, the Omega music program encompasses all aspects of the performing arts. In each class, boys learn about musical artists from a variety of genres, and work collaboratively to create small classroom productions. More advanced rhythm syllables are introduced and reinforced through both dictation and reading, and sight singing skills are developed using solfege. The boys perform at the annual Grandparents and Special Friends celebration

in the winter, and collaborate on creating a Dinosaur Show for the mainstage in the spring.

Science

The Omega science program seeks to further develop boys’ understanding of scientific content, as well as sharpen their observation, measurement, and inference skills. Topics of study include fungi, magnets, earthworms, germs, fossils, volcanoes, dinosaurs, and light. Boys continue to incorporate the scientific method into their hands-on activities, and they are taught to use scientific equipment properly. Boys especially enjoy using the microscopes and donning goggles when completing activities such as erupting volcanoes and excavating fossils.

Social Studies

The Omega social studies program begins with a series of community building activities that foster boys’ understanding of daily routines. Through the year-long “Star of the Week” program, boys develop important skills such as active listening, respecting others, and speaking in front of a group. The “Career Study” unit includes parent visits, presentations, and field trips, and culminates in a career fair where the boys dress up, share what they have learned, and report on a career of their choice. The spring study of dinosaurs is integrated across several disciplines and offers boys opportunities to work in groups, use maps, conduct research, and explore the concepts of time periods and archaeology. As a culmination to the dinosaur unit, boys present facts, recite poems, and sing songs in a performance for parents. Finally, boys conclude the year with a study of Central Park in springtime.

Spanish

The Omega Spanish program is intended to develop boys’ aural skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed each day in playful visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities that aid retention of content. Students experience traditional music, art, and stories. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in Spanish are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As boys study jobs and careers in social studies, they learn to talk about various professions in Spanish. In the spring, boys learn to describe the dinosaurs’ appearance and behaviors in Spanish, as part of an interdisciplinary unit on dinosaurs.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, inter-related pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. In Omega, boys learn to use strategies to express their thoughts and feelings when exploring relationships with those around them. Boys use age-appropriate vocabulary and practice interpersonal skills to drive their learning about friendship and community values. In the spring, boys participate in an interdisciplinary study through a Global Artist Exchange. Throughout this seven-week program, boys exchange brief videos with peers at a partner school in Argentina describing a typical school day, their favorite activities, sports, and holidays so that they can begin to understand how our culture intersects with Argentine culture as well as what makes each culture unique. Boys learn to express their thoughts and feelings as they examine ways that their experience is similar to and different from their peers in Argentina.

FIRST GRADE

First graders enjoy exploring newly discovered interests and passions, and it is not uncommon to find related collections in their blazer pockets. They become more skilled at problem solving and begin to use social skills developed in kindergarten in more mature ways. First graders' sincerity, intensity, and eagerness to learn make this grade one of the most transformative years in elementary school.

In Grade One, each boy becomes more involved in the traditions of Saint David's School and at the same time extends his horizons beyond 89th Street as he explores works of master artists and composers such as Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Henri Matisse, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart as well as tree habitats and New York City. For the first time, he is recognized for his citizenship as well as his academic and athletic achievements at Lower School Armband Assemblies, and an emphasis on community is further developed through weekly Chapel talks.

Boys in the first grade learn about core moral teachings with the Golden Rule as a central focus of boys' developing empathetic spiritual and ethical

capacities. Across the curriculum, shared stories are an opportunity for perspective taking and ethical reflection. Homeroom teachers support each boy's growth across the pillars of his education, providing academic guidance, promoting his social-emotional health, and engaging him in moral and spiritual reflection.

Art

The first-grade art program focuses on developing art and pottery skills. In art, boys continue to explore line, shape, form, color, texture, and pattern in a variety of art media, and create art works inspired by the modern masters, Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky. They draw from imagination and observation, learn basic color theory, paint with watercolor, and mix colors with oil pastels. In pottery, boys are introduced to basic properties, tools, and techniques of clay. They view and discuss ceramic work from a variety of cultures. Techniques include pinch pots, coil making, slab construction and glazing. Subjects include natural themes and roller coasters. In the spring, each first-grade art class visits the Guggenheim twice—first to study the Thannhauser Collection through close observation, and then to create artwork in the museum's studios inspired by what they have seen.

Athletics

The first-grade athletics program introduces four major sports: soccer, basketball, baseball, and indoor lacrosse. Boys learn basic ball skills, the rules of the game, and the importance of sportsmanship. Boys further develop their gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities, and they are introduced to fitness exercises to improve strength and endurance. Boys travel to the park to partake in conditioning exercises. First-grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program.¹

Language Arts

The first-grade language arts program encompasses reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Boys develop their expressive and receptive language skills in small groups. Each day, students have intensive opportunities to develop phonemic awareness, practice decoding, and engage in phonics instruction using a multisensory approach. Boys are directly taught comprehension strategies, such as identifying story elements, sequencing key events, and making predictions. Boys read both non-fiction and literature to further their background knowledge, develop their vocabularies, and begin to make inferences. Through modeling and guided practice, boys become increasingly independent writers.

They practice printing upper and lower case letters, using correct letter formation and proper pencil grip. Students express their thoughts using complete sentences and learn to write a variety of genres, including personal narratives and expert books. As a culminating activity, each boy writes and publishes his own story inspired by an author study, and presents it at a special performance for boys, faculty, and parents.

Library and Technology Integration

Library skills and information technology are fully integrated into the first-grade program. Students visit the library with their reading classes. Boys learn to navigate independently through the library and are encouraged to develop their own areas of interest. They investigate the differences between authors and illustrators, review the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and become familiar with locating various genres available in the library. Boys also participate in book discussions and select "just right" books according to interest and reading level. In science, boys build a foundation of programming concepts while participating in active, collaborative play and problem solving activities with Bee-Bots and Lego WeDo robotics sets. Boys then apply these skills during their social studies classes as they program Bee-Bots to travel routes on large floor maps.

Mathematics

The first-grade mathematics program focuses on building mathematical understanding through context. Students explore real-life scenarios, engage in hands-on activities, and embrace the study of mathematics as dynamic, creative, and relevant. Students build fluency in addition and subtraction facts up to 10 and progressively develop sophisticated strategies for facts up to 20. Additionally, students extend their counting sequence to 120 and grasp two-digit numbers as combinations of tens and ones. The year also includes units on geometry and measurement, where students identify, compose, compare, and sort shapes. Boys explore fractions in the context of two-dimensional shapes. During the final unit, boys deepen their understanding of the meaning and processes of measuring time and length as they conduct duration experiments, constructing, flying, and measuring the flight distances of paper gliders, and investigating the many ways in which they have grown and changed since they were born. First graders are invited to attend Math Lab⁴ for support and enrichment.

Music

The first-grade music program introduces boys to the formal study of music notation. Boys learn to clap, count, and write basic rhythms. They learn how notes are placed on the musical staff and begin to write on manuscript paper. Students learn about the instruments of the orchestra, and they listen to orchestral compositions by Beethoven, Mozart, Prokofiev, and Saint-Saens. Boys sing together in a group as well as sing solo. The first grade boys prepare and perform a Christmas Pageant, one of Saint David's oldest traditions. They also present several songs and poems for their parents in June. Boys who have begun their studies of violin or cello may participate in the First Orchestra.⁵ Boys may also join the Lower School Percussion Ensemble.⁶

Science

The first-grade science program expands boys' understanding of important science concepts. Topics of study include: forest habitats, the states of matter and their properties, interactions using simple machines, and coding. Boys construct scientific knowledge, develop new vocabulary, and share their discoveries with others as they explore the world around them. Hands-on activities, such as building anatomical models of animals and programming robots, provide opportunities to develop problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. The year begins with an emphasis on the proper use of basic science tools and materials. Students practice the scientific method and learn a variety of skills necessary to answer questions they discover during their investigations. While studying forest habitats, boys learn about trees and investigate the relationships between different animals, focusing on bears and owls. They learn the difference between liquids, solids, and gasses, and they observe various properties of each. They practice identifying liquids based on their properties, stack liquids of different densities, and learn what it means when something dissolves. Boys build a foundation of programming concepts using Ozobots and various games. Students also learn about animal classification, deepening their exposure to invertebrates in particular. They end the year with a study of environmental science and various ways they can help the planet.

Social Studies

The first-grade social studies program focuses on the geography and landmarks of New York City while continuing to place an emphasis on community building. As part of a partnership with The New York Historical, boys deepen their understanding of mapping and

features of maps as they study historical maps of New York City and explore how to create a map using techniques cartographers use. Technology plays an integral role in the boys' study of the landmarks and geography of New York City. In the spring, boys work in small groups to research New York City landmarks and present their findings to their classmates. As a culminating experience, first graders apply their understanding of landmarks, geography, and mapping during a trip to the Top of the Rock observation deck.

Spanish

The first-grade Spanish program builds on existing language skills and fosters boys' understanding and appreciation of cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Boys are expected to develop their ability to produce simple sentences with content mastered in the previous year. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed each day in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid retention of content. Students deepen their understanding of the Spanish language through projects, songs, and games. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that the concepts introduced in the foreign language are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As boys learn about geography in social studies, they study the flags and locations of Spanish speaking countries and landmarks of New York City.

Spirituality: Religion

In first-grade religion, boys learn about and reflect on stories, largely drawn from the Judeo-Christian tradition, that emphasize treating one another with respect and kindness. They are introduced to the Bible through a series of chapel presentations and activities. Well known stories and themes from the Old Testament are shared and discussed, and boys explore ideas such as monotheism, an invisible God, God's laws, the Golden Rule, and the consequences of one's behavior. The use of appropriate chapel-manners and the development of good listening skills are emphasized.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. In the first grade, boys learn to express their thoughts and feelings through explicit reflection on virtues using age-appropriate vocabulary—*Words of the Week*—which drive their learning about friendship,

character, and wellness. Service plays an important part in the first graders' spiritual education as boys create festive cards to be delivered with meals during the holiday season for the organization *God's Love We Deliver*.

SECOND GRADE

Second grade is a year of creativity and enhanced self-awareness. Seven- and eight-year-olds become increasingly proficient in basic skills and are able to use them with ease. They enjoy working cooperatively, but they sometimes need adult help to negotiate group dynamics.

At Saint David's School, a second-grade boy's creative interests are cultivated through a variety of academic experiences such as designing three-dimensional sculptures, writing poetry, composing music, and using MIT's visual programming language, Scratch, to create geometric shapes and compose and play music. His need to be part of a group is nurtured through team building exercises in social studies, art, and athletics. Second grade provides an opportunity for each boy to explore his creativity while strengthening friendships with his classmates.

Boys in the second grade learn about core moral teachings with the Golden Rule as a central focus of boys' developing empathetic spiritual and ethical capacities. Across the curriculum, shared stories are an opportunity for perspective taking and ethical reflection. Homeroom teachers support each boy's growth across the pillars of his education, providing academic guidance, promoting his social-emotional health, and engaging him in moral and spiritual reflection.

Art

The second-grade art curriculum revolves around students' firsthand interaction with works of art at three major art museums. In the fall term, second graders spend their ninety-minute weekly art sessions at the Guggenheim Museum, where they study the iconic architecture of the building as well as modern masterpieces from the permanent collection and work on hands-on art activities under the guidance of a museum educator. The term culminates with an exhibit of student work in the museum's rotunda. Mask making is the focus in the winter term. The class visits the Metropolitan Museum of Art to view and sketch masks from a variety of world

cultures. Back at school, boys create their own “tribal masks” in mixed media. Picasso is the focus of art studies in the spring term, in conjunction with the Spanish curriculum. A visit to the Museum of Modern Art exposes boys to major works by the artist such as *Girl in a Mirror* and *The Three Musicians*. Boys make collagraph prints informed by their understanding of cubism.

Athletics

The second-grade athletic program begins to utilize and refine the boys’ skills into more sport specific activities. Boys develop greater control in the use of their bodies and are able to apply running, catching, and kicking skills in more sophisticated ways. Practicing good sportsmanship continues to be a focus of the program. During the fall term, boys play soccer and football. They also participate in the annual Turkey Run, which is approximately 600 meters. In preparation for this Saint David’s tradition, boys partake in weekly conditioning exercises. During the remainder of the year, boys play basketball, handball, floor hockey, indoor lacrosse, and baseball. Second-grade boys may also participate in the Saint David’s hockey program¹.

History

The second-grade history program deepens students’ understanding of New York City as it explores the various ways the city has changed over time while remaining connected to its historical roots. Boys’ knowledge is deepened through hands-on learning experiences developed by a partnership with The New York Historical. Second-grade students begin by studying the Lenape tribe of early Manhattan and creating seasonal models of Lenape longhouses and wigwams. Students also study the impact of Henry Hudson’s explorations throughout the region as well as the development of New Amsterdam. They then sketch still life drawings of period household items and create Delft tiles to showcase the lifestyle of the Dutch settlers. Boys later learn about the New York colony and the city’s critical role during the American Revolution. They study the impact of the Battle of Brooklyn and the role the printing press had in the spread of information during the war. As a culminating experience at the end of the year, second-grade students synthesize and present what they have learned to their parents, faculty, and administrators at The New York Historical.

Language Arts

The second-grade language arts program focuses on developing reading and writing skills using a direct

multisensory approach that is tailored to meet boys’ needs. Boys learn strategies to decode and encode words, and they learn to identify the meaning of words using context clues. Boys learn comprehension strategies for reading fiction and non-fiction, with a special focus on articulating key elements of stories and identifying the main idea. They further improve their comprehension by building knowledge of more complex words and language structures. Throughout the year, students participate in independent reading incentive programs that encourage them to select books that match their reading goals and interests, and explore a variety of genres. Through modeling and guided practice, boys become increasingly independent writers. They practice communicating their ideas in well-organized basic paragraphs, and they are taught to proofread for content and mechanics. Throughout the year, boys write for a variety of purposes, including informational paragraphs, poetry, letters, and narratives, and have ample opportunities to share their writing with classmates, and younger and older boys.

Library and Technology Integration

Library skills and information technology are fully integrated into the second grade program. During their reading classes, boys visit the library and learn to select appropriate books for independent reading. Boys become adept at navigating through the library and are introduced to the Dewey Decimal System. Students participate in book discussions and library activities developed to enhance their library routine and build a love of reading. In science, boys are introduced to computer programming with Scratch. Clicking and dragging blocks to direct an onscreen character, boys learn that computer programs are made of clear, sequential instructions. Programming activities encourage boys to think logically and break down challenges into a series of component tasks. Once the basics are mastered, boys can program their characters to draw geometric shapes, create abstract compositions, and even compose and play music. In math, boys use software to graph data and explore the geometric properties of angles and two-dimensional shapes.

Mathematics

The second-grade mathematics program extends boys’ understanding of place value to adding and subtracting within 1,000, using standard algorithms, mental math strategies, and physical models to build fluency. Boys apply these skills in practical contexts, such as solving one- and two-step story problems, finding the value of groups of coins, and creating and interpreting bar

graphs and picture graphs. They also learn to estimate and measure length using standard units, and to tell time. In geometry, boys reason about shapes based on their attributes and partition shapes into equal parts. The year concludes with an exploration of equal groups of objects, laying the foundation for multi-digit multiplication.

Throughout the year, boys strengthen their problem-solving skills as they learn to apply their knowledge to novel and unfamiliar situations. In their introduction to problem solving, boys are guided on how to take apart a problem in order to understand what is being asked of them. They are encouraged to think flexibly, approach challenges from multiple perspectives, and persevere through productive struggle, with mistakes treated as an integral part of learning, fostering confidence and resilience. In the process, boys develop a framework for problem solving while sharpening their communication and collaboration skills. To put these skills to the test, second graders participate in the Noetic Learning Math Competition (NLMC) in the fall and spring terms. Second graders are invited to attend Math Lab⁴ for support and enrichment.

Music

The second-grade music program continues the boys' study of musical notation. Boys begin to learn basic musical vocabulary including dynamics, tempo indications, and rhythm names. Boys also learn traditional American folk songs, with a particular emphasis on historical and patriotic themes. They begin to explore the American musical theatre repertoire, including songs written by Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hammerstein, and George M. Cohan. The second graders perform an annual show for parents based on the founding of America. Boys who have begun their studies of violin or cello may also participate in the First Orchestra⁵. Boys may also join the Lower School Percussion Ensemble⁶ and First Choir⁷.

Science

The second-grade science program provides opportunities for boys to explore science and technology concepts through hands-on investigation, scientific experimentation, and engineering projects. Topics of investigation include the engineering cycle, plant growth, robotics, chemistry and the nature of matter, and computer programming. Students work through the engineering cycle to build their own large-scale cardboard projects, working in teams to create a functional structure. A pair

of coding and robotics units allows the boys to deepen their understanding of computer programming. Students first use Dash, a speedy and interactive robot that boys program to respond to the world around them. Later, they use Scratch, a developmentally appropriate programming environment, to create games and animations. Second graders are also introduced to chemistry for the first time. They learn that matter is made of molecules, and they investigate how these molecules behave in different situations. Students finish the year with an investigation into plants, reviewing plant anatomy and diving more deeply into concepts such as pollination and seed dispersal.

Spanish

The second-grade Spanish program builds on existing language skills and fosters an understanding and appreciation of the cultures of Spanish-speaking people. Boys are expected to develop their ability to produce simple sentences with content mastered in the previous years. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed each day in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid retention of content. Students deepen their understanding of Spanish cultures through their study of art and music. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that the concepts introduced in the target language are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As part of an interdisciplinary unit on Picasso and Cubism, boys study select masterpieces and make observations in Spanish.

Spirituality: Religion

In second-grade religion, boys learn about and reflect on stories, largely drawn from the Judeo-Christian tradition, that emphasize treating one another with respect and kindness. Topics and themes covered include a look at the world of the New Testament including, prayers, parables, the Golden Rule, and the ideas of kindness, forgiveness, and respect for others. Boys are introduced to significant Gospel stories of the New Testament. The second-grade program prepares Roman Catholic boys for the Sacrament of First Communion, and it is a time for all boys to further recognize, celebrate, and discuss their own faith traditions. Special emphasis is given to similar rites of passage in Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and other faith or philosophical traditions. Whether they are receiving the sacrament or sharing the experience, this milestone event represents a deeper exploration of our classical tradition and rites of passage.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, inter-related pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. In the second grade, boys learn to express their thoughts and feelings through explicit reflection on virtues using age-appropriate vocabulary—*Words of the Week*—which drive our learning about friendship, character, and wellness. As part of our partnership with the Manhattan Childrens Center—a school that provides world class treatment and education to children with autism spectrum disorder and related disorders, boys form meaningful connections with children in our community and develop an appreciation for difference. Through working with children who experience the world differently than they do, boys develop a deeper sense of empathy and an understanding of the principle that while we are all different, we are all the same.

THIRD GRADE

Eight- and nine-year-old children enjoy taking on responsibility and have a contagious can-do spirit. They have a strong drive toward independence and at the same time are interested in learning more about family history and traditions. As third graders become more self-directed in activities, they are able to plan and carry out projects with adult support.

As one of the “oldest” boys in the Lower School, a third grader enjoys planning and organizing homeroom initiatives such as helping the less fortunate by working with City Harvest to feed New York’s hungry. He serves as a role model for younger boys and avows his commitment to lead responsibly at the annual knighting ceremony, a long-standing Saint David’s tradition. Boys in third grade learn about core moral teachings with the Golden Rule as a central focus of boys’ developing empathetic spiritual and ethical capacities. Students connect these teachings to other major world religions, broadening boys’ perspectives and laying the foundation for global citizenship and cultural competency. Across the curriculum, shared stories are an opportunity for perspective taking and ethical reflection, and boys are increasingly invited to deepen these lessons with active role-playing of age-appropriate scenarios. The third-grade program supports boys’ developing moral agency and spiritual

capacity with daily Chapel talks delivered by teachers, coaches, and the Headmaster. Homeroom teachers support each boy’s growth across the pillars of his education, providing academic guidance, promoting his social-emotional health, and engaging him in moral and spiritual reflection.



INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:

STEAM: *The Nerdy Derby*

How can comparing a small sample of data with a large sample of data help win a race?

Third graders’ math, science, and artistic design skills are put to the test in *The Nerdy Derby*. This no-rules miniature car building and racing competition rewards creativity, cleverness, and ingenuity. The goal is to engage boys in educational, interactive, and fun design experiences through problem solving and collaborative challenges. Boys participate in a series of hands-on activities to examine the ways that factors like friction, mass, and aerodynamics affect the motion of their cars. Students then work through the engineering cycle to design, build, test, and revise their vehicles. They test different variables and use their results to modify their cars. When Nerdy Derby Race Day arrives, third graders enter their cars in a series of contests celebrating speed, precision, consistency, and design.



Art

Third grade boys divide the year between ceramics and woodworking. In ceramics, boys explore a range of hand building methods including slab, coil and pinch techniques to create vessels. In woodworking, they are introduced to wood as a construction material and practice basic skills such as measuring, sawing, filing, and joining small pieces of soft wood with hand tools. The boys synthesize their newly acquired woodworking skills to craft a small, decorated box.

Athletics

The third and fourth-grade athletics program marks the introduction to the school’s intramural program. Boys are divided into eight teams, which rotate through a schedule of games, practices, and fitness exercises. Boys practice skills as well as develop strategies during soccer, flag football, basketball, floor hockey, handball, indoor lacrosse, and baseball games. The fitness program focuses on strength training and conditioning, both are considered important means of reducing injury and

promoting readiness for more sustained, competitive play. Boys are introduced to various light weight exercises and body weight movements, and they have an opportunity to use stationary bikes, rowing machines, and elliptical machines. Sportsmanship is a hallmark of Saint David's athletic program. Third-grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program.¹

History

The third-grade history program focuses on nineteenth and early twentieth century American history, emphasizing the ways in which Americans have demonstrated perseverance and ingenuity in improving their lives. Through guided reading, research, and note taking, boys form connections between the past and present to solidify their understanding of this time period in American history. Boys' understanding is deepened through hands-on learning experiences developed by a partnership with The New York Historical. Students begin the year by studying the reasons for westward expansion. Boys develop an appreciation of the pioneer experience as they examine a variety of primary and secondary sources and participate in an Oregon Trail simulation. They learn by figuratively stepping into the shoes of the pioneers who worked together to overcome hardships in the pursuit of a better life. During the winter term, students study immigration at the turn of the twentieth century, investigating the reasons why some people decided to come to America and then considering the many challenges that they faced. Boys acquire an understanding of the immigrant experience as they examine a variety of primary sources, visit Ellis Island and The Tenement Museum, explore the diverse cuisines of the Lower East Side, and participate in Mock Ellis Island. In the spring, students learn about the Industrial Revolution, especially its new technological developments and processes that changed American life. As a culminating experience in May, third-grade students synthesize and present what they have learned to their parents, faculty, and administrators at The New York Historical.

Language Arts

The third-grade language arts program focuses on solidifying reading and writing skills. Boys learn strategies to decode and encode multisyllabic words, and they learn to identify the meaning of words using context clues. While reading fiction and non-fiction books at their instructional level, boys develop comprehension and fluency skills, which help them understand both explicit and implicit information. Boys learn cursive handwriting and practice proper letter formations.

Students write for a variety of purposes using the full writing process when appropriate. Boys compose informational texts and narrative stories. Students revise and edit their writing with attention to content, spelling, and mechanics using editing symbols and a rubric, and they share their published work with their classmates.

Library and Technology Integration

Library skills and information technology are fully integrated into the third grade program. Boys visit the library regularly during their reading and history classes. They use the Dewey Decimal System and their knowledge of the library's organization to search for books. Students continue to be exposed to various genres of literature, with a special emphasis placed on the use of nonfiction materials as an aid to report writing. As part of their history research projects, boys learn to locate and evaluate information using books, while developing their skills in interpreting primary and secondary sources. Students are introduced to note-taking strategies as they learn to record relevant facts and basic information about their sources. The program continues to promote a love for reading and books, and the boys are encouraged to become both lifelong readers and independent researchers. In science, boys build on the programming skills they learned in second grade and use Scratch to demonstrate and deepen their understanding of scientific concepts.

Mathematics

The third-grade mathematics program extends students' understanding of addition and subtraction to multiplication and division. Boys learn to represent and solve problems involving equal groups, including in the contexts of arrays and scaled graphs, and they explore the relationship between multiplication and division. Using rectangles and rectilinear shapes, students investigate area concepts and relate area to multiplication, while also identifying and defining the attributes of different quadrilaterals and exploring the perimeter of two-dimensional shapes. Boys develop multiplication fact fluency through 12, and procedural fluency with addition and subtraction within 1,000, using rounding and estimation to judge the reasonableness of their answers. They also make sense of fractions as numbers, reasoning about them using area and number line diagrams. Using both customary and metric units, students estimate, measure, and solve problems involving length, time, liquid volume, and weight, and they study how data is collected and represented graphically. As part of an interdisciplinary project called The Nerdy

Derby, boys interpret their team's data and the class's aggregate data to inform decisions about the design of their vehicles.

Throughout the year, boys develop their problem-solving strategy toolkit and start to apply these strategies within a broader problem-solving framework. In the process, boys sharpen their communication and collaboration skills. They are encouraged to think flexibly, approach challenges from multiple perspectives, with mistakes treated as an integral part of learning, fostering confidence and resilience. Boys put these skills to the test by competing in the Noetic Learning Math Competition (NLMC) in the fall and spring semesters, where they tackle rigorous, creative problems and cultivate resilience, composure and the ability to thrive under pressure. Third graders are invited to attend Math Lab³ or participate in Math Club⁴.

Music: Performing Arts

Rooted in the Kodaly philosophy that children should learn about music by being musicians, the third-grade music curriculum builds on boys' understanding of what it means to be a performer. In the fall, boys deepen their musicality and develop their dance and performing arts skills during ten weekly workshops led by performing arts educators from the National Dance Institute. They learn the value of excellence in dance and the importance of hard work, focus, and teamwork in achieving personal and collective success. Boys also hone their critical and creative thinking skills as they learn to use movement as a tool to communicate, connect, and share ideas. As a culminating experience, boys showcase what they have learned in a performance for parents. In the spring, boys work collaboratively to co-construct all elements required to fully realize a scripted show for parents, choosing and casting the show, as well as building set pieces and creating costumes. Boys who have begun their studies of violin or cello may participate in the First Orchestra⁵. Boys may also join the Lower School Percussion Ensemble⁶ and First Choir⁷.

Science

The third-grade science program is designed to encourage students to generate questions that lead to experimentation and discovery. Boys practice asking questions, making careful observations, gathering information, and drawing conclusions based on evidence. Topics of study include: the scientific method, motion and design, anatomy, the solar system, life cycles, and programming. Boys utilize the

electronic modules to develop creations of their own design. Students also build upon their knowledge of Scratch to create simulations of prey and predator relationships and a simulation of their own observable universe. Boys will design their own space rovers using Legos SPIKE robotics kits. As part of *The Nerdy Derby*, an interdisciplinary project, students apply their understanding of motion and design as they examine the ways that factors like friction, mass, and aerodynamics affect the motion of their cars. In a collaboration with their math classes, boys test different variables and record their results on data sheets. In teams, boys work through the engineering design cycle to design, build, test, and revise their vehicles.

Spanish

The third-grade Spanish program is intended to develop the boys' aural and literacy skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed five times a week in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid retention of content. Students experience traditional stories and music. This course is also aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in the target language are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. During the winter, boys perform the "Visit of the Three Kings" in Spanish, incorporating theater, religion, and music into their language learning. Additionally, boys learn to describe animals, talk about parts of the body, and how to cure common ailments.

Spirituality: Religion

In third-grade religion, students are introduced to major Christian and Roman Catholic themes, and they learn about the three Abrahamic faith traditions and how they are related. Students study the liturgical year and gain exposure to non-Christian faiths as they create "Holiday and Holyday" calendars. Classroom sharing, projects and activities, and developing respect for all faiths and philosophical traditions are important parts of this program. Students visit a local synagogue and meet with a rabbi. Boys attend Chapel four times each week.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true

self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. In third grade, boys build on their experiences navigating social relationships, reflecting on what it means to be a respectful and engaged member of the community, and celebrating what makes themselves and others unique. Through role playing scenarios, boys practice navigating social situations. They learn how to communicate their feelings in an effective manner, take part in co-operative problem-solving solutions, and develop tools to advocate for their interests while respecting the perspectives of others.

U P P E R S C H O O L

SAINT DAVID'S UPPER SCHOOL refines the reading, writing, speaking, and critical-thinking skills developed in the Lower School and prepares boys for the greater independence and responsibility of adolescence. In all subject areas, teachers help students master the skills needed to conduct research, absorb new material, speak clearly, write cogently, behave ethically, and organize their time.

The Upper School academic program is based on the classical paradigm of balance. In English, students explore the best in modern literature as well as selected works from the Western canon. The boys write often, and they learn to write well, with a coordinated expository and creative writing program that builds targeted skills from year to year. In mathematics, conceptual understanding and computational accuracy receive equal emphasis, and students are taught to apply their knowledge to solve problems. In Upper School sci-

ence, whether they are extracting and analyzing DNA or investigating Newton's laws, our boys hypothesize, experiment, observe, and interpret. In history, through multi-faceted examinations of Ancient Egypt, the Renaissance or the Vietnam War, boys obtain essential insights into the human past and translate those into lessons for our time. Fourth and fifth graders are fully immersed in the Spanish language and experience cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Boys begin studying Latin in the fifth grade and choose to continue with Spanish or begin French in the sixth grade. The use of technology for instruction, research, and presentation is integrated throughout the Upper School curriculum.

The Upper School program is designed to promote self-reliance. To support this process, boys have a 30-minute Commons period each day. During this time, boys are encouraged to meet with a teacher if they have a question, need extra support, or are interested in exploring a topic of study more deeply. They may also choose to use this time to visit the library or socialize with their classmates. While faculty are available to guide the boys as they consider how they plan to use their time each day, boys are ultimately responsible for deciding how to best utilize their time during Commons. Our aim is for boys to learn to effectively manage their time, advocate for their needs, and develop a strong sense of self-confidence.

Teachers in the Upper School use direct instruction to impart essential knowledge skills. Through collaborative, project-based learning, they also cultivate teamwork, leadership, and public speaking skills. For example, teachers of English, science, and technology assist sixth-grade boys with their Digital Universe projects, which involve research, scientific narratives, and live presentations as the boys "fly through space" using the digital universe software OpenSpace. Working in small groups, students learn to appreciate one another's gifts and to delegate and accept responsibility. Each grade has comparable integrative projects that are among the highlights of a Saint David's experience.

Interdisciplinary STEAM (science, technology, engineering, artistic design, mathematics) units in Upper School grades present challenges that promote cross-disciplinary thinking and problem solving. These units draw upon boys' prior knowledge of science and math concepts and processes, and their sense of the aesthetic. When boys determine the optimal way to design and build an efficient wind turbine or conduct an original

DNA research project, they develop deeper, more durable understanding of key concepts in math and science while strengthening collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills.

Throughout the program, educational partnerships and collaborations with cultural and research institutions such as the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, DNA Learning Center of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Frick Collection, and American Museum of Natural History, augment boys' learning and deepen understanding, providing them with special access to the facilities and the work of experts in a variety of fields.

Public speaking is specifically addressed in each grade of the Upper School. In fourth and fifth grade, students practice fundamental skills such as delivering well-organized content and making good eye contact. Rhetoric is an integral part of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade interdisciplinary study program. Students refine their style, delivery, and use of visuals as they present to their classmates, teachers, parents, and guests of the school.

Each day, Upper School students are called upon to speak in front of others. Saint David's boys greet guests confidently and readily explain the current focus of their class. During lunch, students make announcements to their schoolmates and faculty about upcoming community service events and athletics games. Throughout the year, students are invited to speak at parent and alumni events.

The teamwork of the boys reflects that of their teachers, who meet on a weekly basis to discuss curriculum, plan assessments and special events, coordinate homework and monitor student progress. Partnership with families is also a prized component of our community approach to learning. Upper School parents feel connected to school life through Curriculum Nights, homeroom visits, class coffees, Parents Association meetings, topical discussion groups, parent workshops, and parent-teacher conferences. Teachers aim to be proactive and respond promptly to parent questions or concerns.

The unique charge of Upper School teachers is to launch young adolescents successfully into the broader world. Programs and activities at Saint David's contribute to this important goal. Boys who are elected to our

student government exercise leadership skills through planning, advocating, and mediating. Members of our athletic teams, clubs, and musical groups understand what can be accomplished by placing the group before oneself. Through Chapel, religion, and Sophrosyne classes, boys develop a moral compass that we hope will inform the personal and social decisions they are called upon to make. Grade specific classes are devoted to the challenges facing emerging adolescents.

Beginning in sixth grade, boys participate on overnight trips. As a culminating experience to their two-year study of American history, boys visit Washington, D.C. Then, in seventh grade, during their three-day interdisciplinary study in the Pocono Mountains, boys not only examine forest ecology, but also expand and deepen the friendships that are so important to the emotional development of boys. All boys at the conclusion of seventh grade can take part in an optional trip to Salamanca, Spain, for cultural study and Spanish language instruction regardless of their level. The two-week Eighth Grade Italian Study Tour strengthens boys' bonds while providing students with the experience of a lifetime: seeing, discussing, critiquing, drawing, and writing about the Classical, Renaissance, and Baroque masterpieces they have been analyzing in their art history classes. By the time our boys start considering secondary schools, they have developed a strong, confident sense of self and a healthy curiosity with which to meet the challenges and adventures ahead.

Our comprehensive secondary school placement process provides guidance to each family so that the experience is illuminating and successful. A boy who graduates from Saint David's takes with him rich experiences and life lessons from the Lower and Upper Schools. He is the sum of early skill development and more mature analytical thinking, of gentle reminders to live by the Golden Rule and of the Headmaster's call to "be good men." He has learned from devoted teachers, coaches and friends and is poised to explore the important questions of how he will live, what he will love, and who he will become.

FOURTH GRADE

Developmentally, nine- and ten-year-old children are much more in touch with the adult world than younger children. They are more than ready to discuss such grown-up topics as personal responsibility, justice, and the nature of civilizations. Self-reliance is important, and boys this age can set their mind to a school task and bring the task home. Fourth graders like written work and are attracted to problem solving. There is a definite advance in critical and abstract thinking.

Fourth grade is an important developmental stage in a boy's career at Saint David's. He has left the familiar environment of the Lower School and has entered a new world of stronger academic demands, larger responsibilities, and broader extra-curricular offerings such as singing at the school Masses, being in charge of lunch duties, and playing integral roles in community service projects. A fourth grader also has the honor of being elected to the Student Council, where he works with fellow representatives to contribute meaningfully to the school and broader community. A fourth grader earns grades for the first time, and he must learn how to allot time between leisure and schoolwork. Good study habits are not learned overnight, but a very real beginning is made in internalizing those skills and habits that will serve him well in the years to come. Boys in the fourth grade reflect on core moral teachings and connect those of the Catholic faith to other major world faiths and philosophies, broadening the boys' perspectives and laying the foundation for global citizenship and cultural competency. Students are given tools and opportunities to engage deeply in moral introspection by reflecting on core values including respect, honesty, and kindness. The fourth-grade program supports boys' developing moral agency and spiritual capacity with daily Chapel talks delivered by teachers, coaches, and the Headmaster. Homeroom teachers support each boy's growth across the pillars of his education, providing academic guidance, promoting his social-emotional health, and engaging him in moral and spiritual reflection.

Art

Fourth-grade art studies are closely linked with boys' classroom exploration of ancient cultures. Artists learn to draw the human figure after discovering how the ancient Egyptians and Greeks realized the human form, and create landscape pictures after examining Chinese and Western landscape conventions. Problem solving, craftsmanship, and mastery of skills are emphasized throughout the visual arts curriculum.

scape pictures after examining Chinese and Western landscape conventions. Problem solving, craftsmanship, and mastery of skills are emphasized throughout the visual arts curriculum.

Athletics

The third and fourth-grade athletics program marks the introduction to the school's intramural program. Boys are divided into eight teams, which rotate through a schedule of games, practices, and fitness exercises. Boys practice skills as well as develop strategies during soccer, flag football, basketball, floor hockey, handball, indoor lacrosse, and baseball games. The fitness program focuses on strength training and conditioning, both are considered important means of reducing injury and promoting readiness for more sustained, competitive play. Boys are introduced to various light weight exercises and body weight movements, and they have an opportunity to use stationary bikes, rowing machines, and elliptical machines. Sportsmanship is a hallmark of Saint David's athletic program. Fourth-grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program¹.

History

The fourth-grade history course focuses on the essential question: "What is civilization?" After discussing what distinguishes a civilization from a group of nomadic people, the boys identify core aspects that are representative of all civilizations: architecture, art, belief systems, cities, entertainment, government, and writing systems. These become the linchpins for their study of the accomplishments and legacies of the ancient Egyptian, Chinese, and Greek civilizations. As boys discover how these civilizations developed, they learn to annotate and highlight text, utilize physical and political maps, prepare for assessments, and compose written responses in paragraph form.

Each unit culminates in a project that engages boys in the research process. Fourth graders learn to think like historians as they write research reports and prepare presentations about aspects of ancient civilizations they are studying. Boys learn to identify trustworthy sources of information, and identify relevant information to paraphrase into notes. Using their research findings, boys work to construct multi-paragraph reports. Boys are encouraged to use their creativity as they determine the most effective way to present what they have learned to their classmates and teachers. Students often enrich their presentations by dressing up as a historical figure,

building a model representative of a historic location, building, or artifact, or designing an informative poster. In addition to the presentation of content, boys are assessed on how clearly and effectively they deliver their ideas.

As a result of applying a consistent framework of study to each civilization, students are able to make comparisons across cultures and develop generalizations with regard to accomplishments.

Language Arts

The fourth-grade language arts program seeks to develop independent readers and writers. Boys read novels about children solving problems by authors such as Sarah Weeks, Gita Varadarajan, and Henry Winterfield. Students learn to be active participants in book talks where they assume roles that make them think deeply about the novels. They continue to learn strategies to decode and encode multi-syllabic words with close attention to word parts such as roots, prefixes, and suffixes. As boys read, they begin to annotate, taking initial steps toward learning the art of summarizing, providing textual evidence, and generating thought-provoking discussion questions. Boys write for a variety of purposes, using the full writing process when appropriate, and compose expanded expository paragraphs as well as multi-paragraph narratives. Students write assignments by hand using cursive. Fourth graders use rubrics to edit and polish their writing, and they share their published work with their classmates. Boys may attend Writing Workshop¹¹ to further strengthen their writing skills.

Library and Technology Integration

The fourth-grade library program teaches boys how to find what they need from print resources. Library and technology work is integrated into projects from the core curriculum so that the research, organizational, and presentation skills that students develop have immediate relevance. During visits to the Upper School library, boys learn to find and retrieve books in print format in collaboration with their language arts and history teachers. Fourth-grade boys are eager to take ownership for book requests and returns, an important task that strengthens self-reliance, time management, and increased responsibility. Throughout the year, as part of their study of ancient civilizations, students conduct research by using encyclopedias and tradebooks. Boys practice organizing information by paraphrasing ideas into notes, defining relevant sub-topics, and citing

their sources in their notes. In addition, boys visit the library regularly to learn about and select independent reading titles, reinforcing the habits of lifelong readers. The fourth-grade technology program engages boys in activities that promote collaboration and problem solving. In science, boys work in teams to build their own physical computer control interface, using their knowledge of circuitry and Scratch.

Mathematics

The fourth-grade mathematics program builds on boys' understanding of numbers, operations, and geometry, moving into more complex and abstract contexts. Boys explore patterns and identify multiples, factor pairs, and prime and composite numbers. The boys extend their understanding of equivalent fractions and fraction comparison to build competence adding, subtracting, and multiplying fractions and mixed numbers. Their understanding of place value grows to encompass decimal numbers and multi-digit numbers within 1,000,000. Boys multiply and divide multi-digit whole numbers using partial products and quotients strategies, as well as learning the traditional multiplication and division algorithms, and they come to understand multiplication as a way to compare quantities and convert measurements. In geometry, they explore angle measurements, parallel and perpendicular lines, and symmetry as attributes of shapes.

Throughout the year, boys refine their use of problem-solving strategies within the broader problem-solving framework, developing greater communication and collaboration skills in the process. They are encouraged to think flexibly, approach challenges from multiple perspectives, and persevere through productive struggle, with mistakes treated as an integral part of learning, fostering confidence and resilience. Boys put these skills to the test by competing in MOEMS contests throughout the school year, where they tackle rigorous, creative problems, and cultivate composure and the ability to thrive under pressure. Fourth graders are invited to attend Math Lab³ or participate in Math Club⁴.

Music

The fourth-grade music program introduces the boys to instrumental music. The class is divided into four groups, and the boys alternate between the strings class, the bell choir, percussion, and theatre arts. At the end of each ten-week session a "switch concert" is presented to the parents. Boys learn the basic techniques of playing an

instrument and performing together as a group. Musical pieces performed focus on Renaissance, classical, and the contemporary. In addition, performance skills and practicing strategies are demonstrated and discussed. Each boy has an opportunity to experience playing and performing on different instruments, and exploring singing, choreography, and scene work. The students all experience the joy of making music with their classmates. Boys may also participate in the Philharmonic Ensemble⁸, Chamber Singers⁹, or the Percussion Ensemble¹⁰.

Science

Fourth-grade science is designed to introduce students to basic forces and structures in nature through a hands-on approach. The inherent curiosity of nine and ten-year-old boys is well suited to an examination of how the world around us is organized. The year commences with a study of magnetism and its relationship to electricity. Boys work to understand and build parallel and series circuits, and ultimately design and build their own physical computer control interface. This exciting physical computing project invites boys to apply their understanding of basic circuitry while further developing their coding proficiency using MIT's online Scratch coding environment. The movement of electrons leads to the introduction of the atom, the states of matter, and how sound travels through matter. The arrangement of atoms into more elaborate molecules provides a stepping stone from inanimate matter to cellular life. The study of the living world begins with the structure of a cell and builds in complexity to include organisms and their adaptations. Along the way, boys' skills in problem solving, observation, measurement, data collection, and microscopy are utilized. The ability to integrate ideas and organize thoughts is fostered through report writing.

Spanish IV

The fourth-grade Spanish program continues to develop students' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing with more explicit focus on the language's structures. After five years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use sentences to express their ideas. Boys are introduced to a middle school text to help them consolidate and refine their understanding of how to express possession, feelings, and description. Grammar is taught in context and includes subject agreement, plurals, and the conjugation of key irregular verbs. Throughout the school year, boys are immersed daily in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid in the retention of the content they study. Students' willingness to commu-

nicate in Spanish is developed through games and activities that support their understanding and build their growing language skills in authentic ways. Responsibility for continuing conversation and elaboration in written forms of communication is gradually shifted to the students.

Spirituality: Religion

The fourth-grade religion course introduces students to the basic idea of religious belief and several of the world's major religions including Islam and Judaism, as well as Eastern religions and philosophies. Boys visit a Buddhist temple and meet with a religious leader. Students also examine the origins, structure, and organization of the Old and New Testaments, and learn to look up Biblical passages. Boys review important prayers and events in Christ's life. During preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, fourth graders focus on the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule, as well as on the themes of self-reflection, contrition, and forgiveness.

Service is a key component of the fourth graders' spiritual education, and, as part of our long-standing partnership with the Seeing Eye, boys meet with individuals who are visually impaired to learn about their experiences. After visiting Seeing Eye in Morristown, New Jersey to learn about the role of guide dogs, students develop leadership and teamwork skills as they plan, advertise, and execute a school-wide fundraising event as part of their "Pennies for Puppies" campaign, which helps fund guide dogs for the blind.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. Deliberate moral introspection and the forthright presentation of factual information undergird the holistic education of good men. The course is bolstered by explicit reflection on the virtues. In the fourth grade, boys examine emotional vocabulary and empathy, respect and appreciation for difference, stress and effective coping strategies, and friendship and healthy relationship dynamics. Through our partnership with Common Sense Media, boys discuss privacy and safety issues related to digital citizenship, and they learn how to use technology safely, responsibly, and ethically. With each unit, the focus is on teaching

students how to authentically make safe and ethical decisions. Understanding attitudes and feelings is as important as specific information. Taken together, the course reinforces that, following an ancient tradition, right action follows from virtuous habits.

FIFTH GRADE

Ten- and eleven-year-old boys enjoy healthy competition and games that allow for self-improvement. They become more adept at asking questions that lead to greater understanding, and they are able to entertain multiple points of view. At the same time, fifth graders begin to develop their own views about social and global issues and become more active contributors to the school community.

Student-led discussions and teamwork are at the core of a fifth-grade boy's experience. It is not uncommon to overhear a fifth grader debating with his classmates about the actions of a character or the motivations of an explorer. A boy's understanding of historical events is further deepened through role-playing experiences and field trips. An emphasis on study skills continues, and, for the first time, a boy's academic achievements are formally recognized at the academic awards assembly.

The fifth-grade program supports boys' developing moral agency and spiritual capacity with daily Chapel talks delivered by teachers, coaches, and the Headmaster. Students are given tools and opportunities to engage deeply in moral introspection by reflecting on core values including respect, honesty, and kindness. Homeroom teachers support each boy's growth across the pillars of his education, providing academic guidance, promoting his social-emotional health, and engaging him in moral and spiritual reflection.



INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY: *STEAM: Tinkering Labs Catalysts*

What makes a machine a machine? Boys dig into this question as they build, test, and revise simple and compound machines using motorized Tinkering Labs Electric Motors Catalyst Kits™. Working in small, collaborative groups, students use the engineering design process to build solutions to a series of challenges. As

they design and build, they gain a deeper understanding of the ways simple machines leverage distance to provide a mechanical advantage. They practice quantifying this principle by applying the equation: $\text{work} = \text{force} \times \text{distance}$. Challenges require boys to combine simple machines into compound machines, and explore the ways machines transform energy as students design and build vehicles that can move and perform a variety of tasks. Boys work together to design prototypes for each challenge, which they test and redesign until success is achieved. The unit is designed to inspire boys to think critically, take risks, and enjoy the process of creative problem solving through the iterative design process in which attention is paid to planning, testing, and the effective interaction of both. Throughout the unit, boys ask questions and devise their own solutions using their engineering, math, science, and design skills.



Art

During the fifth-grade year, boys study ceramics and woodworking on a semester basis. In ceramics, the theme is "Bringing Art into the Everyday." Boys refine hand-building methods to create functional ware such as cups, bowls, and plates for daily use. Woodworkers build their independence and skills as they master sawing a straight line, driving a nail with a hammer, and joining two pieces of wood with nails and glue. Finally, students research the needs of various species of local birds, and design and build a unique birdhouse. Throughout the curriculum, the emphasis is on independent problem solving, craftsmanship, and mastery of skills.

Athletics

The fifth-grade athletics program introduces team sports through intramurals. In the fall, boys choose to participate in soccer, cross country, flag football, or fitness, and in the winter, they may choose squash, basketball, or ice hockey. During the spring term, boys may choose to participate in baseball, lacrosse, or track. Sportsmanship remains a hallmark of Saint David's athletic program. Fifth-grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program¹.

Classical Language: Latin V

Latin V is the first year of a two-year introduction to Latin and the Roman world. Students in Latin V and VI use the *Cambridge Latin Course, Book 1*. The book follows various aspects of a real Pompeian family, the

Caecilii, during the fateful year 79 AD. The course emphasizes reading skills, and through the readings the students learn about Roman imperial public and domestic culture. Major grammar items in Latin V include introduction to the nominative (subject) and accusative (object) cases of the first three declensions and the present tense of verbs. Students' vocabulary reaches about 100 words. The course also makes use of the *Cambridge GO* website. A consistent focus of the class is the relation of Latin to English and Spanish etymology.

History

The fifth-grade history program is the first part of a two-year study of American history. During the fall term, boys examine encounters among Native Americans and European explorers. They then assess how these encounters shaped the development of the thirteen colonies. In the winter term, boys investigate key events and historical figures during the Revolutionary Era. Students end the year by looking at the early formation of the United States following the Revolution. To deepen their critical thinking skills and foster their understanding of multiple perspectives, boys learn how to analyze primary source documents from the Revolutionary and Founding Eras. Moreover, they continue to develop their ability to synthesize essential information from a textbook. Throughout the year, boys prepare written responses, compose individual research reports, work together in teams to produce collaborative presentations, and create original projects to complement formal study.

Language Arts

The fifth-grade language arts program supports boys in their transition from childhood to emerging adolescence. Boys read independent and shared texts that represent different genres and cultures. Through novel studies, students analyze plot elements, character development, and themes. They learn to monitor their comprehension and utilize annotation strategies that enable them to gain meaning from texts. Students learn to develop and support inferences with textual evidence and engage in literature discussions with classmates. Students write across a variety of genres, including book reports, narratives, and persuasive responses, with the focus on development and organization of ideas, articulated in a robust and cogent manner. Boys practice and gain appropriate mastery in elaborating upon ideas, using rich vocabulary, and becoming more substantive editors of their own and each other's work using rubrics and checklists.

Skill development in grammar and vocabulary continues and is pursued in conjunction with reading and writing assignments as well as through direct instruction and practice. Boys may attend Writing Workshop¹¹ to further strengthen their writing skills.

Library and Technology Integration

In fifth grade, boys use library and digital resources for academic research. They learn to locate information efficiently, think about it critically, and share information ethically and safely. Each fifth-grade boy is given his own laptop to use at school. Using the Google suite, boys work collaboratively on long-term projects related to their core academic disciplines. As part of their history coursework, boys conduct research about Native American tribes, European explorers, colonial settlers, and the American Revolution, using databases, websites, eBooks, and print resources. They master the ability to identify key topics, create note cards from salient facts, cite sources, and synthesize their research into multimedia presentations. In addition, boys visit the library regularly to learn about and select independent reading books, which they share with their classmates through oral presentations.

Mathematics

The fifth-grade mathematics program extends boys' understanding of fractions, decimals, and geometry while introducing ratios, algebraic reasoning, and statistics. Boys calculate the areas of polygons through a variety of techniques, including decomposing, rearranging, enclosing, and composing shapes, and represent polyhedra with nets to find surface area. Boys also learn triangle and quadrilateral area formulas. Boys are introduced to ratios, representing them with double number lines, tables, and tape diagrams, and applying ratio reasoning to solve problems, including those involving unit rates and percentages. Building on their understanding of whole-number division, boys learn to divide fractions, and they develop strategies for adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing decimals. Boys build on their understanding of the equal sign as a representation of balance, using it to solve for unknown values and relate equivalent expressions. Students learn the important difference between an expression and equation. They also explore positive and negative numbers on a number line, as inequalities, and on the coordinate plane, comparing values and their absolute values. Finally, boys visualize data using dot plots and histograms, then calculate mean, median, and range, constructing box plots and interpreting these measures in context.

Throughout the year, boys strengthen their problem-solving skills as they learn to apply their knowledge to novel and unfamiliar situations. They are encouraged to think flexibly, approach challenges from multiple perspectives, and persevere through productive struggle, with mistakes treated as an integral part of learning, fostering confidence and resilience. In the process, boys develop a framework for problem solving while sharpening their communication and collaboration skills. Boys review critical mathematical vocabulary necessary for understanding mathematics problems. They put these skills to the test by competing in MOEMS contests throughout the school year, where they tackle rigorous, creative problems and cultivate resilience, composure, and the ability to thrive under pressure. Having developed familiarity with problem solving strategies and approaches, boys begin to reflect on their effort and progress after each contest. Fifth graders are invited to attend Math Lab³ or participate in Math Club⁴.

Music

The fifth-grade music course is a continuation of the instrumental music program, where students rotate through ten-week sessions of strings, bells, percussion, or theatre arts. Classes emphasize more advanced instrumental techniques, particularly note reading and rhythmic understanding. In order to showcase their developing musicianship, boys perform four Musicales during the school year for their parents. Fifth graders also meet as members of the Glee Club. Boys sing in the school's Advent Service of Lessons and Carols, and each spring they present a fully costumed and staged production of a renowned musical – always a highlight for the boys and their families. Boys may also participate in the Philharmonic Ensemble⁸, Chamber Singers⁹, or the Percussion Ensemble¹⁰.

Science

The fifth-grade science program engages students in active STEAM projects learning about machine engineering, DNA, evolution, and organisms' relationships within ecosystems. Boys ask questions, plan and implement investigations, make observations, collect and analyze data, make inferences, and articulate conclusions based on evidence. Rich learning experiences deepen boys' understanding of core science concepts as they weave together hands-on experimentation and mathematical reasoning and computation. In the fall, engineering activities allow boys to apply their knowledge of science and technology concepts to solve a

problem using what they have learned about simple machines. While building and revising a motorized machine to complete various design challenges such as scrambling an egg, or launching a vehicle, boys apply their understanding of how simple machines combine to form compound machines as they practice adjusting mechanical parts to maximize efficiency. In the winter, students' in-depth study of DNA takes place at school and at the Cold Spring Harbor DNA Learning Center facilities. Boys conduct professional-grade experiments in labs and speak with scientists about the real-world applications of their research. Hands-on lab investigations allow boys to develop their understanding of the structure and function of DNA and the ways that random mutation and natural selection lead to species' evolution. In the spring, students investigate balance and imbalance in ecosystems. Working in pairs, they take to the field to immerse themselves in a microcosm of the Central Park ecosystem, and observe the relationships between the living and non-living elements they find. Boys draw connections between key ideas in studying specific animals' adaptations to their environment through research and laboratory dissections, and their close observations of ecosystem function in the field. Class activities frame students' thinking around these questions: *What do organisms need to survive? How does energy move through a food web? In what ways can human activity affect ecosystems? How do ecosystems evolve?*

Spanish V

The fifth-grade Spanish program continues to develop students' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing with more explicit focus on the language's structures. After six years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas. Boys continue to use a middle school text to help them consolidate and refine their understanding of how to express location, obligations, and preferences, and how to make comparisons and purchases. Grammar is taught in context and includes subject agreement, plurals, and the conjugation of irregular verbs. Projects offer students an opportunity to showcase their language skills and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Throughout the school year, boys are immersed in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid in the retention of the content they study. Students' willingness to communicate in Spanish is developed through games and activities that support their understanding and build their growing language skills in authentic ways. Boys become increasingly responsible for initiat-

ing and continuing discussions, and clearly communicating their ideas orally and in writing.

Spirituality: Religion

Fifth-grade religion classes reinforce and expand on the students' understanding of the central components of the Catholic faith. The course looks closely at the gift of faith as it evolves from Abraham to Christianity and at the foundation of our moral principles expressed in the Ten Commandments. Students visit a nearby Episcopal church and meet with a religious leader. Boys read and discuss the Christian allegory *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis. The school motto, "... that they be good men," is incorporated in practical applications especially appropriate for young boys, and various opportunities and social service projects, including working with One Sandwich at a Time to prepare sandwiches for distribution to local food banks and homeless shelters, are presented to boys to help them put the Golden Rule into practice.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, inter-related pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. Deliberate moral introspection and the forthright presentation of factual information undergird the holistic education of good men. The course is bolstered by explicit reflection on the virtues. In the fifth grade, boys examine emotional vocabulary and empathy, respect and appreciation for difference, stress and effective coping strategies, and friendship and healthy relationship dynamics. Through our partnership with Common Sense Media, boys discuss privacy and safety issues related to digital citizenship, and they learn how to use technology safely, responsibly, and ethically. With each unit, the focus is on teaching students how to authentically make safe and ethical decisions. Understanding attitudes and feelings is as important as specific information. Following an ancient tradition, right action follows from virtuous habits.

SIXTH GRADE

During these early adolescent years, eleven- and twelve-year-olds learn to balance their desire to be independent with their need for adult support. As they assert their individuality, they also become intensely loyal to their peer group. Sixth graders move beyond concrete experiences and think in more abstract and multivariate ways. Utilizing his ability to think abstractly, a sixth grader learns to write persuasively and cite specific evidence to support his ideas. In the spring, during a three-day trip to Washington, D.C., a boy deepens his understanding of American history and government by seeing democracy in action.

Boys in the sixth grade reflect on core moral teachings and connect those of the Catholic faith to other major world faiths and philosophies, broadening the boys' perspectives and laying the foundation for global citizenship and cultural competency. Students are given tools and opportunities to engage deeply in moral introspection by digging beyond surface appearances and politicized language to reflect on core values including respect, honesty, and kindness. The sixth-grade program supports boys' developing moral agency and spiritual capacity with daily Chapel talks delivered by teachers, coaches, and the Headmaster and the introduction of an advisory program. Each boy's homeroom teacher and advisor support his growth across the pillars of his education, providing academic guidance, promoting his social-emotional health, and engaging him in moral and spiritual reflection.



INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:
STEAM: Digital Universe

The Digital Universe, a first-of-its-kind collaboration with educators from the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), blends science, technology, and English curricula into an interdisciplinary unit. Sixth graders take advantage of access to research-grade tools and deep discipline expertise of the museum's educators and astronomers, as they identify and research an astronomy topic of particular interest and use the writing process and cutting-edge technology to create a space show they perform live at the Hayden Planetarium.

From October through March, each sixth-grade homeroom visits AMNH for six three-hour periods, which include time “flying through the cosmos” in the planetarium and state-of-the-art classrooms, using OpenSpace, the front-end software that interfaces with the Digital Universe Atlas: a vast aggregation of real-time astronomical data captured through advanced telescopes by dozens of organizations across the globe and represented in virtual 3D. Boys also spend time engaging with the museum’s exhibits and hands-on activities to deepen their understanding of the scale of the universe and its celestial bodies.

Working in pairs, boys pose a research question to investigate. During their field study visits to the museum, and in science and English classes back at Saint David’s, boys build arguments from evidence found using the Digital Universe Atlas, museum exhibitions, and online databases and journals available through the Saint David’s library.

In English, boys conduct several sessions of research to generate the data they need to describe their specific journey through the cosmos. Boys develop storyboards to plan their trajectory through space so they know exactly what they need to describe to the audience en route in a way that captivates their listeners. They access a variety of print and online sources to gather an understanding of celestial bodies, interstellar and interplanetary distances, and the time it would take to travel such distances.

Finally, boys translate their research findings into a gripping narrative that aligns with their storyboard, combining previously learned, narrative storytelling techniques with the data generated in their research. Then they bring their storyboards to life using the OpenSpace software. Breathtaking, high-definition images captured by the world’s most powerful telescopes replace their sketches of moons and planets.

The unit culminates in a celebration in the Hayden Planetarium, during which boys introduce their shows live for their families, teachers, and classmates using the same sophisticated tools used by astronomers.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY: *The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*

Sixth graders further develop effective research, writing, and speaking skills as they examine twentieth century events from a “kaleidoscope” of perspectives during the

spring term. Students work on collaborative teams and derive meaning from primary sources, including iconic songs, poems, and historical documents.

In history, boys learn to write an analytical and correctly cited research essay. Each component of the research process is directly taught and modeled, and students receive ongoing feedback as they practice the steps. Additionally, they analyze primary sources in their original context in order to learn *what* happened as well as to ask *why* it happened. Each boy crafts his own research question that he then answers in a multi-paragraph analytical essay and, using Noodle Tools, creates online note cards as well as a detailed bibliography.

In English, students complete an in-depth study of poetry as documentary evidence and hone their analytical abilities together in a partnered critique of poetry connected to their twentieth century topics. Discussion and modeling help students learn how to analyze poetry and distill meaning. Teams identify and analyze poems deeply connected with the events they are researching. Throughout the unit, students apply poetic principles of composition to their own poems, which reflect upon twentieth century figures and events.

In music, the focus is on learning to view songs from the Great American Songbook as historical documents that evoke the struggles and ideals of the time periods in which they were written. Teams work with the teachers to identify iconic songs of the time periods they are researching. Boys study original recordings of the songs they select and analyze the lyrics and music.

As a culminating performance, teams orally present a synopsis of their findings against a backdrop of images and examples of primary source documents to their classmates, faculty members, and administrators.



Art

The sixth-grade visual arts program further advances creative skills related to two-dimensional art. In one semester, the focus is on the human figure. Students learn the technique of gesture drawing to quickly capture the essence of the figure in motion and learn about human proportions before studying the figurative art of Harlem Renaissance artist Jacob Lawrence as inspiration for their final project. In the other semester, students employ close looking to discover how the concept of one point perspective as developed by

Brunelleschi during the Italian Renaissance continues to impact visual art. They complete various practice studies utilizing a variety of media before creating a final “road trip” composition inspired by contemporary artist Grant Haffner’s colorful landscape paintings. Throughout the visual arts curriculum, creative problem solving, craftsmanship, and respect for materials are emphasized.

Athletics

The sixth-grade athletics program continues to include intramural sports, but also introduces the boys to interscholastic play. Sixth graders are called upon to assume a leadership role in regards to their fifth-grade counterparts. In the fall, boys choose to participate in soccer, cross country, flag football, or fitness, and in the winter they may choose squash, basketball, or ice hockey. During the spring term, boys may choose to participate in baseball, lacrosse, or track. Throughout the year, all boys have an opportunity to represent the school in interscholastic competition. Sportsmanship remains a hallmark of Saint David’s athletic program. Sixth-grade boys may also participate in the Saint David’s hockey program¹.

Classical Language: Latin VI

Latin VI is the second year of a two-year introduction to Latin and the Roman world. Students in Latin V and VI use the *Cambridge Latin Course, Book 1*. The book follows various aspects of a real Pompeian family, the Caecilii, during the fateful year 79 AD. The course emphasizes reading skills, and through the readings the students learn about Roman imperial public and domestic culture. After a review of what was studied in Latin V, new grammar items in Latin VI include the dative (indirect object) case of the first three declensions, and the imperfect and perfect tenses of verbs. Students’ vocabulary reaches about 250 words. The course also makes use of the *Cambridge GO* website. A consistent focus of the class is the relationship of Latin to English, Spanish, and French etymology. In March, the students sit for the first level of the National Latin Examination.

English

The sixth-grade English program focuses on identifying and tracing themes in literature. Boys read a wide selection of literature and explore novels from multiple points of view. While reading class novels by authors such as Lois Lowry, S. E. Hinton and Mildred Taylor, students annotate key passages to find evidence to support a theme and write responses to literature.

Boys also study the poetry of Robert Frost, Donald Hall, Yusef Komunyakaa, and Wilfred Owen, among others. Boys learn how to write persuasive essays, scientific narratives, and poetry, and they have many opportunities to practice the craft of writing using the full writing process whenever appropriate. In the winter, boys present their scientific narratives during live Digital Universe shows as part of an interdisciplinary project with the American Museum of Natural History. During the spring, boys analyze and discuss twentieth century poetry as part of an interdisciplinary project called *The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*. Skill development in grammar and vocabulary continues and is pursued in conjunction with reading and writing assignments, as well as through direct instruction and practice. Boys may attend Writing Workshop¹¹ to further strengthen their writing skills.

History

The sixth-grade history course forms the second half of a two-year sequence in American history. The course surveys American political, social, and cultural history, and focuses upon the nation’s struggle to live up to the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Major topics include political life in the early United States, sectionalism, the Civil War and its causes, Reconstruction, the Progressive Era, and the Great Depression and New Deal. The course also underscores the value of documentary evidence in its original context. Students spend substantial time analyzing primary sources and develop interpretive and argumentative skills through a series of written compositions and inquiry discussions that respond to complex historical questions. These exercises stress the relationship between evidence, argument, and analysis. In the spring, students research specific topics within twentieth century American history as part of an interdisciplinary project called *The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*. As a culmination of their study of American history, boys also travel to Washington, D.C., to experience democracy in action.

Library and Technology Integration

Technology is integrated throughout the sixth-grade program in ways that make learning more efficient and more effective. Each sixth-grade boy is given his own laptop to use at school. Using the Google suite, boys work collaboratively on long-term projects related to their core academic disciplines. When conducting research for their interdisciplinary study experiences, *Digital Universe* and the *Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*, boys use NoodleTools, an online tool for creating

formal bibliographies, storing research questions, and outlining research conclusions. They utilize academic databases and independently find facts and supporting information in both digital and print resources. In addition, boys visit the library regularly to learn about and select independent reading books, which they share with their classmates through oral presentations.

Mathematics

The sixth-grade mathematics course deepens boys' number sense and algebraic reasoning, extending their fifth-grade work with ratios, expressions, and statistics toward the formal study of algebra. In the first semester, boys explore number theory, the coordinate plane, integers, and integer operations. In the second semester, students study exponents, scientific notation, statistical measures, algebraic expressions, and learn to solve one- and two-step equations. During the year, boys complete two open-ended investigations. In the first investigation, boys participate in a simulated car dealership setting, expanding and applying their knowledge of percentages to address various business elements like taxes, commissions, bank interest, and profitability. The second investigation allows boys to explore the relationship between launch angle and force with a rubber band cannon. During this investigation, students develop an understanding of statistical thinking as they construct and interpret dot plots and compare data sets to draw conclusions.

Throughout the year, boys strengthen their problem-solving skills as they learn to apply their knowledge to novel and unfamiliar situations. They are encouraged to think flexibly, approach challenges from multiple perspectives, and persevere through productive struggle, with mistakes treated as an integral part of learning, fostering confidence and resilience. In the process, boys develop a framework for problem solving while sharpening their communication and collaboration skills. Boys enhance their problem-solving skills by turning their focus to challenge problem sets organized by topics typically covered in competition math, such as number theory, probability, combinatorics, and geometry. Boys put these skills to the test by competing in MATHCOUNTS and MOEMS contests throughout the school year, where they tackle rigorous, creative problems and cultivate resilience, composure, and the ability to thrive under pressure. Sixth graders are invited to attend Math Lab³ or participate in Math Club⁴.

Modern Language: French VI

The French VI course is an introduction to the French speaking world and elementary vocabulary and grammar. The aim of the program is to enable boys to communicate about themselves, their school day, their home and family, clothing and seasons. The grammar topics introduce several regular and irregular verbs, the singular and plural forms of articles and adjectives, possessive adjectives and question words. The cultural readings cover the Quartier latin, Québec, Montréal, and Morocco.

Modern Language: Spanish VI

The sixth-grade Spanish program continues to develop students' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing with a more explicit focus on the language's structure. After seven years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas. Boys continue to use a middle school text as an anchor for their learning. Grammar topics include stem-changing verbs, direct objects, and indirect objects. Boys study grammar in the context of Spanish speaking countries that may include Guatemala, Peru, and Spain. The aim of the program is to enable students to discuss subjects relevant to their lives. Boys become increasingly responsible for communicating their ideas orally and in writing.

Music

The sixth-grade music program introduces students to music appreciation, history, and theory. While listening to works from various traditions and genres, as well as works of non-Western cultures, boys learn to think critically about musical elements and discern different forms of composition. The year's highlights include performing in the Advent Service of Lessons and Carols, a fully staged and costumed musical production for parents in March, and a study of the American Songbook during the spring term. As part of an interdisciplinary project called *The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*, students listen to and discuss music from each decade of the twentieth century. Boys may also participate in the Philharmonic Ensemble⁸, Chamber Singers⁹, or the Percussion Ensemble¹⁰.

Science

The sixth-grade science program focuses on Earth and space science. During the fall, boys begin their exploration of astronomy in their study of planetary science, the structure of the Universe, the life cycles of stars, the properties of light, and the search for life

beyond Earth. During their six visits to the American Museum of Natural History, boys practice “flying through the cosmos” in the planetarium and state-of-the-art classrooms using OpenSpace, and learn about the cosmos by engaging with the museum’s experts and collections. Students enhance their fundamental understanding of space science by working in pairs to pose their own questions, conduct research, and use OpenSpace software to turn that knowledge into breathtaking space shows that they present to an audience of students, families, and faculty in Hayden Planetarium. In the spring, students conduct a study of Earth’s processes. Boys develop an understanding of the rock cycle, the structure of the Earth, and the results of plate tectonics, including natural disasters. In their study of natural disasters, boys utilize their problem-solving skills during a design-build project to create building designs that are meant to improve safety during seismic events. Finally, boys learn about the water cycle and how it shapes the landscape, contributes to weather events, and stabilizes the climate of our planet. The boys’ study of Earth science culminates in a presentation of a topic of their choice relating to the Earth, during which they independently use the research, writing, and presentation skills they developed as part of their Digital Universe unit.

Spirituality: Religion

The sixth-grade religion course has two main elements, which may be called the religious and the ethical. The religious element is a preparation of boys for the Sacrament of Confirmation, which is conferred in May. Students not receiving the sacrament are invited to contribute to discussions from their own faith and family traditions. The milestones and rites of passage in major world religions are examined, helping students to develop a better understanding of their own faith. Much of the course is a lesson in the fundamentals of Christian religion, beginning with the Old Testament basics and a study of the text of the Apostle's Creed. The ethical element is designed to inculcate those values which will help the boys become “good men.” The students discover forms of right behavior through exercises like class discussion and social service projects. For the past several years, Saint David's sixth graders have collaborated with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Leymah Gbowee to raise money for the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa's Book Bag Drive, an initiative that provides book bags and supplies to high achieving students in Ms. Gbowee's native Liberia and in Ghana. Boys exchange notes with the students and, each year,

Ms. Gbowee visits to talk to the boys about the impact of their work.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one’s true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. Deliberate moral introspection and the forthright presentation of factual information undergird the holistic education of good men. The course is bolstered by explicit reflection on the virtues. In the sixth grade, boys examine emotional vocabulary and empathy, respect and appreciation for difference, stress and effective coping strategies, friendship and healthy relationship dynamics, the safe and responsible use of technology, the physical and emotional changes of puberty, and substance abuse and addiction. Finally, boys learn about personal safety through extensive role-playing scenarios, led by faculty and professionals from Prepare, Inc., so that they have practiced responses to the difficult situations they are most likely to face. Throughout the year, boys meet regularly with their advisory groups and for one-on-one sessions with their advisors for structured conversations about the topics discussed in *Sophrosyne*. With each unit, the focus is on teaching students how to authentically make safe and ethical decisions. Understanding attitudes and feelings is as important as specific information. Following an ancient tradition, right action follows from virtuous habits.

SEVENTH GRADE

Twelve- and thirteen-year-olds are more aware of who they are. They are in tune with their strengths and interests, and enjoy learning. Seventh graders begin to establish a personal moral code and display empathy for those around them. A seventh grader at Saint David's School is well on his way to becoming “a good man” as he becomes more involved in the school community and the surrounding neighborhood. During his three-day interdisciplinary study in the Pocono Mountains, he forms deeper bonds with his classmates. He is also a “big brother” to a second grader as both prepare to be leaders in their respective schools.

Boys in the seventh grade continue to study core Christian teachings, connecting these to ethical

reflection. Students are given tools and opportunities to engage deeply in moral introspection by digging beyond surface appearances and politicized language to consider core values including justice, courage, and charity. The seventh-grade program supports boys' developing moral agency and spiritual capacity with daily Chapel talks delivered by teachers, coaches, and the Headmaster culminating in each seventh-grade boy delivering his own Chapel talk in the spring. Each boy's homeroom teacher and advisor support his growth across the pillars of his education, providing academic guidance, promoting his social-emotional health, and engaging him in moral and spiritual reflection.



INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY: *Agents for the Good*

During their seventh-grade year, students refine their research, writing, and speaking skills as they engage in an interdisciplinary study designed to provide boys an opportunity to reflect on and articulate what it means to be a good person. In religion class, students read several passages from Matthew's Gospel, such as the Beatitudes, Salt and Light, and the Judgment of the Nations, and brainstorm characteristics of people who exemplify the message conveyed in these passages. Each boy then selects an individual he believes embodies these characteristics. In English class, students investigate what led the individuals they selected to be agents for the good. Boys utilize the research process to document and organize their findings and write a thesis-driven research paper. The culminating performance, which is led by the Headmaster, is the preparation and delivery of a Chapel talk that draws from their research and the school's mission statement.

Once students determine which grade levels they will be addressing during their Chapel talk, they begin to outline ideas and formulate a draft. Students revise their drafts based on criteria for effective talks and the Headmaster's feedback. Boys then use a rubric of traits of an excellent talk, such as maintaining eye contact, demonstrating enthusiasm, and communicating clearly and effectively, as they plan and practice the delivery. Each student formally presents his talk in Chapel to faculty and boys and receives final feedback from the Headmaster.



Art

Seventh-grade art is a one-year study in observational drawing. Boys learn to observe the world around them carefully and deeply in order to "draw what they see." Classes meet for two sixty-minute periods weekly. Students learn and practice the five component skills of observational drawing, which are accurate perception and rendering of contour line (edges), angles and proportions (sighting), value (a range of lights and darks), spaces (both positive and negative), and the gestalt (combining the skills in totality). Drawing subjects include students' own hands, a leaf, and bottles of various sizes and shapes. The students' artwork is showcased at the Spring Art Show.

Athletics

The seventh and eighth-grade athletics program allows boys to pursue a wide range of sports, while offering those who are interested a more competitive experience. For the first time, boys try out for positions on standing teams. Saint David's School is a member of the Manhattan Private Middle School League, which also consists of Allen-Stevenson, Buckley, Collegiate, Dalton, St. Bernard's, and Trinity. Boys compete against these schools in soccer, flag football, cross country, basketball, lacrosse, baseball, and track and field. Boys can also elect to do fitness, club basketball, golf, and cross training. Sportsmanship remains a hallmark of Saint David's athletic program. Seventh-grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program¹.

Classical Language: Latin VII

In Latin VII, students complete the *Cambridge Latin Course Unit 1*, and move on to the *Cambridge Latin Course Unit 2*. This book follows the surviving members of the Caecilius family to Alexandria in Egypt and thence to Britain. Students read longer and more complex passages, and through the readings learn about Roman governmental interactions with native populations at two of the empire's peripheries. After a review of the grammar learned in Latin VI, major grammar items in Latin VII include the remaining grammatical cases, the ablative (instrumental) and genitive (possessive), of the first three declensions, relative pronouns and relative clauses, and the pluperfect tense. The course also makes use of the *Cambridge GO* website. A consistent focus of the class is the relationship of Latin to English, Spanish, and French etymology. In March the students sit for the second level of the National Latin Examination.

English

In seventh-grade English, boys extend the range of their reading beyond literature written specifically for younger children and learn to appreciate worlds dealing with more complex themes by authors such as Homer, John Steinbeck, William Golding, Harper Lee, Sandra Cisneros, Langston Hughes, Edgar Allan Poe, Saki, Walt Whitman, and Mary Oliver. Through interpretive reading activities, boys explore multiple perspectives and practice identifying textual details and literary elements that shape the reader's understanding. They write original poems, analytical paragraphs and essays, adventure stories, and personal narratives, applying themes and techniques explored in class. Grammar and word studies help boys develop a more nuanced understanding of vocabulary and sentence structure. In the second semester, students work on a full research paper as part of an interdisciplinary project called *Agents for the Good*. Boys may attend Writing Workshop¹¹ to further strengthen their writing skills.

History

The seventh-grade course focuses on the roots of Western Civilization. Boys complete an in-depth study of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, gaining an understanding of their significant contributions to the formation of Western democracy and culture. Students develop and practice important skills such as taking notes, interpreting primary source documents, writing effective thesis-driven essays, and reviewing material for tests. Boys present research on topics related to ancient Greece or Rome using digital slideshows, make oral presentations, and participate in a dramatic performance related to their study of ancient Greece.

Language Enrichment

The seventh-grade language enrichment course focuses on developing comprehension and note-taking techniques, as well as time-management, organizational, study, and test-taking skills. Comprehension and note-taking strategies are strengthened using assigned textbooks from seventh-grade history and science classes. Boys learn how to break long-term assignments and preparation for assessments into steps and how to document their action plan in their Planners. Students also learn and practice active study techniques for quizzes and tests, and they learn how to plan and prepare for cumulative assessments.

Library and Technology Integration

Technology is integrated throughout the seventh-grade program in ways that make learning more efficient and more effective. Each seventh-grade boy is given his own laptop to use at school. Using the Google suite, boys work collaboratively on long-term projects related to their core academic disciplines. Integrated technology plays an essential role in the signature seventh-grade interdisciplinary study unit, *Agents for the Good*. When conducting research, boys learn to evaluate digital and print sources for currency, relevancy, accuracy, and purpose. They continue to develop their research and information literacy skills as they collect, evaluate, and organize information; create citations; and write and revise drafts. In addition, boys visit the library regularly to learn about and select independent reading books.

Mathematics

The seventh-grade mathematics program marks the beginning of a two-year Algebra I sequence, during which boys build a strong foundation in algebraic thinking and skills. Boys use the concepts of variables and algebraic expressions to write and solve linear equations. They practice modeling word problems with equations with one and two variables. Students complete a rigorous study of polynomials, which culminates in solving equations by factoring. Using the DESMOS graphing calculator, students investigate how changing variables in the equations of lines affect how they are graphed. They then learn how to derive the equations of lines and how to graph them in the plane. They progress to interpreting quadratic functions and how to sketch them on the coordinate plane. As a culminating experience, boys embark on a week-long project to create a picture of a boat at sunset, using only mathematical equations and inequalities on the DESMOS platform.

Throughout the year, boys strengthen their problem-solving skills as they learn to apply their knowledge to novel and unfamiliar situations. They are encouraged to think flexibly, approach challenges from multiple perspectives, and persevere through productive struggle, with mistakes treated as an integral part of learning, fostering confidence and resilience. In the process, boys develop a framework for problem solving while sharpening their communication and collaboration skills. Boys develop the most frequently used problem-solving strategy: algebra, and special emphasis is placed on effectively applying algebraic techniques for problem solving. Boys put these skills to the test

by competing in MATHCOUNTS, MOEMS, and AMC 8 contests throughout the school year, where they tackle rigorous, creative problems, and cultivate resilience, composure and the ability to thrive under pressure. Seventh graders are invited to attend Math Lab³ or participate in Math Club⁴.

Modern Language: French VII

The seventh-grade French course builds on the boys' knowledge and understanding of French. As they transition to the second half of a typical high school first year course, they learn to communicate about food, clothing, and travel by air and train. They learn the present tense of all three regular verb groups and the present tense of several irregular verbs, as well as irregular and demonstrative adjectives and their use in the comparative forms. Responsibility for continuing conversation and elaboration in written forms of communication is gradually shifted to students.

Modern Language: Spanish VII

Spanish VII consolidates and builds on previous skills as students transition to the second half of a typical high school first year course. Boys learn to discuss professions, sports, hobbies, and pastimes. Students use the simple future tense, the present progressive tense, and the imperative. Boys study grammar in the context of Spanish speaking locations that may include Spain, Latino communities in the United States, and Argentina. After eight years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas. The aim of the course is for boys to reach intermediate level proficiency in listening, reading and speaking.

Performing Arts: School of Rock

Seventh and eighth graders may elect School of Rock, in collaboration with Marymount School students, in lieu of their regular sports program on Friday afternoons at Marymount School from 2:30–4:00 p.m., September through May. This class emphasizes the skills needed to play together in a band, including instrumental coaching and rehearsal techniques. The repertoire includes contemporary pop and rock, and instruments include bass, acoustic and electric guitars, drums, and piano or keyboard.

Performing Arts: Theatre Arts

Seventh and eighth graders may elect Theatre Arts, in collaboration with Marymount School students, in lieu

of their regular sports program on Friday afternoons from 2:30–4:00 p.m., September through May. Students work together to take creative ownership of a full production—selecting and interpreting material, and shaping casting and staging—building toward a fully costumed one-act play performed for parents in May.

Science

The seventh-grade science program introduces students to the fundamentals of physics and chemistry through the lens of their local environment. During the first semester, boys explore how and why water moves, and what happens when it does. They consider how the movement of water from watersheds on land, to estuaries, to the ocean connects critical Earth systems, and they learn how to use scientific tools and methods to collect precise and reliable data in the field and in the lab.

In partnership with the Billion Oyster Project, boys help restore oyster reefs to New York Harbor. Students contribute to community science as they monitor the oyster restoration site on the East 90th Street Ferry Pier. As part of their study of watersheds and estuaries, each science class visits the estuary for three extended lab periods in September, October, and April to get hands-on experience moving cages, counting and measuring oysters, surveying biodiversity, and testing water. Boys learn to collect data with precision and conduct data analysis, skills they utilize further in field investigations of pond and stream habitats during their overnight trip to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Their research provides insight on oyster growth, water quality, and trends over time beyond the reef sites.

Students then investigate the physical and chemical properties of matter through an in-depth investigation of Earth's climate system. By studying long-term drivers of climate, as well as changing climate patterns and the causes, students focus specifically on building their skills analyzing complex data sets and communicating their findings through the use of writing, graphs and charts, maps, spatial data tools, and multimedia.

During the second semester, students study the structure of atoms and uncover the patterns in the Periodic Table. They continue their exploration of chemistry by running a series of increasingly complex chemical reactions, simultaneously reveling in hands-on work and building their theoretical understanding of how atoms combine to form molecules. In the spring, boys

study forces and motion, performing a series of labs and building models to develop an understanding of velocity, acceleration, force, and Newton's laws.

Spirituality: Religion

The seventh-grade religion course focuses on the idea of “living one’s creed” by emphasizing the importance of engaging in activities of Christian service and studying individuals who model ethical and moral behavior. Boys read and discuss the book *Rescue: The Story of How Gentiles Saved Jews in the Holocaust* by Milton Meltzer. Students discuss scripture passages and current events while studying the early history of the Catholic Church. Throughout the year, boys work on an interdisciplinary project called *Agents for the Good*. In religion and English classes, students research an individual who made a significant difference in the lives of others and link their *Agent for the Good* to a passage from scripture. As a culminating experience, boys work with the Headmaster to prepare and deliver a Chapel talk on their theme to faculty and fellow students. Service continues to be a key component of the seventh graders’ spiritual education, with boys participating in visits to senior citizens living at the Carnegie East House. Boys reflect on lessons learned from their volunteer experience as part of their *Agents for the Good* project.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one’s true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. Deliberate moral introspection and the forthright presentation of factual information undergird the holistic education of good men. The course is bolstered by explicit reflection on the virtues. In the seventh grade, boys examine emotional vocabulary and empathy, respect and appreciation for difference, stress and effective coping strategies, the safe and responsible use of technology, sex and sexuality, and substance abuse and addiction. Throughout the year, boys meet regularly with their advisory groups and for one-on-one sessions with their advisors for structured conversations about the topics discussed in *Sophrosyne*. With each unit, the focus is on teaching students how to authentically make safe and ethical decisions. Understanding attitudes and feelings is as important as specific information. Following an ancient tradition, right action follows from virtuous habits.

EIGHTH GRADE

Thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds display a newfound maturity as they become actively involved in the decision-making process of selecting a secondary school. They demonstrate their scholarship by engaging in a high level of abstract thought and solving more complex problems.

An eighth grader approaches problems more analytically and is comfortable sharing his thinking with an audience. He becomes more aware of the world around him. In the fall, he helps lead a school-wide turkey and canned food drive to support the needy in our neighborhood, and, for two weeks in March, his Saint David’s experience extends beyond Manhattan to Florence, Assisi, and Rome. Through the interview process for secondary schools and multiple leadership experiences as a senior member of the student body, he develops a strong sense of confidence and is ready to pursue new challenges.

Boys in the eighth grade reflect on core moral teachings and connect those of the Catholic faith to other major world religions, broadening the boys’ perspectives and laying the foundation for global citizenship and cultural competency. Students are given tools and opportunities to engage deeply in moral introspection by digging beyond surface appearances and politicized language to reflect on core values including respect, honesty, and kindness. The eighth grade program supports boys’ developing moral agency and spiritual capacity with daily Chapel talks delivered by teachers, coaches, and the Headmaster and a continuing advisory program. Each boy’s homeroom teacher and advisor support his growth across the pillars of his education, providing academic guidance, promoting his social-emotional health, and engaging him in moral and spiritual reflection.



INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:

Analysis and Rhetoric

As part of the art history and history courses, students refine the art of clear, concise, cogent writing and speaking, hallmarks of the art of rhetoric. During the year, boys complete four summary projects.

In the fall, eighth graders participate in the Nightingale-Bamford Lectures competition. Each eighth grader

researches a notable work by a renowned artist, and then prepares a lecture and digital slide presentation on the work that includes in-depth analysis of such components as impact of the artist, historical setting, gesture, color, iconography, and balance, among others. Boys are judged on the quality and depth of their research and analysis, as well as on their oral presentation skills and the visual design of their slides. Finalists compete in the final NBS Lectures before a panel of judges comprised of faculty members, administrators, trustees, and experts in art.

During the winter, eighth-grade students complete the Hogue History Essay, established in honor of Mrs. Hogue, one of the school's ten founders. Boys are guided through the sequence of steps required for the writing of an analytical research paper. Students apply the skills they have developed in framing research questions, developing thesis statements, evaluating print and digital sources, navigating databases, and utilizing NoodleTools to store and organize their information to compose an original essay on a topic of choice related to the Italian Renaissance. The Hogue Prize is awarded annually on the basis of this essay to a boy whose final work exhibits excellence in analysis and writing.

In preparation for the Italian Study Tour, students spend part of the winter working in teams on the Via Fiorentina project. Each group of four or five boys is assigned a particular Renaissance building in Florence and researches the building, its patron, its architect, and its significance. Students within the same group enrich their understanding and appreciation of the work by sharing the results of their inquiries with one another and discussing the salient points of their findings. The next step for each boy is to write an outline and brief essay based upon his and his team's preliminary efforts. A final component of the project is the creation of a visual representation of the building by utilizing the skills learned and practiced in observational drawing classes. The choice of medium is up to each boy. The possibilities include pencil, pen and ink, colored pencil, and watercolor. Through research, discussion, writing, painting, and drawing, the boys appreciate the interplay between art, history, religion, politics, economics, and society in Renaissance Florence. Before visiting his building, each boy pastes into his Italian Study Tour journal the essay about and drawing of the assigned structure. The boys in each group also give an oral presentation to their classmates and faculty at the site itself.

During the spring, eighth graders are challenged to create a piece of work in the spirit of a famous artist. Boys write a brief biography of the artist and a reflection on the process of creating their own work. They present their artwork and rationale to a panel of judges, including teachers and art professionals, who must determine which project most emulates but does not merely imitate the work of the selected artist. The culminating event of the Αρχω Project is an evening reception for parents and families, Salon de Diplômés, at which the eighth-grade boys comment on their work. These four summary experiences provide opportunities for eighth graders to develop and hone their skills in analytical and creative thinking, which prepares them for the demands of a secondary school curriculum.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:

Romeo and Juliet

As a culminating experience to their study of *Romeo and Juliet* in their English classes, boys participate in four three-hour sessions with students from Marymount School led by a team of professional teaching artists. Students explore ways to bring *Romeo and Juliet* to life as they engage in workshops on aspects of Shakespearean performance, including stage combat, rhythmic speech using iambic pentameter, dramatic tableau, and masquerade. Students then work together in groups to prepare and present an incident from the play using the techniques they have learned for an audience of their peers. This academic collaboration with Marymount has become a cherished tradition among the students at both schools.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:

Scientific Debate

How does engaging in debate help us to understand multiple perspectives and strengthen our ability to think critically and communicate effectively?

In eighth-grade science, boys develop critical thinking and communication skills by debating complex scientific and ethical issues such as physician-assisted suicide, the use of performance-enhancing drugs in sports, and CRISPR gene editing in embryos. Engaging in these structured debates helps students explore multiple perspectives, challenge assumptions, and articulate well-reasoned arguments on pressing contemporary issues.



Art History

In art history classes, boys examine artwork from ancient Greece and Rome, Renaissance and Baroque Italy, and the modern world. Through “close looking” routines, group discussions, creative responses, analytical writing, and public speaking activities, boys practice connecting particular details in art to larger patterns, themes, and values—skills central to the course and vital across all humanities disciplines. With artist workbooks in hand, boys extend their learning during visits to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Frick Collection, the Guggenheim, and MoMA, where they sketch and reflect on the works of great artists. Museum visits also help boys to understand how each work relates to broader historical and stylistic contexts, and to trace developments in human thought over time. Culminating projects, including the NBS Lecture, Via Fiorentina, and Αρχα, provide opportunities for boys to delve more deeply into their interests through researched presentations, group collaborations, and their own art creations. Much of the year’s work in art history is integrated into the Italian Study Tour, a means of seeing the actual paintings, sculpture, and architecture the boys have studied and deepening their understanding through writing and drawing.

Athletics

The seventh and eighth-grade athletics program allows boys to pursue a wide range of sports, while offering those who are interested a more competitive experience. For the first time, boys try out for positions on standing teams. Saint David’s School is a member of the Manhattan Private Middle School League, which also consists of Allen-Stevenson, Buckley, Collegiate, Dalton, St. Bernard’s, and Trinity. Boys compete against these schools in soccer, flag football, cross country, basketball, lacrosse, baseball, and track and field. Boys can also elect to do fitness, club basketball, golf, and cross training. Sportsmanship remains a hallmark of Saint David’s athletic program. Eighth-grade boys may also participate in the Saint David’s hockey program¹.

Classical Language: Latin VIII

In Latin VIII, students complete the *Cambridge Latin Course Unit 2*, and move on to the *Cambridge Latin Course Unit 3*. The books follow the travels of Quintus Caecilius, after a stay in Alexandria, a city which bears considerable comparison with New York, to Britain, specifically to the city today called Bath. Students read longer and more complex passages, and through the readings see a realistic picture of Roman

treatment of subject populations. After a review of the grammar learned in Latin VII, major grammar items include present and perfect tense participles, and more uses of the noun cases. The material of the textbook is supplemented by teacher handouts, which expand the students’ knowledge of grammar forms (e.g., the future perfect tense active, the passive tenses indicative, the subjunctive active present). The course also makes use of the *Cambridge GO* website. A consistent focus of the class is the relationship of Latin to English, Spanish, and French etymology.

English

In eighth-grade English, boys are introduced to some of the great writers in the Western tradition including William Shakespeare and Alexandre Dumas. They learn to interpret literature from historical, psychological, and ethical perspectives, making thematic and stylistic connections among a diverse group of works, including poetry and short stories. They continue to expand their English vocabulary, particularly by learning Latin and Greek roots of more sophisticated words. In their study of grammar, boys cultivate an increasingly nuanced understanding of both the structure of English and the parts of speech. A principal focus of the program is the cogent expression of ideas in writing for a variety of audiences and purposes, using the full writing process. To this end, students master the skills necessary to write effective essays, personal narratives, poetry, and responses to literature. Boys may attend Writing Workshop¹¹ to further strengthen their writing skills.

History

In eighth-grade history, students engage in focused study of the Italian Renaissance, including its medieval antecedents and early modern consequences. The course opens with an examination of the European Middle Ages. Students then study the Italian Renaissance from a variety of perspectives in preparation for the Italian Study Tour. Over the course of the first semester, religion, politics, philosophy, literature, and art are particular areas of focus. Students then complete the Hoguet Essay, researching and analyzing a topic of choice related to the Italian Renaissance. In the second half of the course, students examine the consequences of the Renaissance in early modern history, learning about the conflicts and developments of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and the beginnings of European global exploration, conquest, and colonization, with a particular focus on the Caribbean and Mexico. To strengthen their analytical skills, students

work frequently with primary sources. Understanding is assessed through written responses, essays, presentations, Socratic seminars, reading quizzes, and tests.

Language Enrichment

The eighth-grade language enrichment course focuses on developing comprehension and note-taking techniques, as well as time-management, organizational, study, and test-taking skills. Comprehension and note-taking strategies are strengthened using assigned textbooks from eighth-grade art history and history classes. Boys learn how to break long-term assignments and preparation for assessments into steps and how to document their action plan in their Planners. Students also learn and practice active study techniques for quizzes and tests, and they learn how to plan and prepare for cumulative assessments.

Library and Technology Integration

Technology is integrated throughout the eighth-grade program in ways that make learning more efficient and more effective. Each eighth-grade boy is given his own laptop to use at school. Using the Google suite, boys work collaboratively on long-term projects related to their core academic disciplines. When conducting research for their NBS Lectures, Via Fiorentina, Αρχω, and the Hoguet Essay, boys learn to evaluate digital and print sources for currency, relevancy, accuracy, and purpose. They continue to develop their research and information literacy skills as they collect, evaluate, and organize information; create citations; and write and revise drafts. In addition to the Upper School Library, eighth-grade students enjoy the privilege of the dedicated Hume Research Library. The Hume Research Library, housed in the original building, is home to the eighth-grade humanities collection of art books and reference materials that support scholarship and abstract expressions in the arts and humanities. Eighth-grade students are active participants in their search for information literacy and knowledge. In their final year, students are expected to be critical thinkers, ethical consumers of information, and responsible users of digital content.

Mathematics

The eighth-grade mathematics program completes a two-year study of Algebra I, with boys progressing through increasingly advanced algebraic concepts and skills; boys also begin to explore concepts from Algebra II, geometry, and trigonometry. Boys solve linear equations, systems of equations, and word problems involving rates, ratios, and percentages. Operations with algebraic fractions are

practiced, providing students the opportunity to reinforce factoring and simplifying expressions introduced the previous year. Boys learn about functions, studying various types. Students learn to solve, graph, and interpret solutions to one and two-variable inequalities. They explore rational and irrational numbers and apply this knowledge to the Pythagorean Theorem and square roots. Quadratic functions are explored; students learn to solve quadratic equations using several methods including factoring, completing the square, the quadratic formula. As part of a problem-based learning unit, boys encounter and solve novel algebra problems without explicit teacher direction.

Throughout the year, boys strengthen their problem-solving skills as they learn to apply their knowledge to novel and unfamiliar situations. They are encouraged to think flexibly, approach challenges from multiple perspectives, and persevere through productive struggle, with mistakes treated as an integral part of learning, fostering confidence and resilience. In the process, boys develop a framework for problem solving while sharpening their communication and collaboration skills. Boys are best equipped to tackle problems with algebra, and extra focus is given to adding advanced algebraic techniques to their problem-solving toolkit, in addition to practice in number theory, probability, combinatorics, and geometry. Boys put these skills to the test by competing in MATHCOUNTS, MOEMS, and AMC 8 contests throughout the school year where they tackle rigorous, creative problems, and cultivate resilience, composure and the ability to thrive under pressure. Eighth graders are invited to attend Math Lab³ or participate in Math Club⁴.

Modern Language: French VIII

French VIII furthers the boys' basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in French. Boys study vocabulary related to sports, arts and leisure activities, and health and daily routine. The grammar topics introduce the reflexive verbs in the present and past tenses, the passé composé formed with être or avoir, frequently used irregular verbs, connaître and savoir; direct and indirect object pronouns and the imperative forms of verbs. Cultural units explore the Tour de France, skiing in Canada, French museums and health. Boys become increasingly responsible for initiating and continuing discussions, and clearly communicating their ideas orally and in writing.

Modern Language: Spanish VIII

Spanish VIII consolidates and builds on previous skills as students transition to material typically covered in a second-year high school course. Boys continue to develop their proficiency in the intermediate range with increasingly challenging tasks requiring listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. The irregular forms of the past tense are used in the context of telling what they did, where they went and what happened. Projects focus on biographies and story narration. Boys study grammar in the context of Spanish speaking locations that may include Latino communities in the United States, Argentina, and Chile. After nine years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas.

Performing Arts: School of Rock

Seventh and eighth graders may elect School of Rock, in collaboration with Marymount School students, in lieu of their regular sports program on Friday afternoons at Marymount School from 2:30–4:00 p.m., September through May. This class emphasizes the skills needed to play together in a band, including instrumental coaching and rehearsal techniques. The repertoire includes contemporary pop and rock, and instruments include bass, acoustic and electric guitars, drums, and piano or keyboard.

Performing Arts: Theatre Arts

Seventh and eighth graders may elect Theatre Arts, in collaboration with Marymount School students, in lieu of their regular sports program on Friday afternoons from 2:30–4:00 p.m., September through May. Students work together to take creative ownership of a full production—selecting and interpreting material, and shaping casting and staging—building toward a fully costumed one-act play performed for parents in May.

Science

The eighth-grade science program is a yearlong, microscopic and macroscopic exploration of the science of the human body. Students begin the year by learning how cells use DNA to build structures and carry out the functions of life. After studying DNA and the systems it controls, students, in partnership with Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory's DNA Learning Center, carry out original research using an approach called DNA barcoding. They apply their understanding of DNA and lab

techniques to investigate the biodiversity of ants in our urban ecosystem and ask questions about urbanization, migration, and evolution of ant species. In the winter, the year's themes – genes, DNA, and the relationship between form and function – continue as boys explore a unit on infectious disease. Through hands-on activities, mathematical modeling, and reading historical primary sources, boys answer questions: *How do pathogens harm us and how do our bodies fight back? What is the science and the history behind vaccines? How do public health initiatives balance individual freedoms and collective actions?* Boys frame questions, pick sides, do research and hold a debate on timely and relevant topics around infectious disease and public health. In the spring, boys perform hands-on labs and dissections and complete projects to understand the workings of the human pulmonary, cardiovascular, and digestive systems.

Spirituality: Religion

The eighth-grade religion course promotes the formation of a reflective and committed student, especially as this pertains to the world of ethics and spiritual values. Boys study the nature of Christianity at its source, by reflecting upon the person, story, and teachings of Christ, thereby deepening their understanding of the specific tradition in which life at Saint David's is grounded. During the second semester, boys learn about other major world faiths and philosophies. Students visit a mosque and meet with an imam. The course emphasizes the relevance of faith and ethics to governing one's conduct and making good choices. Finally, all boys are encouraged to live the message of the Gospel in their daily lives, with a special focus on organizing and participating in a number of charitable and community service activities during the year. In the fall, boys lead our school-wide Thanksgiving Food Drive. In addition, boys work to develop a signature service project each year; these have included establishing a school in Ethiopia and raising funds for hurricane relief.

Spirituality: Sophrosyne

Sophrosyne, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This ancient virtue represents the dual, interrelated pillars of the course: character education and social-emotional health. Deliberate moral introspection and the forthright presentation of factual information undergird the holistic education of good men. The course is bolstered by explicit reflection on the virtues. In the eighth grade, boys examine the transition to secondary

school, stress and effective coping strategies, perfectionism and pressure, substance abuse and addiction, the safe and responsible use of technology, respect and appreciation for difference, empathy and healthy relationships, and sex and sexuality. Finally, boys learn about personal safety and decision making through extensive role-playing scenarios, led by faculty and professionals from Prepare, Inc., so they have practiced responses to the difficult situations they are most likely to face. Throughout the year, boys meet regularly with their advisory groups and for one-on-one sessions with their advisors for structured conversations about the topics discussed in Sophrosyne. With each unit, the focus is on teaching students how to authentically make safe and ethical decisions. Understanding attitudes and feelings is as important as specific information. Following an ancient tradition, right action follows from virtuous habits.

NOTES

¹**Athletics: Hockey**

Hockey at Saint David's is an elective after-school program available to Alpha through eighth grade students as well as to their siblings. All players are registered with USA Hockey. Games and practices take place at a number of rinks in the New York City area; all are conducted according to USA Hockey rules. The program begins in early November and concludes by the middle of March.

The Alpha, Kindergarten, and Omega program focuses on skating skills and the boys do not play any games. The basic elements of ice hockey are introduced in first grade and the team plays three to four games towards the end of the season. Beginning with the second grade program, boys play a full season of twelve to fourteen games and participate in the Governor's Cup at Riverbank and/or the Lasker Cup.

²**Mathematics: Open-ended Investigations**

Open-ended investigations present a unique opportunity for student-centered learning. Boys receive a problem or a question where the solution requires more than the application of a standard procedure. Five to ten class periods each term are dedicated to developing individual problem-solving approaches, collecting data, interpreting findings, and exploring extensions. Each project culminates with a report in which boys communicate the process they used and their conclusions.

³**Math Lab**

Boys in Grades One through Eight may visit Math Lab before school, from 7:45 and 8:15 a.m., for help with a homework question, to prepare for an upcoming assessment, or to explore a new topic of interest in mathematics.

⁴**Math Club**

Math Club offers boys the opportunity to practice problem solving in a fun, non-competitive, social environment. Boys solve logic puzzles, play interactive math games, and take part in group explorations, working collaboratively with students across grades who share an interest in mathematics. Boys in Grades Three through Five work together to design and complete a mathematics project of their choosing, and they present their project in the spring. Boys in Grades Six through Eight originate, plan, and complete a separate project which will be their 2026-2027 submission to the MATHCOUNTS National Math Club. The club meets Mondays during Commons for boys in Grades Four through Eight, and Fridays before school from 7:30 to 8:15 a.m. for boys in Grades Three through Eight.

⁵**Music: The First Orchestra**

The First Orchestra provides an opportunity for younger boys to experience the pleasure of playing together in an orchestra setting. It encourages our younger violin and cello students to practice even more, and it provides them with an opportunity to learn the skills of playing in a larger group. The curriculum is designed to help the students make a smooth transition to our Philharmonic Ensemble when they reach the Upper School. The First Orchestra rehearses once a week, and boys in the orchestra perform for their classmates twice a year. The First Orchestra is open to any boy in Grades One through Three who has been studying violin or cello for at least six months.

⁶**Music: The Lower School Percussion Ensemble**

The Lower School Percussion Ensemble is open to boys in Grades One through Three and meets Tuesday mornings before school. Boys who wish to participate must also take private lessons. The Lower School Percussion Ensemble performs twice a year at the Lower School music assemblies.

⁷**Music: The First Choir**

First Choir is open to all boys in Grades Two and Three. Choristers develop healthy vocal production through exploration of traditional choral, folk, musical theater and popular music repertoire. In addition to musical development, there is a strong emphasis on the building of a community of singers. The First Choir performs for the Lower School in the winter and spring and collaborates with the Chamber Singers for special performances.

⁸**Music: The Philharmonic Ensemble**

The Saint David's Philharmonic Ensemble invites musicians from Grades Four through Eight to join together to learn and perform famous symphonic compositions from the classical repertoire. There are four performances each year for the student body, two in the winter and two in the spring; the Ensemble has recently performed at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center and at Carnegie Hall. Boys rehearse twice a week: on Tuesday, before school, and on Friday during the school day. They may also choose to participate in small group sectionals and chamber music rehearsals during lunch periods or Commons. The Ensemble is open to any musician who is able to read music, has the desire to participate, and is willing to commit to practice time.

⁹**Music: The Chamber Singers**

The Chamber Singers is open to any boy in Grades Four through Eight. The students rehearse twice a week: on Wednesday before school, and on Thursday during the school day. The program is designed to foster the development of self-esteem while nurturing young voices and building advanced musical skills. Chamber Singers repertoire celebrates the music of many cultures and genres including, but not limited to, folk, popular, gospel, spirituals, classical, and art song. The Chamber Singers perform regularly at Mass, the winter and spring concerts, and they are featured performers at the Advent Service of Lessons and Carols.

¹⁰**Music: The Percussion Ensemble**

The Percussion Ensemble is open to boys in Grades Four through Eight who take private percussion lessons and wish to play a wide variety of mallet instruments in a small group. The class meets once a week before school, and boys learn a wide variety of music from Bach to contemporary songs. Boys learn to follow complicated rhythmic patterns, learn techniques on many different instruments, and enjoy performing at school in the winter and spring concerts.

¹¹**Writing Workshop**

Writing Workshop is a time for boys to work on individual writing endeavors or class assignments while developing creative and analytical skills. Boys may drop in before school Tuesdays through Fridays or after school Mondays through Thursdays.



SAINT DAVID'S is an independent elementary school for boys of all faiths and backgrounds. Boys are admitted to pre-kindergarten through Grade Eight. Since its founding in 1951 by nine Catholic families, Saint David's has graduated more than 2,300 students. They have gone on to the most competitive New York City secondary schools, as well as regional boarding schools, and from there to ranking universities and colleges throughout the nation. The school is accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, subscribing to its Principles of Good Practice for admission of students. Saint David's also belongs to the Independent Schools Admissions Association of Greater New York. The school's headmaster is Dr. P. David O'Halloran.

Saint David's School

Twelve East Eighty-ninth Street
New York, New York 10128
www.saintdavids.org

