

Curriculum Overview

Pre-Kindergarten: Children in our Pre-K Program explore their natural curiosity about the world around them while receiving beginning education in understanding God, expressing feelings, sharing, solving problems and social competence. The curriculum utilizes various methods of learning and growth such as free play, reading circles, literacy activities, learning centers, investigation, arts & crafts, and music. All activities are taught in an age-appropriate manner and with our Catholic faith at the forefront of the learning and developmental experience.

Kindergarten: Students attend Mass each Friday. Our Religion curriculum consists of daily use of “The Golden Rule” which is incorporated throughout our learning. Additionally, we learn all formal prayers and follow the catechetical curriculum guidelines as set forth for kindergarten by the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. We also participate in school-wide service projects for our local and global community. We utilize the Daily 5/CAFE literacy structure for Language Arts/Reading. This structure helps teach children to be independent on literacy tasks. Once students are taught the behaviors of the tasks and build their stamina for independence, we are able to work with individuals and small groups. We also use CAFE, which is a visual aid for organizing the reading strategies children learn, so they can begin to read books at their own level. Age-based Math concepts based on the Indiana Academic Standards are introduced and explored through hands-on activities. Science and Social studies reflect the Indiana Academic Standards. Both subjects are taught during their own dedicated time and in cross-curricular lessons during Math and Reading. Field trips, including Bendix Woods and local performances, are utilized to enhance learning and emphasize real world experiences.

1st – 2nd Grade: Our Catholic faith is woven into every part of the day as students learn to love one another and Jesus through Bible stories and learning about the lives of the saints. Faith is put into action through service projects to the community. Religion is integral to faith formation as the children prepare to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. Using the Daily 5/CAFE literacy structure, the goal in Language Arts is to develop strong, independent readers and writers. Students are exposed to an expansive amount of literature and learn to choose their own “good fit” books and to set goals in the areas of comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and expanding vocabulary. This approach enables teachers to use a cross curricular approach and introduce children to a wide variety of subject areas as they learn to read. Writing also plays a key role in the development of the students. They learn to write poetry, letters, nonfiction and fiction stories, and to respond to reading through writing. In Math, a visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approach is used in teaching students the strong foundational skills needed to be successful in Math throughout their school years. Mastery of addition and subtraction facts, along with problem solving and higher level thinking are the key components to the first grade Math curriculum. In second grade, Math lessons utilize a variety of methods including ‘hands-on’ activities. The skills presented include addition and subtraction with regrouping, counting money, telling time, and strategies for problem solving.

3rd – 4th Grade: The study of Catholicism continues in third and fourth grade with the life of Jesus, the Sacraments, and prayer life. Fourth grade Religion features an in-depth study of a saint by each student. Students then portray their chosen saint for the All Saints Day Mass. Implementation of the Daily 5/CAFE literacy structure fosters independent and proficient reading, creative writing, oral fluency, and vocabulary skills. Classroom and school libraries offer a rich reading selection. In Social Studies, third grade explores topics such as diversity, richness of cultural heritage, government in action, and community relationships, and this exploration continues into fourth grade with the study of Indiana history. Third grade Math focuses on fostering problem solving skills, along with the introduction and applications of multiplication and division facts. Fourth grade Math focuses on the importance of using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division throughout the year. Students utilize their critical thinking skills to solve multi-step, real world problems. Math technology in the form of *ALEKS* and *Xtramath.org* are incorporated into the curriculum. Third and fourth grade students experience Science through project-based learning and laboratory investigations. At this stage, they begin using science process skills to find answers to a question or an experiment. Students can look forward to activities which help bring content to life. Scholastic News magazine is utilized in weekly Reading and Science class.

5th Grade: Fifth grade religion involves study of the sacraments and parts of the Mass. Students also study the liturgical year, virtues, Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, and the Trinity. We will be using the *Alive in Christ* textbook series. In Math, fifth graders expand their understanding of place value patterns and relationships. Students solve problems and evaluate expressions using whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and mixed numbers. Students will apply formulas for area and volume, convert units, and classify polygons. Our primary resource is the *Envision* textbook which develops higher level mathematical thinking. The *ALEKS* program is an online resource that encourages students to explore mathematical concepts at their own pace. Xtramath.org ensures students have the fluency necessary to be successful mathematicians. Fifth graders learn and apply the science process skills. Students study weight and mass, Earth-Moon-Sun relationships, ecosystems, and the engineering design process. Students engage in hands on STEM activities in classroom experiments and a field trip to STARBASE. Social Studies education focuses on a National History Day project and research paper. Students also learn about Native Americans, British colonies, and the American Revolution. They finish the year exploring early American government through the Civil War. Fifth graders learn strategies that improve independent reading abilities through the Daily 5 Program. They build upon previously taught English Grammar principles and learn how to advance from paragraph writing to full paper essay writing.

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6th Grade: Religion in sixth grade is centered on the study of the Old Testament and Salvation History. Students are introduced to a variety of important concepts, such as covenant theology, in addition to reviewing basic Catholic teachings. Prayer life is important and students participate in the Living Stations during Lent. In Language Arts, sixth graders read a variety of fiction and nonfiction works and learn how to combine reading and writing for research. Students also participate in a rigorous vocabulary and spelling curriculum. Social Studies concentrates on ancient civilizations from Asia, North and South America, and Africa. Sixth grade students explore Math concepts such as fractions, decimals, geometry, expressions and equations, with content emphasis on rates, ratios, and proportions. The *Envision* Series helps elicit higher level thinking, while our online *ALEKS* program allows students to work on math concepts at their own pace. In sixth grade, students expand their knowledge and use of the scientific process by forming and testing a hypothesis, conducting experiments, then using the data to create a Science Fair Project.

Students also engage in STEM and Engineering Design Challenges throughout the year.

Junior High Grades 7-8: Seventh and eighth grade students are focused on making meaningful contributions of leadership and service to the school community and beyond. Many Junior High activities are Panther traditions and are designed to build fellowship, leadership skills, deepen faith and expand the mind. These include the Swamp Stomp, Annual Spaghetti Dinner, Service Projects and the class trip for Grade 8. Our students prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation throughout their seventh grade year, culminating in a spiritual journey toward the Sacrament in the fall of eighth grade. In addition to sacramental preparation, junior high students explore morality and ethics within the context of our Catholic faith. Class retreats are designed to encourage spirituality and class bonding and are always a memorable experience for all involved. The Junior High core curriculum expands to include Pre-Algebra (Grade 7) and Algebra (Grade 8), and we have utilized *ALEKS* to provide an opportunity for students to work at an individualized pace. Within Science, dissections and more in-depth understanding of the life around us is explored. Students engage in more developed History Day (Grade 7) and Science Fair (Grade 8) projects and gain knowledge of the stock market through various projects. In Social Studies, the students become more globally and culturally aware with hands-on instruction. Language Arts class prepares students for high school by teaching them how to analyze text, as well as proper research and writing techniques. St. Anthony students move to high school well-prepared to excel.

Computer Science: The PK-5 Computer Science / Technology course follows a guided curriculum, created for use at St. Anthony School, which aligns student learning with the standards set forth by the Indiana Department of Education. The standards are based on five core concepts: Data and Information (DI); Computing Devices and Systems (CD); Programs and Algorithms (PA); Networking and Communication (NC); and Impact and Culture (IC). Students are assessed according to outcome based learning and technology literacy. While “unpacking” the standards, students will have hands-on experience through formative / summative assessments & collaborative learning experiences. This course also supports the needs of STEM by incorporating the technology component discipline to maximize student learning. Platforms of interest used: Microsoft Office, Google Classroom, Digital Citizenship (Common Sense Media), Code.org, & Scratch. This K-5 technology curriculum design is comprehensive and interdisciplinary.

The intermediate (6-8) grade instructions include the use of virtual Google Classroom for assignments. Students create Google Docs (word processing), Sheets (spreadsheets), Slides (presentation model), Forms (surveys) and Draw. Students create many open-ended projects, such as coding animated cards, coding games to play, and creating a historic music video. These experiences are coupled with specific classroom activities and assignments to provide a real world utilization of skills.

Music: The focus of our music program at St. Anthony is to help each student reach his or her full potential as a performer, creator and consumer of music. We use these gifts to give praise and thanks to God. The Pre-K through 3 general music classes use folk song and dance to learn the basics of singing, reading and creating music. Grades 4-8 build upon this foundation by exploring the relationships between music, culture and history. Students also have many opportunities to practice their performance skills, including, band, a Christmas Program for grades PK through 4, and a middle school musical.

Spanish: The goal of Spanish classes is to provide a strong foundation in Spanish by teaching students conversational, reading, writing and grammatical skills with a strong Catholic influence. In addition to learning the language, our students also learn about the culture in Spanish speaking countries and their rich customs and traditions.

STEM: This curriculum is focused on increasing student interest and learning in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math) disciplines through the support and growth of a school-wide, high-quality STEM program. Three teachers are working directly with the Center for STEM Education at The University of Notre Dame to increase the visibility in our school. This partnership is in conjunction with the STEM Trustee Fellows Cohorts. As a result of this three year program, a STEM impact plan is being implemented making our school eligible for grants in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. The 2016-2017 school year marks the first year of implementation.